

Session 3

Understanding the 2 5 1 Chord sequence and Guide Tones (Eb Instruments)

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So far the two tunes we have used for improvisation have used just the basic chord changes. However, any tune will sound more colourful and interesting by using the 2 5 1 Chord Sequence where appropriate.
If every note of a major scale is given a number and on that number a series of thirds are stacked, then the chord on 2 will be a Minor 7th, 5 a dominant, and 1 a Major 7th.

A musical staff in 2/4 time, treble clef, and A major (three sharps). The staff shows a sequence of notes and chords: a note at measure 1, a bass note at measure 2, a note at measure 3, a note at measure 4, a bass note at measure 5, a note at measure 6, a note at measure 7, and a bass note at measure 1. Above the staff, the chords are labeled: F[#]-7, B7, and EΔ.

So nowbecomes.....and if we re-arrange (ie "voice") the chord tones

Musical score for the first section of the piece, featuring six measures. The key signature is E major (no sharps or flats). The measures show the progression: E (two measures), B⁷ (one measure), E (one measure), F#-7 (one measure), B⁷ (one measure), and EΔ (one measure). The bass line consists of eighth-note patterns on the bass clef staff.

We have all the "voices" moving to the nearest note of the next chord, the most important of which are the 3rds and 7ths - Guide Tones.

A musical staff in G major (one sharp) with a common time signature. It features six chords: F#7, B7, EΔ, F#7, B7, and EΔ. The first two chords are shown with vertical stems pointing down; the third chord has a vertical stem pointing up; the fourth and fifth chords have vertical stems pointing down; and the sixth chord has a vertical stem pointing up. The notes are represented by dots on the staff.

"Mhairi's Wedding" using 2 5 1

Musical score for piano in EΔ, F♯-7, and B7 chords. The score consists of two staves. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a measure of EΔ consisting of a dotted half note followed by eighth notes on the first and third beats. The bottom staff shows a bass clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a measure of F♯-7 consisting of a bass clef, a bass staff, and a bass clef, followed by a measure of B7 consisting of a bass clef, a bass staff, and a bass clef.

A musical score for piano in EΔ (E major) key signature. The top staff shows a melodic line with eighth-note patterns: a dotted half note followed by two eighth notes, a sixteenth-note pattern, a sixteenth-note pattern, and a sixteenth-note pattern. The bottom staff shows a harmonic bass line with sustained notes and vertical stems.

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Musical score for "The Wheels on the Bus" (Bar 2). The top staff shows a treble clef instrument playing eighth-note patterns over a repeating bass line. The bottom staff shows a bass clef instrument providing harmonic support. The chords labeled are EΔ, F#-7, and B7.

Continuation of the musical score for "The Wheels on the Bus". The top staff shows the treble clef instrument continuing its eighth-note pattern. The bottom staff shows the bass clef instrument providing harmonic support. The chords labeled are EΔ, F#-7, and B7.

"The Wheels on the Bus" using 2 5 1 (and in bar 2 Chord 3 and 6)

Musical score for "The Wheels on the Bus" (Continuation). The top staff shows the treble clef instrument playing eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the bass clef instrument providing harmonic support. The chords labeled are EΔ, F#-7, G#-7, C#-7, F#-7, and B7.

Continuation of the musical score for "The Wheels on the Bus". The top staff shows the treble clef instrument playing eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows the bass clef instrument providing harmonic support. The chords labeled are EΔ, F#-7, G#-7, C#-7, F#-7, B7, and EΔ.