

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCALE SYLLABUS

Each chord/scale symbol (C7, C–, CΔ+4, etc.) represents a series of tones which the improviser can use when improvising or soloing. These series of tones have traditionally been called scales. The scales listed here are the ones I most often hear musicians play. I have listed the Scale Syllabus in the key of C Concert so you can have a frame of reference and can compare the similarities and differences between the various chords/scales.

This SCALE SYLLABUS is intended to give the improviser a variety of scale choices which may be used over any chord - major, minor, dominant 7th, half-diminished, diminished and suspended 4. Western music, especially jazz and pop, uses major, dominant 7th, Dorian minor and Blues scales and chords more than any other. Scales and chords used less often are the half-diminished, diminished and suspended 4. If we agree on these five chord/scale families as being the most predominant, then we can set up categories and list substitute scales beneath each heading ... see the **Scale Syllabus** page. You should also check out **Volume 26 "The Scale Syllabus"** for more help with scales.

Each category begins with the scale most closely resembling the chord/scale symbol given to the left. The scales are arranged according to the degree of dissonance they produce in relation to the basic chord/scale sound. Scales near the top of each category will sound mild or consonant. Scale choices further down the list will become increasingly tense or dissonant. Each player is urged to start with the scales at the top and with practice and experimentation gradually work his way down the list to the more dissonant or tension-producing scales. You should work with a new scale sound on your instrument until your ears and fingers become comfortable with all the tones in the scale. Also try singing the scale with your voice. Improvise with your voice over the scale you are learning and then reproduce on your instrument what your voice has created.

Music is made of tension and release. Scale tones produce either tension or relaxation. The improvisor's ability to control the amount and frequency of tension and release will, in large measure, determine whether he is successful in communicating to the listener. **Remember** - you, the player, are also a listener! Read **Volume 1 JAZZ: How To Play And Improvise** for a more detailed explanation of tension and release in melodic development.

Any of the various practice procedures and patterns listed in **Volumes 1, 2, 3, 21, 24** or **84** can be applied to any of the scale choices listed in this Scale Syllabus. Needless to say, any scale you want to learn should be transposed and practiced in all twelve keys. The column on whole and half step construction I have listed for each scale on the syllabus should prove helpful when transposing a scale to any of the twelve keys.

For additional information on scale substitution, I recommend **Scales for Jazz Improvisation** by Dan Haerle, **Jazz Improvisation** by David Baker, **Patterns for Jazz** (Treble-Clef or Bass Clef) and **Complete Method for Jazz Improvisation** by Jerry Coker, and **Repository of Scales & Melodic Patterns** by Yusef Lateef. These books are available from your favorite music source or visit www.jazzbooks.com for more information.

Several Play-A-Long sets offer you an opportunity to practice the various scales in all twelve keys. They are: **Vol. 24 Major & Minor**; **Vol. 84 Dominant 7th Workout**; **Vol. 21 Gettin' It Together**; and **Vol. 16 Turnarounds, Cycles & II/V7's**. You might also check out the Play-A-Longs which have tunes in all keys: **Vol. 42 Blues In All Keys**; **Vol. 47 Rhythm In All Keys**; **Vol. 57 Minor Blues In All Keys**; and two more volumes, **Vol. 67 Tune Up and Vol. 68 Giant Steps** - each has several classic tunes in all twelve keys.

Scales and chords are the backbone of our music and the better you equip yourself, the more fun you will have playing music.

THE SCALE SYLLABUS

LEGEND: H = Half Step, W = Whole Step.; Δ = Major 7th; + or # = raise H; b or - = lower H; Ø = Half-diminished; -3 = 3H (Minor Third)

