Steps To Improvisation

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**Steps To Improvisation**

Let's use the following chord progression. (I, VI, III, V)

**C Instruments**
Flute, Oboe, Trombone, Piano, Vibes, Bass

```
Cmaj7   G7   Cmin7   F7
```

**Bb Instruments**
Clarinet, Trumpet, Tenor

```
Cmaj7   A7   Dmin7   G7
```

**Eb Instruments**
Alto Sax, Baritone Sax

```
Gmaj7   D7   Amin7   D7
```

**Step 1 - Getting Acquainted**

1) Play Roots - 2) Add Rhythms (Charleston)
Steps To Improvisation
Let's use the following chord progression. (1,6,2,5)

Step 2 - Equal & Opposite
1) Digital Pattern (1,6,2,5)

C

Bb

Eb

Bb

Eb

G Bb Maj7 G7 Cmin7 F7

G G Maj7 A7 Dmin7 G7

G G Maj7 E7 Amin7 D7

E G Bb Maj7 G7 Cmin7 F7

E G G Maj7 A7 Dmin7 G7

E G G Maj7 E7 Amin7 D7
Steps To Improvisation
Let's Use the Following Chord Progression. (1,6,2,5)

Step 3a - Scales Are Good
Diatonic - (1-5) - 1,2,3,4,5

Step 3b - Scales Are Good - Equal & Opposite
Diatonic - (5-1) - 5,4,3,2,1

Steps To Improvisation
Let's use the following chord progression. (1,6,2,5)
**Steps To Improvisation**

Let’s use the following chord progression: (1, 6, 2, 5)

**Step 4a - Triads Are Easy**  
Play Triads (Ascending)

**Step 4b - Triads Are Easy?**  
Play Triads (Descending)
**Steps To Improvisation**

Let’s use the following chord progression. (1,6,2,5)

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**Step 5a - Chromatic Approach**

Play Root On Beat ‘One’, Rest For Two Beats And
Play 1/2 Step Approach From Below To The Next Root On Beat ‘Four’.

- **C**
  - Bb Maj7
  - G7
  - Cmin7
  - F7

- **Bb**
  - C Maj7
  - A7
  - Dmin7
  - G7

- **Eb**
  - G Maj7
  - E7
  - Amin7
  - D7

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**Step 5b - Chromatic Approach**

Play Root On Beat ‘One’, Rest For Two Beats And
Play 1/2 Step Approach From Above To The Next Root On Beat ‘Four’.

- **C**
  - Bb Maj7
  - G7
  - Cmin7
  - F7

- **Bb**
  - C Maj7
  - A7
  - Dmin7
  - G7

- **Eb**
  - G Maj7
  - E7
  - Amin7
  - D7
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Let's use the following chord progression: (1, 6, 2, 5)

**Step 6a - Sounding Mature**
Play triad with 1/2 step approach from below on beat 'Four'.

**Step 6b - Sounding Mature**
Play triad with 1/2 step approach from above on beat 'Four'.

Steps To Improvisation
Let's use the following chord progression: (1, 6, 2, 5)
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**Step 7 - Rhythm Wins!**

Play Ascending Triads With New Rhythm.

**C**

\[\text{C}, \text{Bb Maj7, G7, Cmin7, F7}\]

**Bb**

\[\text{C Maj7, A7, Dmin7, G7}\]

**Eb**

\[\text{G Maj7, E7, Amin7, D7}\]

---

**Step 7b - Rhythm Wins!**

Play Descending Triads With New Rhythm.

**C**

\[\text{C}, \text{Bb Maj7, G7, Cmin7, F7}\]

**Bb**

\[\text{C Maj7, A7, Dmin7, G7}\]

**Eb**

\[\text{G Maj7, E7, Amin7, D7}\]
Step 7c - Wow, This Is Kind Of Cool!
Play Ascending Triads With New Rhythm.

**C**
\[ \text{Cmaj7} \]
\[ \text{G7} \]
\[ \text{Cmin7} \]
\[ \text{F7} \]

**Bb**
\[ \text{Cmaj7} \]
\[ \text{Amaj7} \]
\[ \text{Dmin7} \]
\[ \text{G7} \]

**Eb**
\[ \text{Gmaj7} \]
\[ \text{C7} \]
\[ \text{Amaj7} \]
\[ \text{D7} \]

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Step 7d - Wow, This Is Still Kind Of Cool!
Play Descending Triads With New Rhythm.

**C**
\[ \text{Cmaj7} \]
\[ \text{G7} \]
\[ \text{Cmin7} \]
\[ \text{F7} \]

**Bb**
\[ \text{Cmaj7} \]
\[ \text{Amaj7} \]
\[ \text{Dmin7} \]
\[ \text{G7} \]

**Eb**
\[ \text{Gmaj7} \]
\[ \text{C7} \]
\[ \text{Amaj7} \]
\[ \text{D7} \]
Step 8a - Goal Notes
Play 5, 4, 3, 2 of the Goal Chord in the Preceding Measure to the Goal Chord 'Root' (C).

Step 8b - Goal Notes
Play 7, 6, 5, 4 of the Goal Chord in the Preceding Measure to the Goal Chord 'Third'.
Steps To Improvisation
Let's use the following chord progression. (1,6,2,5)

Step 9a - Howdy Neighbor!
Play 5,4,3,Half Step Below Of The Goal Chord In The Preceding Measure To The Goal Chord 'Root'.

C

Step 9b - Goal Notes
Play 7,6,5,Half Step Above Of The Goal Chord In The Preceding Measure To The Goal Chord 'Third'.
**Steps To Improvisation**

*Let's use the following chord progression: (2,5,1)*

**Step 10 - Sequence**

Play a short phrase and transpose to the new chord.

```
C  Cmin7  F7  Bb Maj7  Bb Maj7
```

```
Bb  Dmin7  G7  C Maj7  C Maj7
```

```
Eb  Amin7  D7  G Maj7  G Maj7
```

**Step 10b - Sounding Like A Pro**

2-5 Lick

```
C  Cmin7  F7  Bb Maj7  Bb Maj7
```

```
Bb  Dmin7  G7  C Maj7  C Maj7
```

```
Eb  Amin7  D7  G Maj7  G Maj7
```
**Steps To Improvisation**

Let's use the following chord progression: (2,5,1)

**Helpful Hints:**

- **Listen to Professionals**
  
  If you don't know what to sound like, how do you know you're doing it right?

- **Keep it Simple**
  
  Don't try to sound like you know more than you do.

- **Learn Basic Jazz Piano Skills**
  
  This will help even if you don't play the piano.

- **When in doubt, add rhythms!**

- **Use a metronome to help develop good, consistent time.**

- **Transcribe simple licks.**