

ROOT MOTIONS

Some, definitely not all, Root Motions
FROM DIGGING DEEPER JAZZ VIDEO #5

Circle of 4ths

C F B \flat E \flat A \flat D \flat F \sharp B E A D G

This is probably the most important Root Motion in jazz. This is the way the most songs and chords tend to progress . . . up a fourth. A ii - V - I progression is "three stops" around the Circle of 4ths, for example.

Chromatic

C C \sharp D E \flat E F F \sharp G A \flat A B \flat B

C B B \flat A A \flat G F \sharp F E E \flat D D \flat C

Chromatic is, after the Circle of 4ths, one of the next most common root progressions. When you see chromatic chord changes, you are likely looking at a Tritone Substitute, which is a common device used in jazz compositions and solos.

Minor 3rds

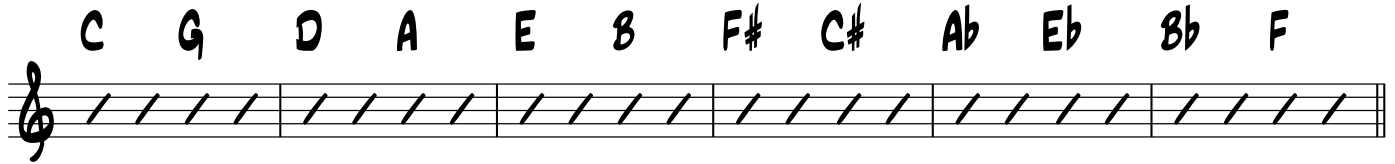
C E \flat F \sharp A C A F \sharp E \flat

C \sharp E G B \flat C \sharp B \flat G E

D F A \flat B D B A \flat F

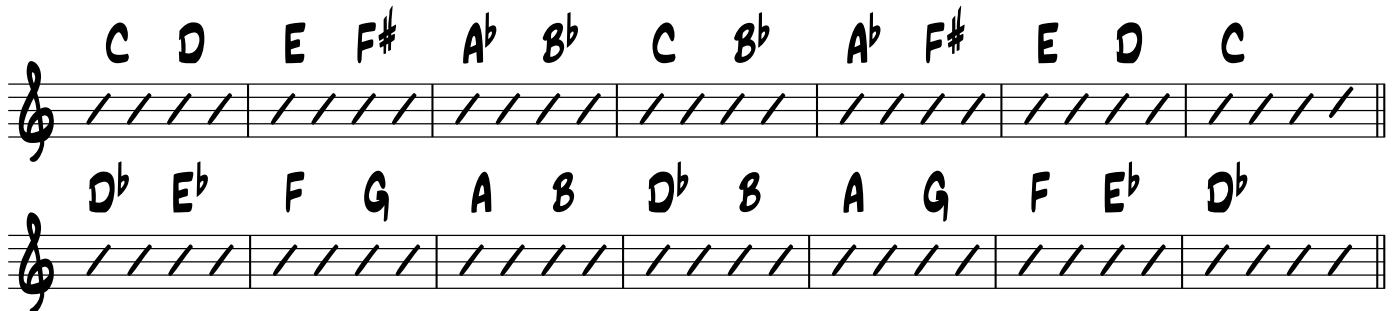
To get to all 12 keys, we have to start our "Circle of minor 3rds" in three places (ie. C, C \sharp and D).

Circle of 5ths



This is the Circle of 4ths, backwards. Many classical theory classes talk about the Circle of 5th instead of the Circle of 4ths. They are closely related, and both are very functional and have great sounds.

Whole Tones



To get to all 12 keys, we have to start our "Circle of Whole Tones" in two places (ie. C, Db).

SONGS!

And finally the best Root Motion of all . . . songs! The blues for instance has a fantastic root motion that we should practice over (it happens to use the Circle of 4ths a lot). Or "A Night In Tunisia," whose "A" section uses a chromatic progression (Tritone Substitute). One of the things that makes one song different from another is its Root Motion (its chord progression). Practice your material, your licks, your melodic devices, your voicings, your arpeggios and everything else around the Root Motions of SONGS.

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