



Guide Tones and the 2nd Pillar #3

Jazz Guitar Improv 102

Hello, and welcome to section two, so this is lesson three, of course: Guide tones and the 2nd Pillar. We're going to revisit and expand upon the exercise we started in Improv 101 involving guide tones. Guide tones, once again, are thirds and seventh of each chord, and are so named because they served an extremely good guide post purpose for you to target when you transition from chord to chord. So when the chord changes, third and sevenths are amazing to target, and I will explain why in a moment. Since Improv 102 focuses on the 2nd pillar, which is, once again, connecting chords logically, the exercises we play will rely heavily on targeting guide tone third and sevenths when we change chords.

So this is a really important concepts throughout the course, and filling in the gaps in between them in any way we want is also a thing we'll be doing. The hard part is figuring out where we want to end up. Getting there is easy, it's only when you see where we wanna target, then that's what we'll talk about in the section. So for now, let's just focus on finding the third and sevenths for each chord. If we land on the third of the next chord when we change to that chord, we'll be giving the listeners a very strong sense of the tonality of the chord, as it whether or not it's major or minor. This is why the third degree of the chord is so important as a guide tone. In a progression such as two five one, D minor seven, G seven, C seven, the thirds are really all you need to get a sense of the big picture.

Those are the most beautiful notes, basically. So now, most of the chord progressions in jazz, including the infamous two five one, are based on the cycle of fourths, so, ♪ Two five one ♪ It simply means that, to get from the root of one chord to the root of the next, you have to travel upwards by a

perfect fourth. Most progressions in jazz follow this root relationship, so if you notice, a fourth up from D is G, and a fourth up from G is C, once again. So, D minor, G seven, and C major. The reason why I mention this is, why the seventh of each chord is equally important as a guide tone as the third is. You see, chords whose roots are related by fourths fit together in such a way that the seventh of one chord falls easily by a step to the third of the next chord.

We introduce this phenomenon in Autumn Leaves at some point in Improv 101, but now we'll really explore it more fully. So as an example, here's C, the seventh of D minor seven. Falling by half step to B, the third of G seven, and here is F, the seventh of G seven, falling by half step to the E note, which is the third of C major. You can see this in the P-D-F. So, I know there's a lot of numbers here, but to keep track, what I want you to notice is the sound, really. You get these really smooth, compelling transition from one chord to the next, fully outlining the tonality of each chord. And once we know where we want to end up, in this case the third of the next chord, and how we'll get there, this is falling from the seventh of the previous chord, all that's left is filling in the gaps in any way you want: blues licks, blind scales, and arpeggios.

So, let's get some practicing playing the guide tones in before we start improvising, shall we? Because together we'll be playing through the two five one progression, following the cycle of fourths, starting and ending on C major. At first, we'll simply target the third of every chord, so just third, third, third. Then, we'll add in the seventh of the previous chord to fall nicely to the third to create that smooth transition from one chord to the next. It's your first step into the 2nd pillar, it's amazing. By the way, this exercise works really well with what we call daisy chained two five shell voicings exercise from comping 102, comping 102, another course. If you completed that course, you'll remember that shell voicings contain the root and a guide tone of a chord, so you can actually use the shape of the chord to your advantage if you're having trouble remembering where the third or seventh is on your fretboard, relate it back to the root of the shell voicing.

Think of your shell voicings, you get guide tones, it's easy, you kill two birds with one stone. So shell voicings and soloing with guide tones are basically the same thing, except you separate a note and you add, say, single-line rhythms if you want. If you feel you haven't fully gotten the hang of it, or if you notice you're blanking on some of the guide tones for some chords more than others, don't be afraid to repeat the exercises or even play with the speed controls on the video in the gear menu, bottom right or top left depending. So, the ultimate goal in these exercises is to begin hearing exactly which notes you're trying to target, you hear them before you play them, and to internalize what it sounds like before you play it, and that's really the start of improvising, but that's what should be happening when you're soloing, is you hear it first and then it comes out later, right? So, please play through the exercise multiple times, even if it gets easy. The more prepared you are here, the easier improvising in the next section will become. Alright, so have fun with this, and I'll see you in the next video.