

## Jazz Piano Mastery Dec 2024 - Advanced Techniques with Autumn Leaves

**Focus:** Exploring altered dominants, chromatic voice leading, and improvisation techniques.

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### Overview of Lesson Plan

This month's class builds on the bass line, rhythmic patterns, and improvisation skills introduced last month. The focus is on altered dominants, chromatic voice leading, and creating a cohesive arrangement of *Autumn Leaves* that can showcase your progress..

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## 1. Warm-Up Exercises

### 1.1. Technical Warm-Up: Scales and Altered Tensions

- Play scales on F7 and D7 (the 2 dominant chords in Autumn Leaves) by adding b9, #9, and b13 tensions to V7 chords in the scale's key

### 1.2. Voice Leading Practice:

- Play a chromatic voice-leading exercise on the IIm7 – V7 – I progression:
    - In G minor: Am7(b5) – D7alt – Gm.
    - Focus on moving the 3rd and 7th of each chord chromatically to the next chord.
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## 2. Left-Hand Bass Line Variations

### 2.1. Pedal Point Bass Line:

- Play a pedal point bass line (e.g., holding the root or fifth of the tonic while changing chords above).

### 2.2. Chromatic Approaches:

- Practice walking bass lines with chromatic approaches into the root of each chord.
    - Example: In G minor, walk chromatically into Am7(b5), D7alt, and Gm.
  - Apply these techniques to the full form of *Autumn Leaves*.
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## 3. Right-Hand Rhythmic Patterns and Comping

### 3.1. Syncopation Practice:

- Practice rhythmic comping patterns emphasizing syncopation:
  - Examples: Anticipating beats, “offbeat” accents, or using triplet rhythms.

### 3.2. Two-Hand Coordination:

- Combine LH bass lines with RH rhythmic comping patterns.
    - Start with half-note bass, then move to walking bass.
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## 4. Improvisation: Target Notes and Chromaticism

### 4.1. Target Note Exercise:

- Choose specific notes to “target” in the improvisation (e.g., 3rd or 7th of each chord).
- Practice resolving altered tensions from the V7 chord to the tonic.
  - Example: Over D7(#9), target G (root of G minor).

### 4.2. Chromatic Approach Notes:

- Use chromatic approaches into target notes:
  - Approach target notes from a half-step above or below.
  - Combine this technique with blues scale ideas for more fluid lines.

### 4.3. Integrating the Blues Scale:

- Improvise using the G minor blues scale over the IIm7 – V7 – I progression.
    - Add chromatic passing tones to connect scale notes smoothly.
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## 5. Reharmonization Challenge

### 5.1. Tritone Substitutions:

- Replace V7 chords with their tritone substitutes.
  - Example: D7 → Ab7.

### 5.2. Secondary Dominants:

- Add secondary dominants to lead into diatonic chords.
  - Example: A7 leading into D7.

### 5.3. Applying Reharmonizations:

- Apply these reharmonizations to specific sections of *Autumn Leaves* to create fresh harmonic textures.
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## 6. Full Arrangement Practice

### 6.1. Playing the Full Tune:

- Combine all elements (bass lines, RH comping, and improvisation) into a cohesive arrangement.
  - Start with a pedal point intro.
  - Transition into a walking bass and RH comping for the head.
  - Use target notes and chromaticism for solos.

### 6.2. Turnaround Application:

- Focus on the turnaround sections (e.g., IIm7 – V7 – I) to refine the flow and resolution.
  - Use altered dominants and chromatic bass lines for variety.

### 6.3. Ending the Arrangement:

- Learn and practice an advanced ending using a chromatic descending bass line or a reharmonized cadence.
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## Your Mission for This Month

1. Practice chromatic bass lines and altered dominant resolutions in 3 different keys.
2. Create your own reharmonized version of the B section of *Autumn Leaves*.
3. Record a full performance of *Autumn Leaves* with all the techniques covered, and submit it for review.