

NOTES ON THE METHOD OF BARRY HARRIS

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1 RESSOURCES

1. Things I've Learned From Barry Harris (hereafter TILFBH), a Youtube channel by Chris PARKS.
2. The Labyrinth of Limitations (hereafter LL), a Youtube channel by Thomas ECHOLS.
3. The Barry Harris Harmonic Method for Guitar, a book by Alan KINGSTONE.

2 SCALE EXERCISES

Partial transcript of TILFBH4.

2.1 In Thirds



2.2 In Triads



Variation



2.3 In Chords (i.e. Seventh Arpeggios)



2.4 In Thirds with Chromatic Pick-Up

The notation consists of two staves of musical lines. The top staff is in G major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. The bottom staff is in A major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. Both staves show eighth-note patterns where the third note of each measure is a chromatic pick-up, typically a half-step higher than the expected note.

2.5 In Triads with a Chromatic Pick-Up

The notation consists of two staves of musical lines. The top staff is in C major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. The bottom staff is in D major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. Both staves show eighth-note patterns with chromatic pick-ups on the third note of each measure.

2.6 In Chords with a Chromatic Pick-Up

The notation consists of two staves of musical lines. The top staff is in C major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. The bottom staff is in D major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. Both staves show sixteenth-note patterns with chromatic pick-ups on the third note of each measure.

2.7 Chromatic Scale

Synchronizing the scale notes on the beats, by adding the upper scale tone when no chromatic passing tone is available.

The notation consists of a single staff of musical lines. The staff is in C major (C position), indicated by a C with a triangle above it. It shows an eighth-note chromatic scale pattern where upper scale tones are added to synchronize the notes with the beats.

2.8 Charlie Parker Ideas

2.8.1 Thirds with triplets

Partial transcript of TILFBH31. Playing a scale in thirds, but adding a triplet on the highest note.

The notation consists of a single staff of musical lines. The staff is in C major (A-flat position), indicated by an A-flat with a triangle above it. It shows a scale in thirds with a triplet on the highest note.

2.8.2 Upper structure with chromatic appogiatura

Partial transcript of TILFBH32. Declining a lick over the whole scale

The notation consists of a single staff of musical lines. The staff is in C major (D7 position), indicated by a D7 with a triangle above it. It shows a declining lick over the whole scale with chromatic appogiatura.

3 CHORD EXERCISES

3.1 Family of Dominant Chords

Partial transcript from TILFBH10.

3.1.1 The origin of the dominant chord families

- The chromatic scale contains all the notes:



- It can be symmetrically split in two whole tone scales:

C, D, E_b, G_b, A_b, D_b whole tone scales

C_#, D_#, F, G, A, B whole tone scales

- It can also be split in three diminished arpeggios:

C, D, E_b, G_b, A diminished arpeggios

C_#, E, G, A_# diminished arpeggios

D, F, A, B_b diminished arpeggios

- From each diminished arpeggio, four dominant chords can be built by lowering one of their notes by a half step (e.g. F⁷, B⁷, D⁷ and A_b⁷ all spring from C^{o7}):

Lowering the root of C^{o7} *Lowering the third of C^{o7}* *Lowering the fifth of C^{o7}* *Lowering the seventh of C^{o7}*

B⁷ D⁷/C F⁷/C A_b⁷/C

- Stacking the diminished arpeggio and the roots of the four dominant chords from its family, results in the diminished scale.

C^{o7} *Roots of B⁷, D⁷, F⁷, A_b⁷* *C diminished scale*

3.1.2 Practicing moving through families

Since it is possible to substitute dominant chords from the same family, it is important to practice moving from one to the other:

- F7 to B7;
- F7 to D7;
- F7 to Ab7.

3.2 Chord Scales

Partial transcript from TILFBH6. Examples in Drop 2 voicings.

3.2.1 Major sixth diminished

3.2.2 Minor sixth diminished

Musical staff showing chords: Cm⁶, D°⁷, Cm⁶/E♭, F°⁷, Cm⁶/G, A♭°⁷, Cm⁶/A, B°⁷, Cm⁶, B°⁷, Cm⁶/A, A♭°⁷, Cm⁶/G, F°⁷, Cm⁶/E♭, D°⁷, and Cm⁶.

3.2.3 Dominant seventh diminished

Musical staff showing chords: C⁷, D°⁷, C⁷/E, F°⁷, C⁷/G, A♭°⁷, C⁷/B♭, B°⁷, C⁷, B°⁷, C⁷/B♭, A♭°⁷, C⁷/G, F°⁷, C⁷/E, D°⁷, and C⁷.

