



BUILDING JAZZ VOCAB

BEBOP AND BEYOND

Rufus Philpot

COURSE BOOK

SCOTTSBASSLESSONS.COM

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Introduction

Do you have a hard time appreciating jazz on a deeper level? Do you want to step up your understanding of jazz bebop vocabulary and how the core principles work? Then look no further: the secret to getting ahead and really connecting with jazz as a language, is right here in this course.

In this course, Rufus Philpot is going to walk you through some of the key melodic devices made famous by the likes of Charlie Parker, Sonny Rollins and Cannonball Adderley. And crucially, how you can craft your own melodic ideas and implement them within your own practice. You'll also learn a Thelonious Monk-inspired 'SBL Blues' that Rufus has composed exclusively for this course.

Rufus Philpot



Rufus Philpot has been a mainstay on the LA jazz scene for years. He has performed or recorded with everyone from Simon Phillips to Allan Holdsworth, Tony MacAlpine and Randy Brecker. He also played with jazz guitarist Scott Henderson as part of the Nomad Trio, and was a member of Planet X and the Virgil Donati Group.

Rufus takes his influences from a wide range of musical genres. "If you can dig Andy Fraser's bass playing as well as Jaco or Anthony Jackson, then I think you're going to get more out of music and be a better bass player." Rufus was previously a faculty member of the Bass Collective in New York, and regularly gives Masterclasses at the Musician's Institute in Hollywood.

Lesson 01

Minor Harmony

Minor harmony can be difficult to understand compared to major key harmony because there are more scales to deal with. So how do you know which of those scales to use? What are the common chord choices in minor harmony? That's exactly what we unpack in this lesson.

In Example 01, Rufus introduces the Mixolydian mode, which is also known as the dominant scale. It's notable for its flattened 7th and is commonly used to improvise over a dominant seventh chord.

Example 01 F Mixolydian Mode

Video - 01:40

F7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 02 F Lydian Dominant

The fourth mode of the Melodic Minor Scale is called the Lydian Dominant. You can think of it as a Lydian Mode with a flat 7th or as a Mixolydian #11. It's a nice alternative to the Mixolydian mode and is flexible enough to work over pretty much any dominant 7th chord.

Video - 01:47

F7

8 10 7 9 10 7 8 10 8 7 10 9 9 9 10 7 10 8

Example 03 Melodic Minor

The melodic minor scale has all of the same notes of the major scale, except it has a flattened 3rd. In classical music, the melodic minor is unique in that the 6th and 7th scale degree are different depending on whether you are ascending or descending. However, in jazz the scale is the same whether ascending or descending.

Video - 02:55

3 5 6 3 5 2 4 5

Video - 03:06

5 4 2 5 3 6 5 3

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 04 Essential Dominant Scales

In Example 04, Rufus plays through the Mixolydian, Lydian Dominant and the Blues Scale starting from the same root note. When you play them all from the same root note, you can really hear the different tension and resolution of each pattern.

Video - 06:54

F Mixolydian

Fretboard diagram for F Mixolydian scale (bass clef, 4/4 time):

Measure 1: 8 10 7 8 10 7 8 10

Measure 2: 8 7 10 8 7 5 8 6

Measure 3: 5 8 6 0 3 1

Video - 07:01

F Lydian Dominant

Fretboard diagram for F Lydian Dominant scale (bass clef, 4/4 time):

Measure 1: 1 3 0 2 3 0 1 3

Measure 2: 0 2 4 5 7 8 10

Measure 3: 10 8 7 10 9 7 5 8

Video - 07:09

F Blues Scale

Fretboard diagram for F Blues Scale (bass clef, 4/4 time):

Measure 1: 1 4 1 2 3 1 3 1

Measure 2: 3 2 1 4 1

Video - 07:12

F Blues Scale (cont.)

Fretboard diagram for F Blues Scale (continued) (bass clef, 4/4 time):

Measure 1: 8 11 8 9 10 8 10 8

Measure 2: 10 9 8 11 8 8 6

Measure 3: 8 7 6 4 1

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 05 Harmonising the Melodic Minor Scale

In Example 05, Rufus gives more insight into his approach to learning the modes of the melodic minor. Remember that the point of these examples is to search for tensions that you want to incorporate into your own playing. As you make progress, try to build a vocabulary for yourself that incorporates all of these different patterns. And make sure you try these examples in other keys as well.

