

Tenor Madness - Session 2 (Bass Clef)

Session 2 is made contains several exercises which build on the information set out in session 1. Firstly, it's important to extend the previous exercise of root note practice through to the full 4 note arpeggio on each chord. The root, 3rd, 5th and 7th are shown as a chord in each bar here: Practice playing the 3rd only, then the 5th only and then the 7th only in each bar, before going on to pick combinations, such as the 3rd and 7th, or root and 5th.

Three staves of bass clef music showing chord exercises. The first staff has measures 1-4 with chords I, IV, I, I. The second staff has measures 5-8 with chords IV, #IV, I, VI. The third staff has measures 9-12 with chords II, V, I, and a whole rest.

To develop this exercise further as a group, we can apply the rhythmic figures which we practiced in session 1 (derived from the melody) to the chord tones shown above. The example below shows 2 players applying the 3rds and 7ths to the top line of the rhythmic figure, while 2 players apply the root and 5th to the low line of the figure.

Three systems of music for a group exercise. Each system has a treble and bass clef staff. The first system (measures 13-17) has chords I⁷, IV⁷, I⁷, I⁷. The second system (measures 18-21) has chords IV⁷, #IV[°], I⁷, VI⁷. The third system (measures 22-25) has chords II⁻, V⁷, I⁷, and a whole rest.

Still using the rhythmic fig, we can now apply it to the triads which we assigned to each chord. This time, starting at the highest pitch, descending 2 steps and then ascending for the final note, as shown below. This now gives a very strong indication of the melody.

The image shows three lines of musical notation in bass clef, each with a measure number and chord/triad labels above the notes. The notes are connected by slurs and have a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with a dotted eighth note and a sixteenth note.

Line 1 (Measure 26):
 I⁷ Minor Triad from 6th | IV⁷ Diminished Triad from 3rd | I⁷ Minor Triad from 6th | I⁷ Minor Triad from 6th

Line 2 (Measure 30):
 IV⁷ Diminished Triad from 3rd | #IV^o Diminished Triad from 3rd | I⁷ Minor Triad from 6th | VI⁷ Minor Triad from 6th

Line 3 (Measure 34):
 II⁷ Minor Triad from root (2nd inversion) | V⁷ Diminished Triad from 3rd | I⁷ Minor Triad from 6th

As well as laying the melodic and rhythmic foundations for the melody, this exercise should allow us to improvise more freely using the triads described in the boxes.