3.2.4 Dominant seventh flat fifth diminished

Musical staff showing chords: C⁷♭⁵, D°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/E, F°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/G♭, A♭°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/B♭, B°⁷, C⁷♭⁵, B°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/B♭, A♭°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/G♭, F°⁷, C⁷♭⁵/E, D°⁷, and C⁷♭⁵.

3.3 Moving in Fourths

Partial transcript of TILFBH26. Practice the following chord scale, here in C major.

3.3.1 Practicing the movement

Musical staff showing a sequence of chords: Em⁷/B, Am⁷, F[△]/C, B°, G⁷/D, C[△], Am⁷/E, Dm⁷, B°/F, Em⁷, C[△]/G, F[△], Dm⁷/A, G⁷, Em⁷/B, Am⁷, Em⁷/B, Am⁷, Dm⁷/A, G⁷, C[△]/G, F[△], B°/F, Em⁷, Am⁷/E, Dm⁷, G⁷/D, C[△], F[△]/C, B°, Em⁷/B, Am⁷.

3.3.2 Application to a II V I in C

1. Play the movement on II;
2. Play the movement on the tritone sub;
3. Resolve on the I.

Musical staff showing chords: Am⁷/E, Dm⁷, F[△]/C, B°, Ebm⁷/B♭, Abm⁷, B[△]/G♭, F°, and Em⁷.

3.4 Inner Movements

Partial transcript of TILFBH27.

3.4.1 Alternating sixth and seventh

3.4.2 Adding a chromatic note

4 MAKING PHRASES

4.1 5-4-3-2

4.1.1 Major

Partial transcript of TILFBH3.

4.1.2 Minor

Partial transcript of TILFBH37.

4.2 Half-Step Rules

Partial transcript of TILFBH5. Those are rules to synchronize the chord tones on the beats, when descending a scale, starting on a down beat. The following table synthesizes the different choices of chromatic notes to add, depending on the starting note. Note, in the case of the harmonic minor scale, there are two instances where we can not add a half-step, the second is thus added between the tonic and the major seventh, and the fourth between the minor third and the second. Those make the coolest lines.

4.2.1 Example on dominant chords

Starting note	Root	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh
Dominant chords:							
- Choice 1	7M	No	7M	No	7M	No	7M
- Choice 2	7M, 3m, 2m	2m, 7M	3m, 2m, 7M	2m, 7M	3m, 2m, 7M	2m, 7M	3m, 2m, 7M
Major chords:							
- Choice 1	6m	No	6m	No	6m	No	6m
- Choice 2	6m, 3m, 2m	2m, 6m	3m, 2m, 6m	2m, 6m	3m, 2m, 6m	2m, 6m	3m, 2m, 6m
Harmonic minor:							
- Choice 1	2	No	2	No	2	No	2
- Choice 2	-	2m, 2	4, 2m, 2	2m, 2	4, 2m, 2	2m, 2	4, 2m, 2

The image displays six staves of musical notation for piano, arranged in two columns. Each staff begins with a dominant chord, specifically F7, as indicated by blue text above the staff. The notation consists primarily of eighth-note patterns, with some sixteenth-note patterns appearing in the later staves. The first staff (A) features a steady eighth-note pattern. Subsequent staves (B) show more complex eighth-note patterns, often with grace notes or slurs.

4.2.2 Major chords

Partial transcript of TILFBH25. See table 4.2.

4.2.3 Example on the harmonic minor scale

Partial transcript of TILFBH29.

The image displays three staves of musical notation for piano, arranged in two columns. Each staff begins with an Am chord, indicated by blue text above the staff. The notation consists primarily of eighth-note patterns, with some sixteenth-note patterns appearing in the later staves. The first staff (A) features a steady eighth-note pattern. Subsequent staves (B) show more complex eighth-note patterns, often with grace notes or slurs.

The image shows four staves of musical notation, each consisting of two measures. The first measure of each staff is labeled 'A' and the second is labeled 'B'. The notation is in common time, treble clef, and C major (Am). The patterns involve eighth-note groups and some sixteenth-note figures.

4.2.4 Starting with eight note triplet trill

The rule of the upper note of the triplet applies. For instance:

The image shows two staves of musical notation, each consisting of two measures. The first measure of each staff is labeled 'A' and the second is labeled 'B'. The notation is in common time, bass clef, and F7. The patterns start with a triplet trill on the upper note of the first group.

