



Easy Chord Identification & Improvisation Suggestions

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Improvisation & Soloing Tips by Keith DiSantis

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Improvisation, Easy Chord ID & Soloing Tips

#1. Building confidence using ability-level solos.

Most students are scared & nervous but want to play a solo.

I recommend giving students with little knowledge, especially M.S. students and students starting to play in the H.S. Jazz Band, a good solo that is at their ability level. You can use the written solo provided by the arranger or have someone write a solo for the student at their ability level.

Help make the student sound good. Work individually with the student on the solo. Have them practice standing each time they solo and practice soloing with a microphone. Microphone & instrument placement is very important.

Have the student practice acknowledging the audience with a smile or a bow at the end of the solo.

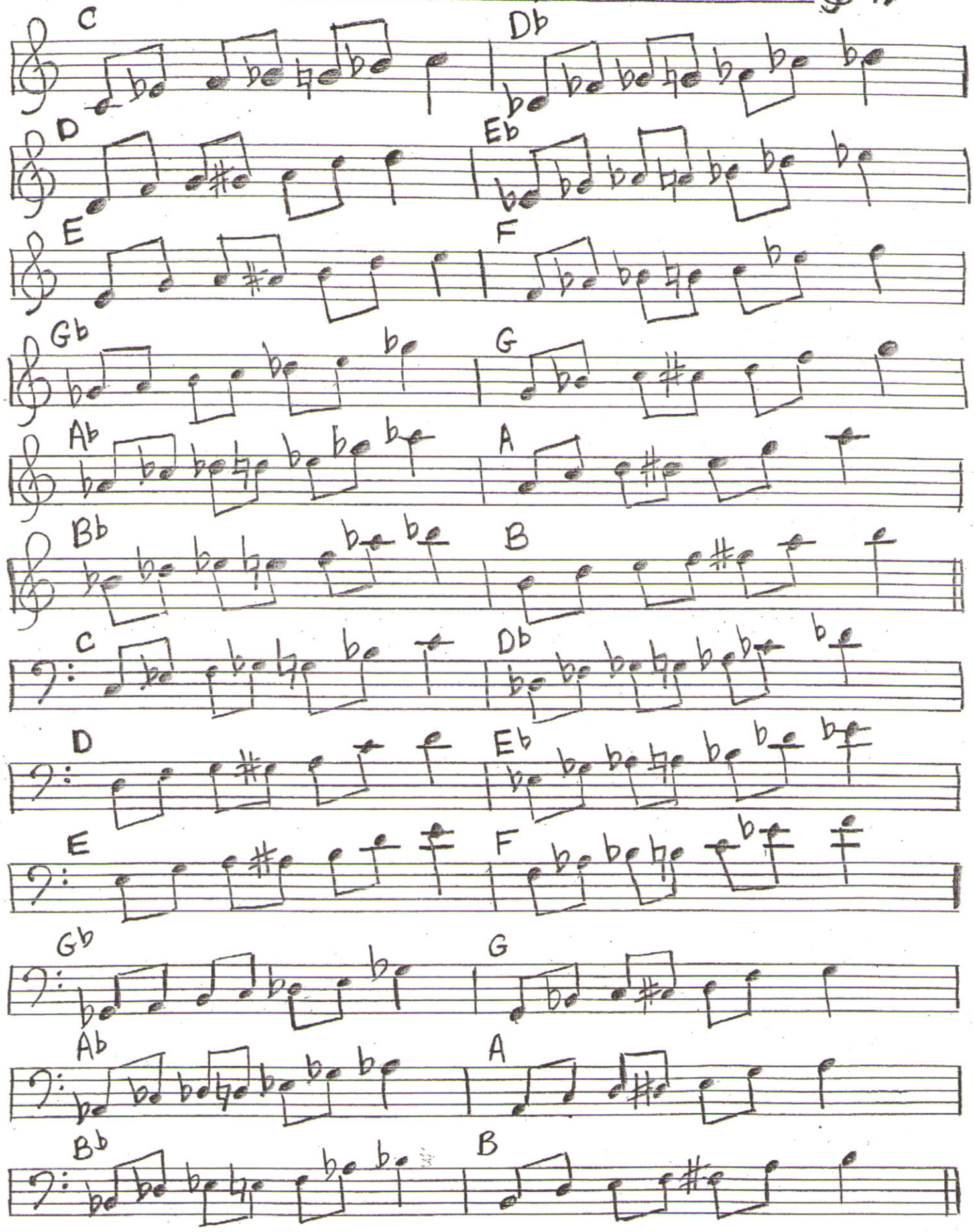
Give the student positive feedback, with some encouraging words, while they are playing the solo and when they are finished.