CHORD/SCALE SYMBOL	SCALE NAME	WHOLE & HALF STEP CONSTRUCTION	SCALE IN KEY OF C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C	
C	Major	W W H W W W H	C D E F G A B C	C E G B D	
C7	Dominant 7th (Mixolydian)	W W H W W H W	C D E F G A B \flat C	C E G B \flat D	
C-	Minor (Dorian)	W H W W W H W	C D E \flat F G A B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
CØ	Half Diminished (Locrian)	H W W H W W W	C D \flat E \flat F G \flat A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G \flat B \flat	
C \circ	Diminished (8 tone scale)	W H W H W H W H	C D E \flat F G \flat A \flat B C	C E \flat G \flat A (B $\flat\flat$)	
1. MAJOR SCALE CHOICES					
CΔ (Can be written C)	Major (don't emphasize the 4th)	W W H W W W H	C D E F G A B C	C E G B D	
C	Major Pentatonic	W W -3 W -3	C D E G A C	C E G B	
CΔ+4	Lydian (major scale with +4)	W W W H W W H	C D E F \sharp G A B C	C E G B D	
CΔ	Bebop (Major)	W W H W H H W H	C D E F G G \sharp A B C	C E G B D	
CΔb6	Harmonic Major	W W H W H -3 H	C D E F G A \flat B C	C E G B D	
CΔ+5, +4	Lydian Augmented	W W W W H W H	C D E F \sharp G \sharp A B C	C E G \sharp B D	
C	Augmented	-3 H -3 H -3 H	C D \sharp E G A \flat B C	C E G B D	
C	6th Mode of Harmonic Minor	-3 H W H W W H	C D \sharp E F \sharp G A B C	C E G B D	
C	Diminished (begin with H step)	H W H W H W H W	C D \flat D \sharp E F \sharp G A B \flat C	C E G B D	
C	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C E \flat F F \sharp G B \flat C	C E G B D	
2. DOMINANT 7th SCALE CHOICES					
C7	Dominant 7th	W W H W W H W	C D E F G A B \flat C	C E G B \flat D	
C7	Major Pentatonic	W W -3 W -3	C D E G A C	C E G B \flat D	
C7	Bebop (Dominant)	W W H W W H H H	C D E F G A B \flat B C	C E G B \flat D	
C7b9	Spanish or Jewish scale	H -3 H W H W W	C D \flat E F G A \flat B \flat C	C E G B \flat (D \flat)	
C7+4	Lydian Dominant	W W W H W H W	C D E F \sharp G A B \flat C	C E G B \flat D	
C7b6	Hindu	W W H W H W W	C D E F G A \flat B \flat C	C E G B \flat D	
C7+ (has #4 & #5)	Whole Tone (6 tone scale)	W W W W W W	C D E F \sharp G \sharp B \flat C	C E G \sharp B \flat D	
C7b9 (also has #9 & #4)	Diminished (begin with H step)	H W H W H W H W	C D \flat D \sharp E F \sharp G A B \flat C	C E G B \flat D \flat (D \sharp)	
C7+9 (also has b9, #4, #5)	Diminished Whole Tone	H W H W W W W	C D \flat D \sharp E F \sharp G \sharp B \flat C	C E G \sharp B \flat D \sharp (D \flat)	
C7	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C E \flat F F \sharp G B \flat C	C E G B \flat D (D \sharp)	
DOMINANT 7th SUSPENDED 4th					
C7 sus 4	MAY BE WRITTEN G-/C	Dom. 7th scale but don't emphasize the third	W W H W W H W	C D E F G A B \flat C	C F G B \flat D
C7 sus 4		Major Pentatonic built on b7	W W -3 W -3	B \flat C D F G B \flat	C F G B \flat D
C7 sus 4		Bebop Scale	W W H W W H H H	C D E F G A B \flat B C	C F G B \flat D
3. MINOR SCALE CHOICES*					
C- or C-7	Minor (Dorian)	W H W W W H W	C D E \flat F G A B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
C- or C-7	Pentatonic (Minor Pentatonic)	-3 W W -3 W	C E \flat F G B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
C- or C-7	Bebop (Minor)	W H H H W W H W	C D E \flat E F G A B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
C-Δ (maj. 7th)	Melodic Minor (ascending)	W H W W W W H	C D E \flat F G A B C	C E \flat G B D	
C- or C-6 or C-	Bebop Minor No. 2	W H W W H H W H	C D E \flat F G G \sharp A B C	C E \flat G B D	
C- or C-7	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C E \flat F F \sharp G B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
C-Δ (b6 & maj. 7th)	Harmonic Minor	W H W W H -3 H	C D E \flat F G A \flat B C	C E \flat G B D	
C- or C-7	Diminished (begin with W step)	W H W H W H W H	C D E \flat F F \sharp G \sharp A B C	C E \flat G B D	
C- or C-b9b6	Phrygian	H W W W H W W	C D \flat E \flat F G A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat	
C- or C-b6	Pure or Natural Minor, Aeolian	W H W W H W W	C D E \flat F G A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G B \flat D	
4. HALF DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES					
CØ	Half Diminished (Locrian)	H W W H W W W	C D \flat E \flat F G \flat A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G \flat B \flat	
CØ#2 (CØ9)	Half Diminished #2 (Locrian #2)	W H W H W W W	C D E \flat F G \flat A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G \flat B \flat D	
CØ (with or without #2)	Bebop Scale	H W W H H H W W	C D \flat E \flat F G \flat G A \flat B \flat C	C E \flat G \flat B \flat	
5. DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES					
C \circ	Diminished (8 tone scale)	W H W H W H W H	C D E \flat F G \flat A \flat B C	C E \flat G \flat A	

NOTES: 1) The above chord symbol guide is my system of notation. I feel it best represents the sounds I hear in jazz. Players should be aware that each chord symbol represents a series of tones called a scale. 2) Even though a C7+9 would appear to have only a raised 9th, it also has a b9, +4 and +5. The entire C7+9 scale looks like: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, +5, b7 & root (C, D \flat , D \sharp , E, F \sharp , G \sharp , B \flat , C). My chord symbol C7+9 is therefore an abbreviation, while the complete name of this scale is Diminished Whole Tone (sometimes called Super Locrian or Altered Scale). Similarly, C7b9 also appears to have only one altered tone (b9) but it actually has three: b9, +9 and +4. The entire scale looks like: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, 5th, 6th, b7 & root (C, D \flat , D \sharp , E, F \sharp , G, A, B \flat , C). This is called a Diminished scale and my chord symbol abbreviation is C7b9. 3) All scales under the Dominant 7th category are scales that embellish the basic Dominant 7th sound. Some scales provide much more tension than the basic dominant 7th sound and require practice and patience to grasp the essence of their meaning. I encourage you to work with **Volume 3 "The 11-V7-1 Progression"** since it emphasizes Diminished and Diminished Whole Tone scales and chords. 4) In category #3, MINOR SCALE CHOICES, the PURE MINOR scale choice is not used very often. I have found the order of preference to be Dorian, Bebop, Melodic, Blues, Pentatonic, and then any of the remaining Minor scale choices.