4.2.5 Starting with sixteenth notes trill

The rule of the first note of the sixteenth group applies. For instance:

The image shows two staves of musical notation, each consisting of two measures. The first measure of each staff is labeled 'A' and the second is labeled 'B'. The notation is in common time, bass clef, and F7. The patterns start with a sixteenth-note trill on the first note of the first group.

4.3 The Sixth / Seventh Diminished Octatonic Scales

The major / minor / dominant diminished scales can be practised the same way as regular scales. Examples for the C major sixth diminished scale.

The image shows four staves of musical notation for the C6 scale. The first staff is labeled 'Up and down the scale', the second 'In thirds', the third 'In arpeggios', and the fourth 'In chords'. Each staff consists of two measures. The notation is in common time, treble clef, and C6. The patterns involve eighth-note groups and some sixteenth-note figures.

In chords

4.4 Important Arpeggios (i.e. Octave Triads)

On a dominant chord (e.g. C⁷), the important triads are those built on:

- the root (i.e. C major);
- the fifth (i.e. G minor);
- the seventh (i.e. B♭ major).

Mixolydian mode

4.5 Using Diminished Arpeggios

Partial transcript from TILFBH21.

Adding chromatisms between two of the notes

5 PRACTICING CHORD CHANGES

5.1 Mapping the Changes with Scales

1 bar per chord: play the scale in eight notes starting on the root up to the seventh.

2 bars per chord: play the scale in eight notes starting on the root up to the seventh and back to the root.

Major sixth of major seventh chord: play the major scale (ionian mode).

Dominant chord: play the dominant scale (mixolydian mode).

Tonic minor chord: play the minor sixth diminished scale to the sixth (i.e. with minor sixth passing tone, but without the seventh).

IIm7 V7: only play the V chord over the whole duration of a II V.

I6 VI7: play the scale of the I to the third of the VI (the minor second of the I).

IIm7b5 V7: play the dominant scale (mixolydian mode) of the VII to the third of the five (the minor second of the II).

5.1.1 B♭ Blues

Partial transcript of TILFBH1.

Musical score showing six measures of jazz-style chords and scales. The chords are labeled in blue: B_b[△]7, E_b⁷, B_b[△]7, E_b⁷, E^{o7}, B_b[△]7, G⁷, B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷, B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷. The scales are labeled in pink: B_b mixolydian, E_b mixolydian, B_b ionian to the third of G⁷, F mixolydian, and Cm⁷/F⁷.

5.1.2 Rhythm Changes

Partial transcript of TILFBH2.

1. A1

Musical score showing four measures of jazz-style chords. The chords are labeled in blue: B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷, Dm⁷, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷. The scales are labeled in pink: B_b ionian, F mixolydian, B_b ionian, and F mixolydian.

2. A2

Musical score showing four measures of jazz-style chords. The chords are labeled in blue: B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷, Dm⁷, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷. The scales are labeled in pink: B_b mixolydian, E_b⁷, E^{o7}, B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷.

3. B

Musical score showing four measures of jazz-style chords. The chords are labeled in blue: D⁷, G⁷, C⁷, F⁷. The scales are labeled in pink: D mixolydian, G mixolydian, C mixolydian, and F mixolydian.

4. A3

Musical score showing four measures of jazz-style chords. The chords are labeled in blue: B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷, Dm⁷, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷. The scales are labeled in pink: B_b mixolydian, E_b⁷, E^{o7}, B_b[△]7, G⁷, Cm⁷, F⁷.

5.1.3 Cherokee

Partial transcript of TILFBH8.

1. A1

B_b ionian
B_b^Δ

F mixolydian
F⁷

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b ionian
E_b^Δ

A_b mixolydian
A_b⁷

B_b ionian to the third of G⁷
B_b^Δ

C minor sixth diminished to the sixth
Cm⁶

G⁷

C mixolydian
C⁷

B_b mixolydian to the third of G⁷
C minor sixth diminished to the sixth

F mixolydian
Cm⁷

F⁷

2. A2

B_b ionian
B_b^Δ

F mixolydian
F⁷

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b ionian
E_b^Δ

A_b mixolydian
A_b⁷

B_b ionian to the third of G⁷
B_b^Δ

G⁷

C mixolydian
C⁷

F mixolydian
Cm⁷

F⁷

B_b ionian
B_b^Δ

3. B

F[#] mixolydian
C[#]m⁷

F[#]⁷

B ionian
B^Δ

E mixolydian
Bm⁷

E⁷

A ionian
A^Δ

D mixolydian
Am⁷

D⁷

G ionian
G^Δ

C mixolydian
Gm⁷

C⁷

F mixolydian
Cm⁷

F⁷

4. A3

B_b ionian
B_b^Δ

F mixolydian
F⁷

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b ionian
E_b^Δ

A_b mixolydian
A_b⁷

B_b ionian to the third of G⁷
B_b^Δ

G⁷

C mixolydian
C⁷

B_b mixolydian to the third of G⁷
C minor sixth diminished to the sixth

Cm⁶

G⁷

F mixolydian
Cm⁷

F⁷

5.1.4 Donna Lee

Partial transcript of TILFBH9.