#2. Playing the blues using blues scale notes in a question and answer style.

One scale that works for an entire 12 bar blues is the blues scale. Have students learn & memorize all 12 blues scales. (**See attached handout.**)

Use a Question & Answer Style while rehearsing the band. #1 Have the rhythm section or a recording play the blues changes. #2 Demonstrate playing an easy phrase using the blues notes and have the ensemble answer you with that same phrase. This is a great starting point for learning how to improvise.

ALL TWELVE BLUES SCALES



The image displays twelve blues scales, each consisting of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The scales are organized into six pairs, with the key signature for each pair indicated by a letter above the first treble staff. The scales are as follows:

- C Major:** Treble: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Bass: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4.
- D Major:** Treble: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5; Bass: D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4.
- E Major:** Treble: E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5; Bass: E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4.
- Gb Major:** Treble: Gb4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, Gb5; Bass: Gb3, Ab3, Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, Gb4.
- Ab Major:** Treble: Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, Gb5, Ab5; Bass: Ab3, Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, Gb4, Ab4.
- Bb Major:** Treble: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, Gb5, Ab5, Bb5; Bass: Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, Gb4, Ab4, Bb4.
- C Major:** Treble: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; Bass: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4.
- Db Major:** Treble: Db4, Eb4, F4, G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, Db5; Bass: Db3, Eb3, F3, G3, Ab3, Bb3, C4, Db4.
- D Major:** Treble: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5; Bass: D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4.
- E Major:** Treble: E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5; Bass: E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4.
- F Major:** Treble: F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5; Bass: F3, G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4.
- G Major:** Treble: G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5; Bass: G3, Ab3, Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, G4.
- Ab Major:** Treble: Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, Gb5, Ab5; Bass: Ab3, Bb3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, Gb4, Ab4.
- B Major:** Treble: B4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, Gb5, Ab5, B5; Bass: B3, C4, D4, Eb4, F4, Gb4, Ab4, B4.

C Major scale - Relative Minors - Chords

The image displays handwritten musical notation for the C Major scale and its relative minors and chords. It consists of 12 staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notation includes fingerings, accidentals, and chord symbols.

SCALES

- Staff 1: C Major scale (1 3 4 5 7 6 9). Fingerings: 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 6, 9.
- Staff 2: A Natural minor scale.
- Staff 3: A Melodic minor scale (6 7 #7 6). Fingerings: 6, 7, #7, 6.
- Staff 4: A Harmonic minor scale (7 #7). Fingerings: 7, #7.

CHORDS

- Staff 5: C MAJOR (3 5). Fingerings: 1, 3, 5.
- Staff 6: C MINOR (-3). Fingering: -3.
- Staff 7: C Aug 5th (+5). Fingering: +5.
- Staff 8: C MAJ 7th (3 5 7). Fingerings: 1, 3, 5, 7.
- Staff 9: C 7th (-7). Fingering: -7.
- Staff 10: C Dim 7th (-3) (+4) (6). Fingerings: -3, +4, 6.
- Staff 11: C 9th (9). Fingerings: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9.
- Staff 12: C 6th (6). Fingerings: 1, 3, 5, 6.