Video - 08:45

Lydian Augmented

Lydian Augmented scale in B-flat major (4/4 time). The scale is played in the bass clef. The fretboard diagram shows the scale starting on B-flat (6th fret), with fingerings: 6, 8, 5, 7, 4, 5, 7, 8, 7, 5, 7, 4, 7, 5, 8, 6, (6), (6).

Video - 09:02

Lydian Dominant

Lydian Dominant scale in B-flat major (4/4 time). The scale is played in the bass clef. The fretboard diagram shows the scale starting on B-flat (6th fret), with fingerings: 3, 5, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 8, 7, 10, 9, 7, 5, 8, 6, 5, 8, 7, 0, 3, 1.

Video - 09:12

Mixolydian b13

Mixolydian b13 scale in B-flat major (4/4 time). The scale is played in the bass clef. The fretboard diagram shows the scale starting on B-flat (6th fret), with fingerings: 3, 5, 2, 3, 5, 6, 3, 5, 3, 6, 5, 3, 2, 5, 3.

LESSON 1 (Ex. 05 continued)

Video - 09:16

Mixolydian $\flat 13$ (cont.)

Musical notation for the Mixolydian $\flat 13$ scale (cont.) in bass clef, 4/4 time. The scale is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4. The notation includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4.

Fingerings (T = Thumb, A = Index, B = Middle):

5 7 4 5 7 8 10 12 | 10 12 10 11 12 10 | 9 12 10 10 8 11 10 | 8 7 0 3 1 3

Video - 09:50

Locrian $\sharp 2$

Musical notation for the Locrian $\sharp 2$ scale in bass clef, 4/4 time. The scale is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4. The notation includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4.

Fingerings (T = Thumb, A = Index, B = Middle):

12 14 15 12 | 13 15 12 14 | 12 13 14 12 15 13 12 15 | 14 12 12

Video - 10:35

Altered Scale

Musical notation for the Altered Scale in bass clef, 4/4 time. The scale is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4. The notation includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4.

Fingerings (T = Thumb, A = Index, B = Middle):

2 3 5 6 3 5 2 4 | 2 5 3 6 5 3 2

Video - 10:42

Altered Scale (cont.)

Musical notation for the Altered Scale (cont.) in bass clef, 4/4 time. The scale is written on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4. The notation includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes are: F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G#3, A#3, B#3, C#4, D#4, E#4, F#4.

Fingerings (T = Thumb, A = Index, B = Middle):

9 10 12 13 10 12 14 16 | 14 16 14 17 15 18 17 15 | 14 14 12 15 13 11 10

Lesson 02

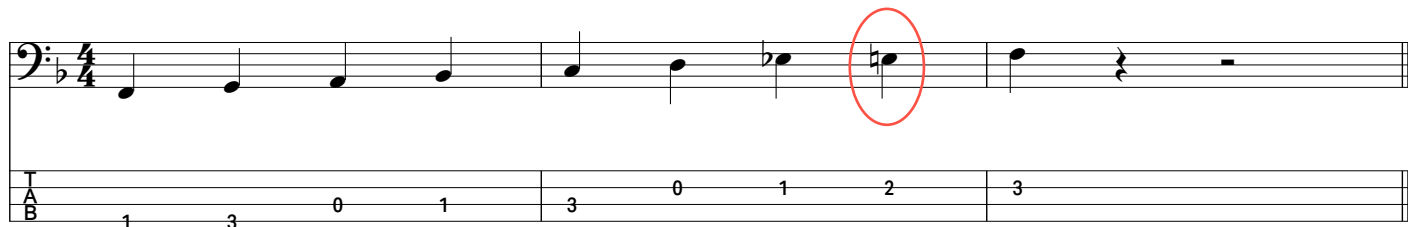
The Bebop Scale

Perhaps you've read or heard about the jazz bebop scale before, but where does it come from, and how can it be used? In Lesson 02, Rufus introduces the dominant bebop scale, which can give you a great platform for adding chromaticism to your playing. We're going to start by learning what the bebop scale is, how it looks on the bass guitar, and how you can start using it in your solos.

Example 01 F Bebop Scale

The Bebop Scale has the same notes as the Mixolydian mode with an additional passing tone (a major 7th).