1. A

A_b ionian to the third of F⁷
A_b^Δ

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b mixolydian
E_b⁷

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

A_b ionian
A_b^Δ

A_b mixolydian
E_b^{m7} A_b⁷

D_b ionian
D_b^Δ

G_b mixolydian
G_b⁷

A_b ionian to the third of F⁷
A_b^Δ

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b mixolydian
B_b^{m7}

E_b mixolydian
E_b⁷

2. B

A_b ionian to the third of F⁷
A_b^Δ

B_b mixolydian
B_b⁷

E_b mixolydian to the third of C⁷
G^o C⁷

F minor sixth diminished to the sixth
Fm C⁷

E_b mixolydian to the third of C⁷
F minor sixth diminished to the sixth

F minor sixth diminished to the sixth
Fm C⁷

B_b mixolydian to the third of G⁷
Fm Fm B^{o7}

A_b ionian
A_b^Δ

E_b mixolydian
B_b^{m7} E_b⁷

A_b ionian
A_b^Δ

E_b mixolydian
B_b^{m7} E_b⁷

5.1.5 How High the Moon

Partial transcript from TILFBH14.

1. A1

G ionian *C mixolydian*
G Δ Gm 7 C 7

F ionian *B♭ mixolydian*
F Δ Fm 7 B \flat 7

2. B

E♭ ionian *F mixolydian to the third of D⁷*
E \flat Δ A 0 D 7 Gm

G ionian to the third of E⁷ *D mixolydian*
G Δ E 7 Am 7 D 7

3. A2

G ionian *C mixolydian*
G Δ Gm 7 C 7

F ionian *B♭ mixolydian*
F Δ Fm 7 B \flat 7

4. C

E♭ ionian *F mixolydian to the third of D⁷* *G ionian*
E \flat Δ A 0 D 7 G Δ

G ionian *D mixolydian* *G ionian* *D mixolydian*
Bm 7 E 7 Am 7 D 7

5.1.6 A Nighth in Tunisia

Partial transcript from TILFBH18. A A B A structure.

1. A

E♭ mixolydian *D minor sixth diminished to the sixth* *E♭ mixolydian* *D minor sixth diminished to the sixth*
E \flat 7 Dm 6 E \flat 7 Dm 6

E♭ mixolydian *D minor sixth diminished to the sixth* *C mixolydian to the third of A⁷* *D minor sixth diminished to the sixth*
E \flat 7 Dm 6 E 0 A 7 Dm 6

2. B

F mixolydian to the third of D⁷
G minor sixth diminished to the sixth
A⁰ D⁷ Gm⁶
C mixolydian Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁻
F ionian E⁰ A⁷

5.2 Movements

5.2.1 Development of the first 4 bars of a C blues

Partial transcript from TILFBH7. There are several movements that can be played on the first four bars of a blues.

1. Tritone substitution

C⁷ F⁷ C⁷ F♯⁷

2. Descending line-cliché

C C⁷ F⁷ Fm⁷ C⁷ F♯⁷

3. Ascending line-cliché

C⁷ C⁷/E F⁷ F♯⁷ C⁷/G F♯⁷

4. Bebop blues

C⁶ B⁰ E⁷ Am⁷ Abm⁷ Gm⁷ C⁷

5. Cycle of fifths

C⁶ C⁶/E F⁷ B♭⁷ E♭⁷ A♭⁷ D♭⁷ B♭⁷

5.2.2 Bars 1 and 2 of How high the Moon

Partial transcript from TILFBH16 Applicable on any G major chord.

Single notes
GΔ
Chords
GΔ GΔ GΔ GΔ

See also Chapter 2 of the Kingstone book (the sixth on the fifth movement).

GΔ GΔ GΔ GΔ

5.2.3 Bars 9 to 11 of How high the moon

Partial transcript from TILFBH14.

Eb⁶ D⁰⁷ Cm⁷ Cm⁷/B♭ A⁰ D⁷ b⁹ Gm⁶