

Introduction

7 Grids is a system for practicing and memorizing material to be used in improvised solos. It is a twelve key system. It is self contained.

You will be asked to memorize grids and the material couched in them. You will be asked to import the practiced material into solo lines, at first in pre-selected measures, later randomly.

You will not be asked to read transcribed solos or master every available chord/scale relationship or compile involved rhythmic lexicons. You will not find any discography here-- if you're interested in improvising we'll assume the foregoing items are on your shopping list.

For now, a few simple items have been selected for you to practice. There is no deadline involved; decide how many exercises you have time for and practice these. At some point they will be memorized. At some point your speed will exceed that of our practice CD. Practice without or program CD allowing you to increase speed.

Practice Guidelines.

- Practice the material in the order given.
- Practice 20-24 sessions in any month period.
- Practice by repetition rather than by clock time. Two to three repetitions per page will do.
- Practice aerobically. Keep moving from page to page. Momentum resembles the action of a solo.
- Practice through your mistakes; these will go away after a while. Should some gremlins persist, however, set aside a non-grid segment and work them over.

Average time of session; 32 minutes

Insert guidelines

*As the material becomes easy, try fitting it into solo lines (see Key: "inserts")
The Jamie Aebersold play-along series is indispensable for insert drill. Try these albums:*

1. *Blues In All Keys, Vol. 42*
2. *Maiden Voyage, Vol 54*
3. *Killer Joe, Vol 70.*

Before beginning, please take note:

- Before starting this system, singers would do well to read the addendum
- Chord calls do not dictate contents of the measure; rather the measure contents are (but one) workable option for the given chord call.
- Tablature is suggested only. It is presumed the individual will modify fingerings as necessary.

Now turn to our key.



A simple inventory will be easy to practice,
easy to understand, and easy to use.
Complex inventories might well prove
impossible to practice in their entirety.
Understanding and usage might not occur in
an acceptable period of time, if ever.

Let us begin.

Grid Two
 Progression by Fifth
 Sample: Minor MBP

C min C min G min G min

D min D min A min A min

E min E min B min B min

F# min F# min C# min C# min

Ab min Ab min Eb min Eb min

Bb min Bb min F min F min

Can you do the rest from memory?

C C min G G min

Practice as written
 Practice odd measures only
 Practice even measures only

Grid Three
 Progression by Half Step
 Sample: Minor Triad

C min C min 7 B min B min 7

Bb min Bb min 7 A min A min 7

Ab min Ab min 7 G min G min 7

F# min F# min 7 F min F min 7

E min E min 7 Eb min Eb min 7

D min D min 7 Db min Db min 7

Can you play alternating major and minor triads like this?

C C min C# C# min

Practice as is
 Practice odd measures only
 Practice even measures only

Grid Four
 Progression by Whole Step
 Sample: Minor Half Scale

Set One

C min C min 7 Bb min Bb min 7

Ab min Ab min 7 F# min F# min 7

E min E min 7 D min D min 7

CD Track 7

Set Two

B min B min 7 A min A min 7

G min G min 7 F min F min 7

Eb min Eb min 7 Db min Db min 7

CD Track 8

Can you swing major and minor a whole step back and forth?

C Bb C min Bb min

Practice as is
 Practice odd numbered measures
 Practice even numbered measures

Grid Six Ascending
 Progression by Major Third
 Sample: Major MBP
 Control: Grid Three

Set One

C E Ab C

Set Two

B Eb G B

Set Three

Bb D F# Bb

Set Four

A C# F A

CD Track 11

Grid Six Descending
 Sample: Major Triad
 Control: Grid Three

Set One

C Ab E C

Set Two

B G Eb B

Set Three

Bb F# D Bb

Set Four

A F Db A

Practice as is
 / vary start set

The Short Turnaround (ii mi7 – V7 – I)

Think of the Turnaround as a two-chord progression to a particular (target) chord

In the Short Turnaround the first two chords receive two beats apiece before resolving on the target. This resolving characteristic frees the target from any preset number of beats.

For a more thorough discussion of the Turnarounds and Turnbacks see the addendum.

Short Turn Around
 Minor MBP / Major MBP / Root Note
 Control: Grid One

Musical notation for the 'Short Turn Around' exercise, measures 1 through 24. The exercise is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves of music. Each staff contains six measures, with a chord label above each measure. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together in groups of four.

Measure	Chord
1	D min 7
2	G7
3	C
4	G min 7
5	C7
6	F
7	C min 7
8	F7
9	Bb
10	F min 7
11	Bb7
12	Eb
13	Bb min 7
14	Eb7
15	Ab
16	Eb min 7
17	Ab7
18	Db
19	Ab min 7
20	Db7
21	Gb
22	C# min 7
23	F#7
24	B
25	F# min 7
26	B7
27	E
28	B min 7
29	E7
30	A
31	E min 7
32	A7
33	D
34	A min 7
35	D7
36	G

CD Track 15

Try using Grid 4 as your practice grid

Musical notation for the 'Short Turn Around' exercise, measures 25 through 28. This section continues the exercise with four measures, each with a chord label above it.

