

# Improvising Jazz ... Made Easy

*By Shawn Goodman*

1. If you want to PLAY JAZZ, you must first LISTEN TO JAZZ.

*The only way to play in the jazz STYLE is to LISTEN to JAZZ!*

2. What's the GOAL of improvising in jazz?

*\*Find a MELODIC way to resolve to each CHORD CHANGE\**

*The most melodic resolution is often by HALF-STEP to a CHORD TONE*

*For example, look at the chord tones of a **C7** chord:*

<b>7</b>	<b>Bb</b>	← Resolve to Bb from either A or B
<b>3</b>	<b>E</b>	← Resolve to E from either F or Eb
<b>1</b>	<b>C</b>	← Resolve to C from either C# or B

3. How do we learn to do this?

*With IMPROVISATION EXERCISES:*

*By practicing improvising lines that resolve to chord tones when the chords change*

*By practicing improvising lines that resolve by half-step to chord tones when the chords change*

*Practice resolving to the ROOT of each chord, then move on to the THIRD, then to the SEVENTH*

*Once you can do this, you will know the FORM of the song, the SOUND of the chord changes, and you can improvise MELODIC lines.*

4. Does that mean you're playing JAZZ now?

*No. Not necessarily. WHAT you play will be influenced by what you LISTEN to.*

5. But how do I play COOL stuff in my solos?

*As you get more comfortable with these improvisation exercises, branch out by incorporating other SOUNDS into your improvised lines. This means other SCALE sounds and even LICKS that you have figured out.*

*Use your EAR to figure out what sounds good, what works, and what doesn't work. But don't forget the most important thing...*

*Resolve to CHORD TONES when the CHORDS CHANGE!*

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For step-by-step instructions on how to practice the STEPS on your own,  
visit my website:

[www.shawngoodmanjazz.com](http://www.shawngoodmanjazz.com)

and click on "Resources for Educators", then click "Steps to Playin' Changes – a Step-by-Step Method for Teaching Jazz Improvisation"



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