Video - 01:01

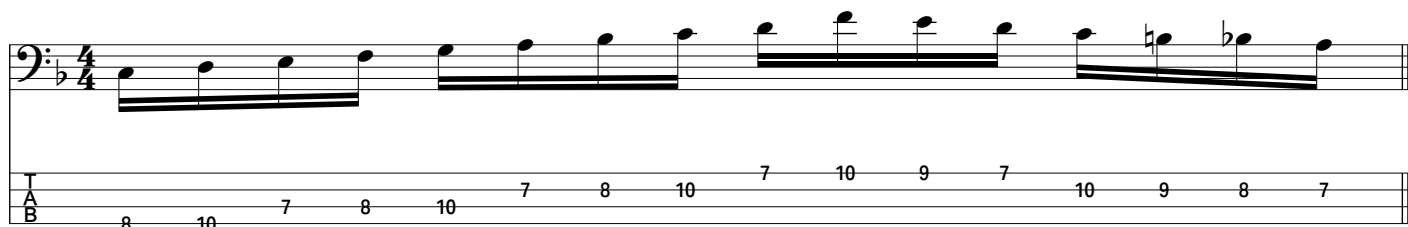


1 3 0 1 3 0 1 2 3

Example 02 Cannonball Adderley

Cannonball Adderley was an alto saxophonist of the bop era of the 1950s and 1960s. His playing is steeped in the bebop tradition and this lick is a great example of his stylistic approach.

Video - 01:42



8 10 7 8 10 7 8 10 7 10 9 7 10 9 8 7

LESSON 2 (continued)

Example 03 Tenor Madness - Sonny Rollins

Example 03 looks at a chromatic phrase from *Tenor Madness* by Sonny Rollins. The album of the same name was released in October 1956 and is the only known recording that features both Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane.

Video - 02:50

Harm. - -

3

In this second section, Rufus borrows from the Lydian Dominant mode, which adds a deeper sense of tension and release to the idea. As you practice these examples, always try to come up with strong melodic statements based on the scales as opposed to just mechanically plugging them into your solos.

Video - 02:58

4

LESSON 2 (continued)

Example 04 Bebop Scale & Lydian Dominant

In this next idea, Rufus combines elements of both the Bebop Scale and the Lydian Dominant mode. It is important to note that the Bebop Scale is generally thought of as a descending scale, meaning it's most often used when playing descending patterns.

Video - 05:16

10 9 8 10 7 10 9 7 10

Example 05 Lydian Dominant, Mixolydian & Blues Scale

In Example 05, Rufus runs through the Lydian Dominant, Mixolydian and Blues Scale patterns. If you're able to combine all three, then you'll have an excellent framework for adding chromatic notes to your jazz solos.

Video - 06:19

Lydian Dominant

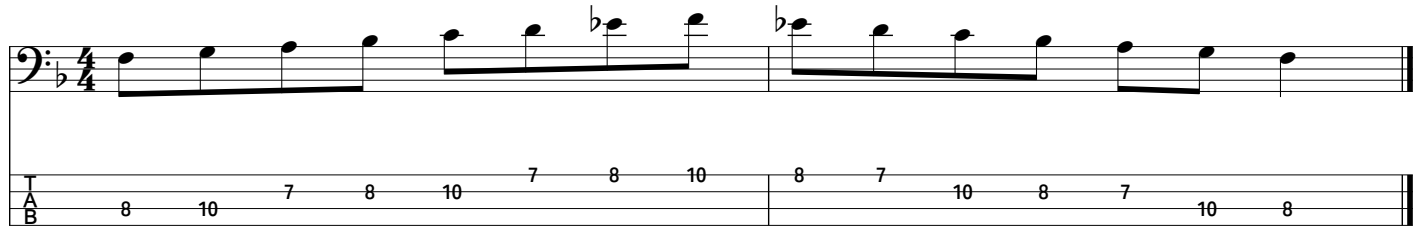
8 10 7 9 10 7 8 10 8 7 10 9 7 10 8

continued →

LESSON 2 (Ex. 05 continued)

