

BEBOP SCALES

What are they?

Bebop scales are basically scales you already know, but with a chromatic passing note (CPN) added. This is done so that when you play them as 8th notes (say, from the root, starting on the downbeat) the following downbeat is also the root. This gives us a nice, symmetrical rhythm.

Details, please

The **Bebop Major** includes a CPN between the 5 and 6. (I call it a #5 when ascending, b6 when descending.) **Bebop Dominant** has its CPN between the b7 and 8 (don't hang around on the natural 7...it's very un-dominant!) The **Bebop Minor (Dorian)** can have its CPN between the b3 and 4, or between the b7 and 8. Just make sure you don't linger and the natural 3 or 7...again, very un-Dorian (but fine as passing notes.)

Pro Trick

Practice these starting on ALL the chord tones, not just the root (all 12 keys, please!) Play "top down" too, not always bottom to top. Adjust range for your instrument. Here are some examples.

Basic Bebop Scales

BEBOP MAJOR
1 2 3 4 5 #5 6 7 8 7 6 b6 5 4 3 2

BEBOP DOMINANT
1 2 3 4 5 6 b7 7 8 7 b7 6 5 4 3 2

BEBOP MINOR (DORIAN)
1 2 b3 3 4 5 6 b7 8 b7 6 5 4 3 b3 2

BEBOP MINOR (DORIAN) ALTERNATE
1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7 7 8 7 b7 6 5 4 b3 2

What to Practice

BEBOP DOMINANT FROM THE 5 FROM THE b7 FROM THE 3

BEBOP MAJOR, TOP DOWN, FROM THE 5 FROM THE 3

FROM THE ROOT FROM THE 7

C⁷ BEBOP DOMINANT PHRASES (IMPLIES Gm7, THE II OF C7)

Cmi⁷ BEBOP DORIAN PHRASE