

JAZZ GUITAR FOR BAND DIRECTORS

HOW TO TURN YOUR ROCKER INTO A JAZZER IN THREE EASY STEPS!

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Step 1 – Tone

Guitars

- Solid Body
 - Lots of sustain
 - Works well with distortion and other effects
 - Good for modern & fusion jazz
 - Models
 - Fender – Stratocaster
 - Gibson – Les Paul
- Hollow Body (Archtop)
 - Less sustain
 - More acoustic sound
 - Good for traditional jazz
 - Models
 - Gibson – ES-175
 - Ibanez – AF105
 - Epiphone – Joe Pass Emperor
- Semi-Hollow Body
 - Medium sustain
 - Less feedback than hollow body
 - Very versatile
 - Models
 - Gibson – ES-335
 - Ibanez – AS103
 - Epiphone – Sheraton

Strings

- Roundwound
 - Bright tone
- Flatwound
 - Dark tone
- Gauge
 - .012" or .013"

Picks

- Heavy Plastic
- At least 1mm

Amplifiers

- Tube

- Warm tone, some distortion
- High maintenance
- Solid-State
 - Clean tone, little distortion
- Digital Modeling
 - Maximum versatility
- Power
 - At least 40 watts
- Models
 - Fender
 - Hot Rod Deluxe
 - Frontman 212R
 - Roland
 - Jazz Chorus 120
 - Cube 80XL

Settings

- Guitar Settings
 - Select neck pickup only
 - Roll back tone control
 - Turn down volume for comping
- Amp Settings
 - Turn down pre/gain/distortion/overdrive as low as possible
 - Start with mid EQ at 5, high and low EQ at 0
 - Add low EQ until the tone starts to get muddy
 - Add a little high EQ to give presence
 - Keep reverb low

Step 2 – Comping

Voicings

- Rock Barre Chords
 - Can be used to play chords with any bass note
 - Often double the root or 5th
- Basic Jazz Voicings
 - Remove doubled notes from barre chords
 - Modify chord tones to get different qualities

- Freddie Green Voicings
 - Start with root, 3rd, and 7th
 - Add extension on the b-string
 - Add extension on the e-string (root may be omitted)

Simplifying Chord Progressions

- Remove all extensions and alterations
 - Amin11 -> Amin7
 - C13(#11) -> C7
- Ignore alternate bass
 - Dmaj7/F# -> Dmaj7
- Remove passing chords

Comping Styles

- Swing Comping
 - Use only down-strokes
 - Left hand mutes each note
 - Slight accent on beat 2 & 4
- Latin Comping
 - Bossa Nova Patterns



- Thumb or pick plays root or alternates root and 5th
- Fingers play other chord tones.
- Comping Behind a Soloist
 - Down-strokes with pick or thumb
 - Fingerstyle
 - Use a mix of short and long durations
 - Fill space left by the soloist
 - Guitar and piano take turns comping

Step 3 – Improvisation

Scales

- Learn all scales in 5 positions
- Sing scale degrees while playing
- Play scales in 3rds, 4ths, triads, 7th chord arpeggios and other patterns

Articulation

- Avoid string bends
- Slide from a fret below instead
- Don't pick every note
- Use hammer-ons and pull-offs to create a more legato line

Practice Strategies

- Play lines using only one string
- Sing what you play

Double-Stop Techniques

- Hold one note constant on the high E-string while changing notes on the B-string
- Play in 3rds or 6ths
- Play in octaves
 - Three frets apart on upper strings
 - Two frets apart on lower strings

Chord Soloing

- Use chords to punctuate lines

Recommended Listening

- Swing/Early Jazz
 - Django Reinhardt – “Djangology”
 - Charlie Christian – “The Genius of the Electric Guitar”
- Bebop/Hard Bop
 - Barney Kessel – “The First Four Albums”
 - Wes Montgomery – “Smokin’ at the Half Note”
 - Joe Pass – “Virtuoso”
 - Jim Hall – “Live”
 - Kenny Burrell – “Midnight Blue”
 - Grant Green – “Solid”
 - George Benson – “The George Benson Cookbook”
 - Pat Martino – “El Hombre”
- Modern
 - Pat Metheny – “Question and Answer”
 - John Scofield – “This Meets That”
 - Bill Frisell – “With Dave Holland and Elvin Jones”
 - Mike Stern – “Give and Take”
 - Kurt Rosenwinkel – “Deep Song”

Final Thoughts

- Repertoire
 - Look for active guitar parts
 - Choose a few “rocker” pieces
- Find a good private teacher
- Guitar doesn't have to be a neglected instrument!

JAZZ GUITAR CHORD REFERENCE

BASIC VOICINGS

E-STRING ROOT (ROOT 7TH/6TH 3RD 5TH)

MAJ7	7	6	MIN7	MIN6	MIN7(b5)	DIM7
1 3 4 2	1 2 4 3	2 1 4 3	2 3 3 3	2 1 3 4	2 3 4 1	2 1 3 1

A-STRING ROOT (ROOT 5TH 7TH/6TH 3RD)

MAJ7	7	6	MIN7	MIN6	MIN7(b5)	DIM7
1 3 2 4	1 3 1 4	2 3 1 4	1 3 1 2	2 4 1 3	1 3 2 4	2 3 1 4

FREDDIE GREEN VOICINGS

E-STRING ROOT (ROOT 7TH/6TH 3RD)

MAJ7	7	6	MIN7	MIN6
1 3 4	1 2 3	2 1 4	2 3 4	2 1 3

A-STRING ROOT (ROOT 3RD 7TH/6TH)

MAJ7	7	6	MIN7	MIN6
2 1 3	2 1 3	3 1 2	2 1 3	3 1 2

8-STRING EXTENSIONS

7(#11)	7	7(#5)	13	7	7(b9)	9	7(#9)
2 3 4 1	1 2 4 3	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	3 2 4 1	2 1 3 1	2 1 3 4	2 1 3 4

E-STRING EXTENSIONS (ROOT MAY BE OMITTED)

13	13(b9)	13	13(#9)	9(#11)	9	9(#5)	13
1 2 3 1	1 2 4 3	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 3 4 2	1 2 2 2	1 2 3 4	1 2 2 4