Video - 06:22

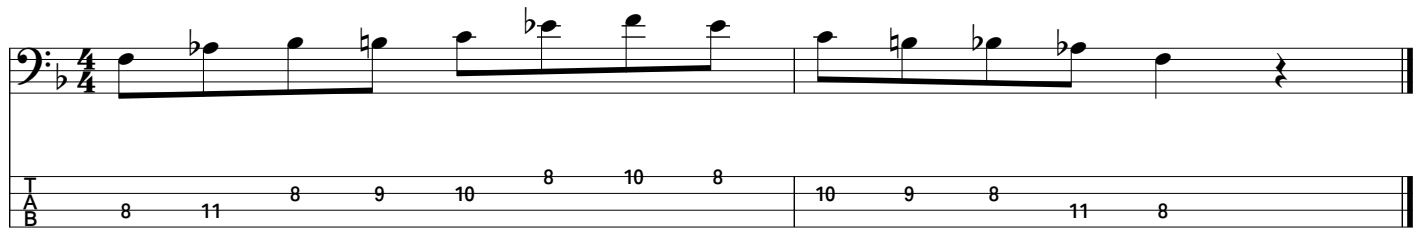
Mixolydian



Two staves of music. The top staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a Mixolydian scale exercise starting on Bb, moving up and then down. The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the left hand, with strings T, A, and B labeled. The fret numbers are: 8, 10, 7, 8, 10, 7, 8, 10, 8, 7, 10, 8, 7, 10, 8.

Video - 06:24

Blues Scale



Two staves of music. The top staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a Blues Scale exercise starting on Bb, moving up and then down. The bottom staff shows the fret positions for the left hand, with strings T, A, and B labeled. The fret numbers are: 8, 11, 8, 9, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 9, 8, 11, 8.

LESSON 2 (continued)

Example 06 Integrating Jazz Language

The next step is to start thinking of these melodic minor derived scales as musical devices that you can actually improvise with. If you only practice them as exercises, then you're missing out on a harmonic approach that has been utilized by some of the greatest modern improvisers in jazz.

Video - 07:40

F7

3

5

7

8va - 1

Harm. -1

Lesson 03

'Perhaps' 2-5-1 Lick

By studying a certain line or lick, you might just uncover a hidden detail that can make all the difference when coming up with your own vocabulary. We're going to start lesson 03 by isolating a solo lick from one of the greatest bebop masters of all time – Charlie Parker.

Example 01 shows Charlie Parker's line from the tune 'Perhaps' and how you can use it to navigate through a ii-V-I chord¹ progression.

A ii-V-I chord sequence is the most common chord progression in jazz music. It contains three basic chords built from the first (I), second (ii) and fifth (V) degree of the major scale. Generally, the ii and the V are played in the same bar.

Jazz standards that use ii-V-I progressions

Autumn Leaves

Blue Bossa

In a Mellow Tone

All The Things You Are

Sunday Morning

This is actually a pop song by Maroon 5, but it's built around the same ii-V-I progression.

Example 01 2-5-1 Lick

A ii-V-I chord sequence is the most common chord progression in jazz. It contains three basic chords built from the first (I), second (ii) and fifth (V) degree of the major scale. Generally, the ii and the V are played in the same bar.

Video - 01:46

Example 01 shows Charlie Parker's line from the tune 'Perhaps' and how you can use it to navigate through a ii-V-I chord progression.

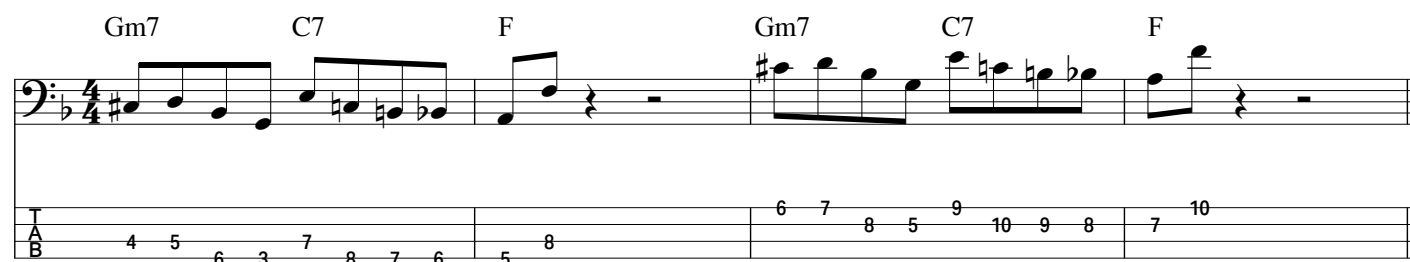
¹: Capital lettered Roman numerals generally indicate a major chord. Lower caps indicate a minor chord.

LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 02 Phrasing

Sometimes it works better to try and hear how the pattern should sound before you try to play it. This way you get a feel for the best way to phrase it. Practice moving the lick around the fingerboard to find the most comfortable fingering.