Measure	Chord
25	D min 7
26	G7
27	C
28	C min 7
29	F7
30	Bb

Practice as is
 Vary Starting point

G# min7 C#7 F#
 19 20 21
 C# min7 F#7 B
 22 23 24
 F# min7 B7 E
 25 26 27
 B min7 E7 A
 28 29 30
 E min7 A7 D
 31 32 33
 A min7 D7 G
 34 35 36

CD Track 16

Think: Minor side of each long turnaround can be used as a short turnaround!

D min7 G7 C G min 7 C7 F
 37 38 39 40

Turnbacks often occur at the very end of phrases and songs, in other words "highlight" areas. The use of simple material citing the existence of the Turnback is therefore not merely practical for learning but aesthetically pleasing.

The musical score consists of six staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat major). The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together. Chord progressions are indicated above the notes. Measure numbers are placed at the beginning of each staff.

Staff	Measure	Chord
1	19	Bb min7
	20	Eb7
	21	Ab min7
	22	Db7
	23	Gb
2	24	Eb min7
	25	Ab7
	26	Db min7
	27	Gb7
	28	Cb
3	29	G# min7
	30	C#7
	31	F# min7
	32	B7
	33	E
4	34	C# min7
	35	F#7
	36	B min7
	37	E7
	38	A
5	39	F# min7
	40	B7
	41	E min7
	42	A7
	43	D
6	44	B min7
	45	E7
	46	A min7
	47	D7
	48	G

CD Track 17

Major MBP versus the 7 Grids

Can you run this material through all seven grids?

From memory?

Using the grid ribbon? (see addendum)

Grid one

Musical notation for Grid one in 4/4 time. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A, Bb, and Eb. Chord symbols C, F, Bb, and Eb are placed above the staff.

Grid two

Musical notation for Grid two in 4/4 time. The notes are C, D, E, G, A, B, and D. Chord symbols C, G, D, and A are placed above the staff.

Grid three

Musical notation for Grid three in 4/4 time. The notes are C, D, E, C#, D, E, and Eb. Chord symbols C, C#, D, and Eb are placed above the staff.

Grid four (set one)

Musical notation for Grid four (set one) in 4/4 time. The notes are C, D, E, D, and F#. Chord symbols C, D, E, and F# are placed above the staff.

Grid five (set one)

Musical notation for Grid five (set one) in 4/4 time. The notes are C, Eb, F#, and A. Chord symbols C, Eb, F#, and A are placed above the staff.

Grid six (set one)

Musical notation for Grid six (set one) in 4/4 time. The notes are C, E, Ab, and B. Chord symbols C, E, and Ab are placed above the staff.

Grid seven

Musical notation for Grid seven in 4/4 time. The notes are C, F#, C#, and G. Chord symbols C, F#, C#, and G are placed above the staff.

Major Scale
Grid Three

Musical notation for Major Scale Grid Three, measures 1-12. The notation is in 4/4 time and treble clef. It shows the following chords and their corresponding scale runs:

- Measure 1: C Maj 7
- Measure 2: Db Maj 7
- Measure 3: D Maj 7
- Measure 4: Eb Maj 7
- Measure 5: E Maj 7
- Measure 6: F Maj 7
- Measure 7: F# Maj 7
- Measure 8: G Maj 7
- Measure 9: Ab Maj 7
- Measure 10: A Maj 7
- Measure 11: Bb Maj 7
- Measure 12: B Maj 7

Major Scale
Grid Three Inversion

Musical notation for Major Scale Grid Three Inversion, measures 13-15. The notation is in 4/4 time and treble clef. It shows the following chords and their corresponding scale runs:

- Measure 13: C Maj 7
- Measure 14: Db Maj 7
- Measure 15: D Maj 7

You're on your own! Fill in Chord Calls and Scales

Three empty musical staves for practice, measures 16-24. Each staff is in 4/4 time and treble clef. The first staff is labeled Eb Maj 7 at the beginning. The measures are numbered 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

- * Practice as is
- * Invert the scale direction

Bebop Scale
Grid Three

The image displays the Bebop Scale Grid Three, consisting of 12 measures across six staves. Each measure is associated with a specific chord, indicated by a label above the staff. The notes are written in a treble clef with a 2/4 time signature. The scale is played in a descending direction.

- Measure 1: C7
- Measure 2: C#7
- Measure 3: D7
- Measure 4: Eb7
- Measure 5: E7
- Measure 6: F7
- Measure 7: F#7
- Measure 8: G7
- Measure 9: Ab7
- Measure 10: A7
- Measure 11: Bb7
- Measure 12: B7

Practice as is
Invert the direction of each scale

Dorian Scale
Grid One

C min 7 F min 7

Bb min 7 Eb min 7

Ab min 7 Db min 7

F# min 7 B min 7

E min 7 A min 7

D min 7 G min 7

Can you play the scale from the 9th down?

