

#4. PASSING TONES


MAKE REAL JAZZ FIGURES AND FILL-INS

Now that we have the diatonic seventh chords fairly well under control, we can begin to use more than four notes for our broken chords or jazz figurations. You will notice immediately that this will sound much more like real jazz! The easiest note to add is the note ONE HALF-STEP BELOW THE ROOT of each seventh chord.

In some cases this will be the same as the upper note of the chord, but played an octave lower.

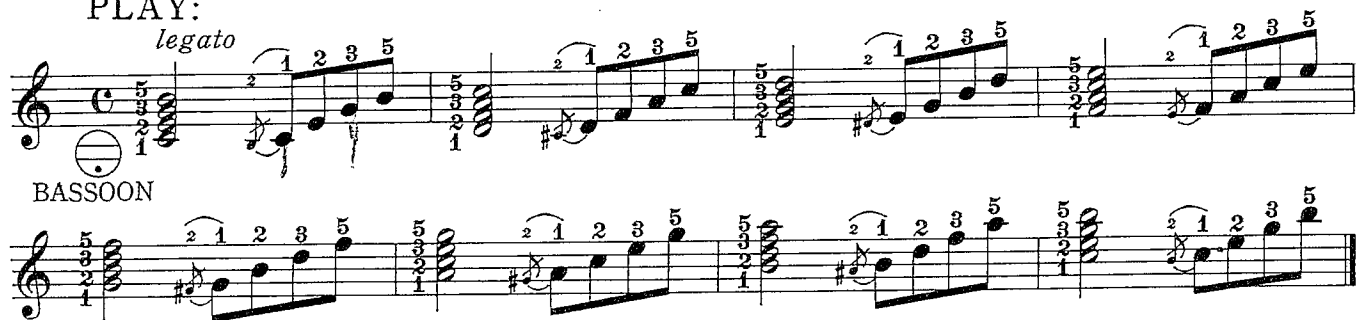
In most cases the added note will be a note that is not part of the chord. It will represent a BLACK KEY.

When notes are used that are not notes of the chord, they are called PASSING TONES. They add a slightly dissonant quality, but pass so quickly to the regular chord tones that they do not disturb the ear.

We will use these added notes first as GRACE NOTES:  GRACE NOTES are written smaller than regular notes. They do not receive any actual count, but are played as quickly as possible just before the beat received by the following note.

PLAY:

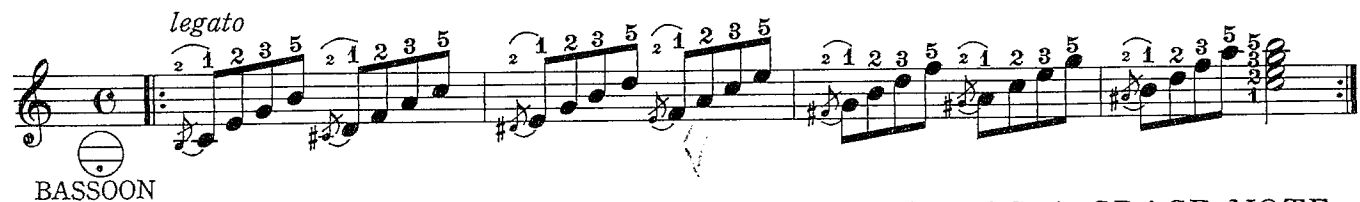
legato



BASSOON

Practice this line slowly at first, then gradually increase speed:

legato



BASSOON

THE ADDED NOTE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE USED AS A GRACE NOTE. In this example it is used as an EIGHTH NOTE, on the first beat of the measure:

PLAY: *legato*



BASSOON

Now we will repeat the same idea, using a broken chord on the last half of the measure, to form a continuous eighth-note jazz figure. In all of these examples, please remember the general rule for playing eighth notes.

legato

BASSOON

REMEMBER THAT EACH SEVENTH CHORD CONSISTS OF A ROOT, A THIRD, A FIFTH AND A SEVENTH:

Another note that may be added for jazz figures is the note ONE HALF-STEP BELOW THE THIRD of each seventh chord:

legato

BAS.

legato

BAS.

Another note that may be added is the note ONE HALF-STEP BELOW THE FIFTH of each seventh chord:

legato

BAS.

legato

BAS.

Another note that may be added is the note ONE HALF-STEP BELOW THE SEVENTH of each seventh chord:

legato

BAS.

legato

BAS.

GENERAL RULE FOR PASSING TONES:
 ANY NOTE MAY BE USED AS A PASSING TONE, IF IT IS A HALF-STEP BELOW ANY NOTE OF THE CHORD. THE PASSING TONE MUST MOVE IMMEDIATELY TO THE NEAREST CHORD TONE.