Video - 02:40

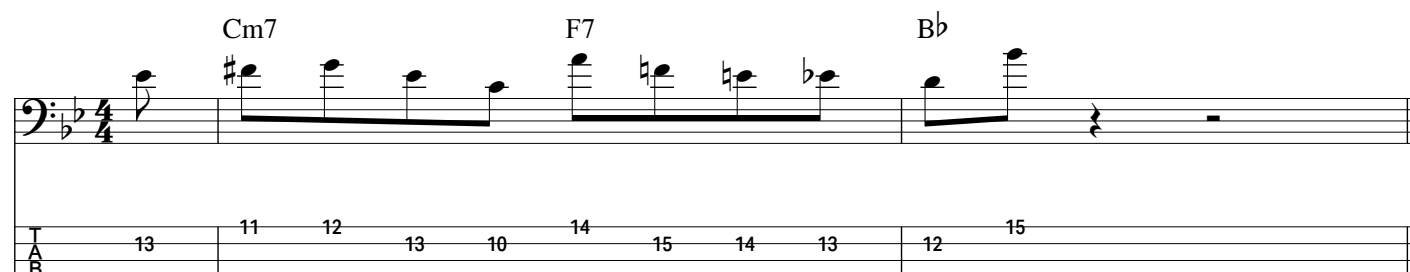


Example 02 Phrasing musical notation. The notation is in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of six measures, each with a chord label above it: Gm7, C7, F, Gm7, C7, and F. The notes are: Gm7 (Bb, D, F), C7 (Eb, G, Bb), F (Ab, C, Eb), Gm7 (Bb, D, F), C7 (Eb, G, Bb), and F (Ab, C, Eb). The fingering is shown below the staff: 4 5 6 3 7 8 7 6 | 5 8 | 6 7 8 5 9 10 9 8 | 7 10.

Example 03 Different Keys

You should also try taking the line through different keys (example 03 is in the key of Bb). This is a great exercise for improving both your technique and your fingerboard knowledge.

Video - 04:45



Example 03 Different Keys musical notation. The notation is in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The melody consists of three measures, each with a chord label above it: Cm7, F7, and Bb. The notes are: Cm7 (Eb, G, Bb), F7 (Ab, C, Eb), and Bb (Ab, C, Eb). The fingering is shown below the staff: 13 | 11 12 13 10 14 15 14 13 | 12 15.

LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 04 Approach Notes

Adding different approach notes is also a good way to change things up. Try starting from an E^b or an F below the first note. This idea can keep the line moving forward and help add new phrases to a line.

Video - 04:59

Example 04 shows a bass line in 4/4 time, key of Bb (two flats). The progression is Cm7, F7, Bb. The notes are: G2, A2, Bb2, C3 (Cm7); C3, Bb2, Ab2, G2 (F7); F2, G2, A2 (Bb). The fretboard diagram shows the fret numbers for the notes: 10, 11, 12, 13, 10, 14, 15, 14, 13, 12, and 15.

Example 05 Limehouse Blues

So far in this lesson, we've been playing through the progression in a major key, but the same principles can also be applied to any minor key. Example 05 isolates a solo lick by Cannonball Adderley on the tune *Limehouse Blues*.

Video - 07:29

Example 05 shows a bass line in 4/4 time, key of Bb (three flats). The progression is Gm7b5, C7, Fm. The notes are: Gb2, Ab2, Bb2, C3 (Gm7b5); C3, Bb2, Ab2, Gb2 (C7); F2, Gb2, Ab2, Bb2 (Fm). The fretboard diagram shows the fret numbers for the notes: 14, 15, 13, 16, 13, 14, 15, 15, 13, 15, 16, 13, and 15.

LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 06 Locrian Natural 2

Example 06 focusses on the Locrian Natural 2, which is the sixth mode of the melodic minor scale. It's a scale that is often played over min7^b5 chords for a more modern sound.

Video - 09:17

Gm7b5

10 12 13 10 12 13 10 11 10 13 12 13 10

Lesson 04

Advanced

Turnaround Lines

Turnaround lines are usually found in the final two bars of a section of music. They're often used at the end of a bridge as a means of getting back into an A section.

In lesson 04, we're going to look at the I-vi-ii-V (1-6-2-5) turnaround, which might not look that important at first glance, but it's in nearly every standard that you'll ever play. We're also going to talk about tritones, which are intervals of three whole tones (tri) between two notes. You can also think of them as a $\sharp 4$ or $\flat 5$ from a root note. As always, it's a good idea to practice playing these variations in all twelve keys.