G Major scale - Relative Minors - Chords

SCALES
G Major

MINOR
E Natural

E Melodic

E Harmonic

CHORDS
G Major

G Minor

G Aug 5th

G MAJ 7th

G 7th

G Dim 7th

G 9th

G 6th

D Major Scale - Relative Minors - CHORDS

SCALES
D Major

Minors
B Natural

B Melodic

B Harmonic

CHORDS
D Major

D Minor

D Aug 5th

D MAJ 7th

D 7th

D Dim 7th

D 9th

D 6th

A Major Scale - Relative Minor - Chords

SCALES

A Major

MINORS

F# Natural

F# Melodic

F# Harmonic

CHORDS

A Major

A Minor

A Aug 5th

A MAJ 7th

A 7th

A Dim 7th

A 9th

A 6th

The image displays handwritten musical notation for the A Major scale and its relative minor, F# Natural. It includes melodic and harmonic minor scales, and a list of A Major chords. The notation is written on a grand staff (treble clef) with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The scales are written in a single line, and the chords are written in a single line. The chords are: A Major, A Minor, A Aug 5th, A MAJ 7th, A 7th, A Dim 7th, A 9th, and A 6th. The A Major scale is written in a single line, and the F# Natural scale is written in a single line. The melodic and harmonic minor scales are written in a single line. The chords are written in a single line. The notation is handwritten and includes accidentals, stems, and beams. The A Major scale is written in a single line, and the F# Natural scale is written in a single line. The melodic and harmonic minor scales are written in a single line. The chords are written in a single line. The notation is handwritten and includes accidentals, stems, and beams.

E Major Scale - Relative Minors - Chords

SCALES
E Major

MINOR
C# Natural

C# Melodic

C# Harmonic

CHORDS
E Major

E Minor

E Aug 5th

E MAJ 7th

E 7th

E Dim 7th

E 9th

E 6th

B Major Scale - Relative Minors - Chords

The image contains 12 staves of handwritten musical notation in treble clef, all with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The notation is organized into three sections: SCALES, MINORS, and CHORDS.

- SCALES:** The first staff shows the B Major scale (D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5). The second staff shows the G# Natural minor scale (G#4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5). The third staff shows the G# Melodic minor scale (G#4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5). The fourth staff shows the G# Harmonic minor scale (G#4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5).
- MINORS:** This section is empty.
- CHORDS:** The fifth staff shows the B Major triad (D4-F#4-A4). The sixth staff shows the B Minor triad (D4-F4-A4). The seventh staff shows the B Aug 5th chord (D4-F#4-A4-C#5). The eighth staff shows the B Maj 7th chord (D4-F#4-A4-C#5-G#4). The ninth staff shows the B 7th chord (D4-F#4-A4-G#4). The tenth staff shows the B Dim 7th chord (D4-F#4-A4-G#4). The eleventh staff shows the B 9th chord (D4-F#4-A4-G#4-B4). The twelfth staff shows the B 6th chord (D4-F#4-A4-G#4-F#4).

SCALES

B Major

MINORS

G# Natural

G# Melodic

G# Harmonic

CHORDS

B Major

B Minor

B Aug 5th

B Maj 7th

B 7th

B Dim 7th

B 9th

B 6th

F Major Scale - Relative Minors - Chords

SCALES
F MAJOR

MINOR
D Natural

D Melodic

D Harmonic

CHORDS
F Major

F Minor

F Aug^{5th}

F MAJ^{7th}

F 7th

F Dim^{7th}

F 9th

F 6th

Bb Major - Relative Minors - Chords

SCALES

Bb MAJOR

MINORS

G Natural

G Melodic

G Harmonic

CHORDS

Bb Major

Bb Minor

Bb Aug 5th

Bb MAJ 7th

Bb 7th

Bb Dim 7th

Bb 9th

Bb 6th

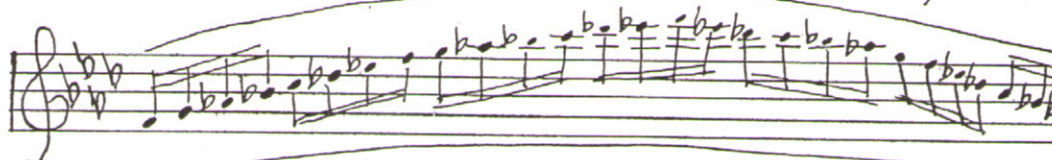
A^b Major Scale - Relative Minor - Chords