C min 9 F min 9 Bb min 9

Set Two

Musical notation for Set Two, measures 9-16. The notation is on a single treble clef staff. Measure 9 is labeled with the chord B. Measure 10 is labeled with G# min. Measure 11 is labeled with Ab. Measure 12 is labeled with F min. Measure 13 is labeled with F. Measure 14 is labeled with D min. Measure 15 is labeled with D. Measure 16 is labeled with B min. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note.

CD Track 26

Set Three

Musical notation for Set Three, measures 17-24. The notation is on a single treble clef staff. Measure 17 is labeled with the chord Bb. Measure 18 is labeled with G min. Measure 19 is labeled with G. Measure 20 is labeled with E min. Measure 21 is labeled with E. Measure 22 is labeled with C# min. Measure 23 is labeled with C#. Measure 24 is labeled with A# min. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note.

CD Track 27

Blues Scale
Grid Three Ascending

Set One

C7 C#7 D7 Eb7

E7 F7 F#7 G7

Ab7 A7 Bb7 B7

Blues Scale Inverted
Grid Three

C7 C#7 D7 Eb7

E7 F7 F#7 G7

Ab7 A7 Bb7 B7

Insert Solo One
 Inserts: Major and Minor MBP and Triads

C7 F7 C7 G min7 C7
 C MBP Maj F Maj Triad C MBP Maj Short Turn Around

F7 F7 C7 E min7 A7
 F Maj Triad F MBP Maj C Triad Long Turnaround Excerpt

D min7 G7 E min7 A7 D min7 G7
 D MBP min G MBP Maj Turnback

CD Track 29

Insert Solo Two
 Inserts: Seventh Chords, Scales

C7 F7 C7 G min7 C7
 C Bebop Scale F MBP Maj C Maj Half Scale Short Turnaround

F7 F7 C7 E min7 A7
 F Bebop Scale F Dom 7th Chord C Dom 7th Chord

D min7 G7 E min7 A7 D min7 G7
 D min 7th chord G half scale G MBP Maj Long Turnaround D min 7 chord G Maj MBP

Addendum

Turnarounds are complicated, yes, but absolutely necessary to our work here. Because of this, we will limit ourselves to Turnarounds (and Turnbacks) in major or dominant style keys.

Let's assemble a short turnaround.

We're in the key of C. Ascending, the notes of our C scale are: C D E F G A B and the octave C. Each note has a numerical equivalent as well: C = 1, D = 2, E = 3 and so on.

Let's extract D (2), G (5) and C (1).

Using the notes of our scale, let's build a seventh chord over D (2) and G (5) leaving C (1) as a simpler major triad. The progression should read: Dmi7, G7, C Major. Play through it. Remember: the first two chords receive two beats, the target as many as you wish.

On pages 23 and 24 the minor and major MBP have been combined into Short Turnarounds in all twelve major or dominant style keys. Let's practice these.

Turnbacks often occur at the very end of phrases and songs, in other words "highlight" areas. The use of simple material citing the existence of the Turnback is therefore not merely practical for learning but aesthetically pleasing as well. (The following is laid out on CD Track 17, play along or just listen.)

Return to the Scale of C. Extract, in order, E (3), A (6), D (2) and C (1). Over E and A, build the same order of seventh chords noting that A7 uses a pitch (C#) not found in the key of C. The progression should read: Emin, A7, Dmi7, G7, C Maj. Play through this. Maintain a two-beats-per chord feel.

On pages 26 - 28 the Minor MBP and half scale have been arranged to provide Turnbacks in all twelve Major or Dominant style keys.

Grid One: Movement by Perfect Fourth

C F Bb Eb Ab Db/C# F# B E A D G [C]

Grid Two: Movement by Perfect Fifth

C G D A E B F# C#/Db Ab Eb Bb F [C]

Grid Three: Movement by Half Step

C C#/Db D D#/Eb E F F#/Gb G G#/Ab A A#/Bb B [C]

Grid Four: Movement by Whole Step

Set One: C D E F# G#/Ab Bb [C]

Set Two: C# D#/Eb F G A B [C#]

Grid Five: Movement by Minor Third

Set One: C Eb F# A [C]

Set Two: C# E G Bb [C#]

Set Three: D F Ab Cb/B [D]

Grid Six: Movement by Major Third

Set One: C E G# [C]

Set Two: Db F A [Db]

Set Three: D F# A#/Bb [D]

Set Four: Eb Gb B [Eb]

Grid Seven: Movement by Tritone (Control Grid One)

C - F# F - B Bb - F# Eb - A Ab - D C# - F

F# - C B - F E - A# A - D# D - G# G - C#