Example 01 Tritone Substitution

A tritone substitution is one of the most fundamental chord substitutions in jazz. Here is a ii-V-I chord progression written out with the tritone substitution added on the V chord (F7 is substituted with a B7).

Video - 01:17

Chord progression: Cm7, B7, Bb7, Bb.

Fretboard diagram (Bass clef, 4/4 time):

Bar	Notes (Fret)
1	Bb (1), D (3), F (4), Ab (5)
2	B (0), D (3), F (4), Ab (5)
3	Bb (1), D (3), F (4), Ab (5)
4	Bb (1)

LESSON 4 (continued)

Examples 02 & 03 I-VI-II-V-I Turnaround

The I-VI-ii-V-I (1-6-2-5-1) turnaround is a classic turnaround that features a I chord, a dominant VI7 chord, and then a basic II-V at the end. In this line, Rufus has again used tritone substitutions on the VI and the V chords, which allows the bass to move chromatically from G to F. The line itself is comprised of a combination of arpeggios and chromatic runs. Be sure to accent the downbeats to keep it swinging.

Video - 02:47

Chord progression: F7, Ab7, Gm7, Gb7#11, F7

Fingerings (Bass): 14, 15, 15, 14, 17, 18, 17, 16, 18, 15, 16, 15, 0, 14, 16, 15, 13, 12

Example 04 Substituting the ii Chord

This technique of substituting chords, especially when implied melodically, is something that all great jazz players do (using the tritone substitution was a method that John Coltrane used to add harmonic interest to his lines). Here is the same chord progression written out with the tritone substitution added on the ii chord (Gm7 is substituted with a Db7).

Video - 04:56

Chord progression: F7, Ab7, Db7, Gb7, F7

Fingerings (Bass): 15, 15, 14, 17, 18, 17, 16, 18, 15, 18, 18, 16, 15, 18, 16, 14, 15, 14

Lesson 05

SBL Blues

In lesson 05, we're going to tackle a bebop derived tune in the key of F. The melodic techniques that Rufus uses are very typical to bebop, and you can start using these ideas to develop your own jazz improvisation chops. Look out for the Thelonious Monk-inspired patterns in bars 5 and 6, which perfectly outline the B diminished chord. There's also a Charlie Parker-inspired triplet idea in bar 9.

It's a good idea to learn each of these sections by ear, one phrase at a time. By repeating each fragment over and over, you'll start to recognise the rhythmic skeleton of each bar. When it gets to that point, learning to play the entire line becomes a lot easier.

Video - 00:51

First system (bars 1-3):

- Staff: F7, Bb7, F7
- Fretboard: 12 11 12 15 13 0 | 11 12 13 11 12 11 | 12 11 12 15 13 13 (13)

Second system (bars 4-6):

- Staff: Bb7, B°7, F7, Am7, D7
- Fretboard: 13 15 16 12 13 13 15 16 12 15 16 14 13 | 12 11 12 15 15 16 14 | 15 13 14 12 13 11 12 11

Third system (bars 7-9):

- Staff: Gm7, C7, F7, C7, F7
- Fretboard: 10 13 10 10 13 12 15 15 | 15 18 17 15 14 17 16 14 | 15 14 15 13 13 15 13 | 20 19 (20) 19

Summary

To get further into the bebop language, here's our first suggestion: immerse yourself in the music. Once you've worked through the exercises in this course, try transcribing bebop licks from recordings or pick up a copy of the Charlie Parker Omnibook - 'Billie's Bounce' and 'Yardbird Suite' by Charlie Parker both sit well on bass guitar. The point of studying this vocabulary is that you can learn the language or style by example, which is not that far from how we learn actual languages. When you isolate a particular lick or solo that you like, try to learn it by ear, and then write it down. Once you can do this, it becomes a part of your own vocabulary. Memorize chord progressions and standard bebop songs, and try incorporating chromatic passing tones whenever you practice scales.

By learning this kind of language you're going to see immediate improvements in your technique and your fretboard knowledge. You'll also be able to take these melodies or licks and adapt them to suit your own ideas. One thing is to try and understand what to play, but it is much more useful to experience how it feels to play it with the right phrasing. Building on the innovations of others - that is essentially the jazz tradition. Just keep your ears open!