SCALES

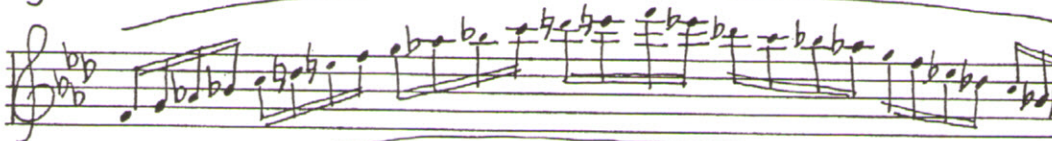


A^b Major

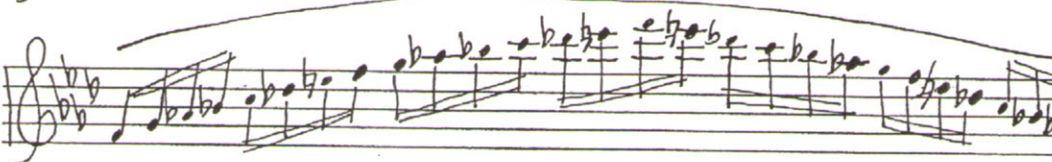
MINORS



F Natural



F Melodic



F Harmonic

CHORDS



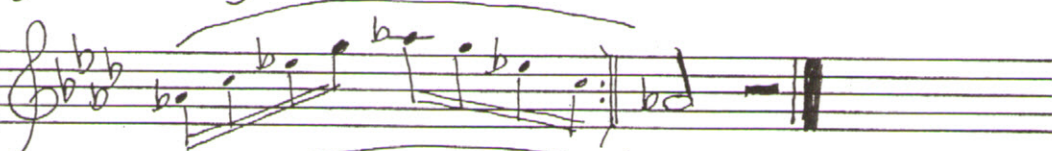
A^b Major



A^b Minor



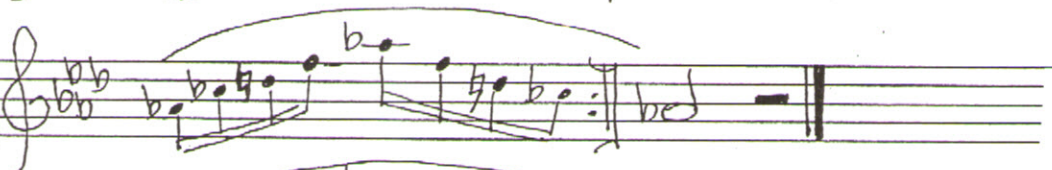
A^b Aug 5th



A^b MAJ 7th




A^b 7th



A^b Dim 7th



A^b 9th



A^b 6th

B \flat Major Scale - Relative Minor - Chords

SCALES

B \flat Major

MINORS

B \flat Natural

B \flat Melodic

B \flat Harmonic

CHORDS

B \flat Major

B \flat Minor

B \flat Aug 5th

B \flat MAJ 7th

B \flat 7th

B \flat Dim 7th

B \flat 9th

B \flat 6th

F# Major scale - Relative Minors - Chords

SCALES
F# MAJ

MINOR
D#
Natural

D# Melodic

D# Harmonic

CHORDS
F# MAJOR

F# MINOR

F# AUG 5th

F# MAJ 7th

F# 7th

F# 9th

F# Dim 7th

F# 6th

" ii⁷ V CHANGES "

The image displays a handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of 12 systems of music. Each system contains two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in a style typical of guitar notation, with chords and melodic lines. The key signature and time signature change across the systems, as indicated by the number of sharps and flats at the beginning of each system.

The systems are organized as follows:

- System 1: Treble clef, Dmi⁷, G; Bass clef, Dmi⁷, G.
- System 2: Treble clef, Gmi⁷, C; Bass clef, Gmi⁷, C.
- System 3: Treble clef, Cmi⁷, F; Bass clef, Cmi⁷, F.
- System 4: Treble clef, Fmi⁷, B^b; Bass clef, Fmi⁷, B^b.
- System 5: Treble clef, B^bmi⁷, E^b; Bass clef, B^bmi⁷, E^b.
- System 6: Treble clef, E^bmi⁷, A^b; Bass clef, E^bmi⁷, A^b.
- System 7: Treble clef, A^bmi⁷, D^b; Bass clef, A^bmi⁷, D^b.
- System 8: Treble clef, C[#]mi⁷, F[#]; Bass clef, C[#]mi⁷, F[#].
- System 9: Treble clef, F[#]mi⁷, B; Bass clef, F[#]mi⁷, B.
- System 10: Treble clef, Bmi⁷, E; Bass clef, Bmi⁷, E.
- System 11: Treble clef, Emi⁷, A; Bass clef, Emi⁷, A.
- System 12: Treble clef, Ami⁷, D; Bass clef, Ami⁷, D.