

Jazz Clinic Review Session I Leading Tone & Guide Tones

- A. The leading tone is a half-step below the root, or in a major scale, the seventh scale degree. You can use this one note as a way to add tension, delay resolution, or outline the harmony of a progression. In a II V I progression the kernel of the harmonic motion is the 7th of the II chord (ex: key of C it would be the "c" of a Dm7 chord) to the 3rd of the V chord (i.e. "b" of the G7) chord.

This is a powerful tool; you can use this simple "tonic" to "leading tone" movement as in example 1.

Or do tonic, leading tone, then back again, as in example 2.

Stretch this idea out, contract it, expand it, play around with it on all II V progressions. Take it on "Autumn Leaves" and play around with the leading tone on the minor II V I's as well, as in example 3.

- B. The Guide Tones are the 3rd and 7th of each chord. This an expansion of the example above, but now we add the full movement of each chord. (ex: "f" and "c" of Dm7 go to "f" and "b" to G7 go to "e" and "b" of Cmaj7. Notice the overall movement is "f" to "f" to "e" and "c" to "b" to "b" – so a different part moves at a different time.

The simple guide tones are illustrated in example 4.

Here is a sample line in example 5.

Or delay the resolution as in example 6.

Or anticipate the changes as in example 7.

Using the guide tones, you can outline the harmony easily, even without accompaniment. Try this technique through an entire section or tune.

Clinic: Guide Tones & Leading Tone

① *D-7* *G7* *CΔ7*

② *D-7*₃ *G7* *CΔ7*

③ *BΔ* *E7* *A-*

④ *D-7* *G7* *CΔ7*

⑤ *D-7* *G7* *CΔ7*

⑥ *D-7* *G7* *CΔ7*

⑦ *D-7* *G7* *CΔ7*