Major ii-V-I Progression Practice Sessions

Practice Session 1

Play the lesson intro transcription

Objective

To inform your intuition and develop your musical instincts by playing the arrangement and imitating the recording.

Task

Listen to the recording and play the transcription as written.

Procedure

1. Listen to the introduction of the lesson where I play the Tommy Flanagan licks.
2. As you listen, read along with the music and pay attention to the details of how the right hand notes are played: phrasing, articulation, rhythmic feel and the overall expressive inflection. Also note the left hand: how and when the chords are played.
3. Play the transcription below. Imitate my playing by emulating the elements of the recorded performance that you noted from listening to his solo. Play the nine bar phrase four times.
4. Also listen to the source recording that the licks were derived from: "Confirmation" by the Tommy Flanagan Trio. The album is available on Amazon. The phrases used in the introduction to the lesson were taken from the bridge of his first solo chorus from the title tune "Confirmation."

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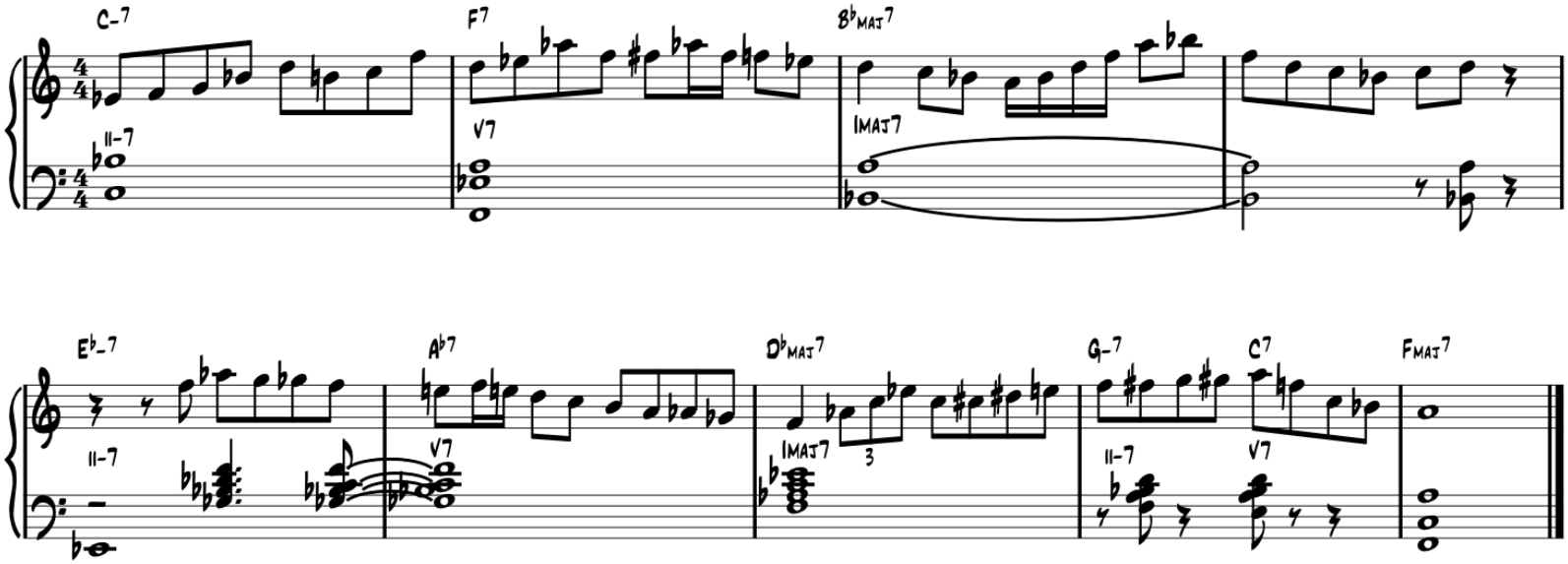
Transcription of the introduction to the Major ii-V-I Progression lesson, taken from the bridge of Tommy Flanagan's solo over "Confirmation" from his 1982 recording of the same name.



Self Assessment

1. Record your performance and compare it to the lesson intro.
2. How does your recording compare and contrast with the lesson intro recording with respect to phrasing, articulation, rhythmic feel and the overall expressive inflection?
3. Record your playing multiple times and listen to them again several days later. Letting time pass between recording the solo and listening to it can give you perspective on your playing that is more objective than when you are in the midst of making the recording.

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Practice Session 2

Identifying Major ii-V-I Progressions

Objective

To learn to visually and aurally identify major ii-V-I progressions in jazz standard tunes

Task

Identify major ii-V-I progressions in the tunes "Lady Bird" and "Out of Nowhere. " Play the progressions with the playalong accompaniment.

Procedure

1. On the staves below, visually identify each major ii-V and ii-V-I progression in the chord changes to the tune "Lady Bird." Look for the chord qualities minor 7, dominant 7, maj7 (or maj6 or triad) in that order. Look for the progression in 2 or 4 measure phrases with root motion in descending perfect 5ths or ascending perfect 4ths.
2. Download the playalong source files and play the chords to this tune with the playalong. Play the chords in any way that you can, either in root position (as notated on page 2 of the notation gallery), with or without voice leading, using rootless voicings or two handed voicings. Listen for the sound of the major ii-V-I progressions: the chord qualities, the root motion and the harmonic rhythm of two or four measure phrases.
3. Adjust the playalong tempo as necessary.

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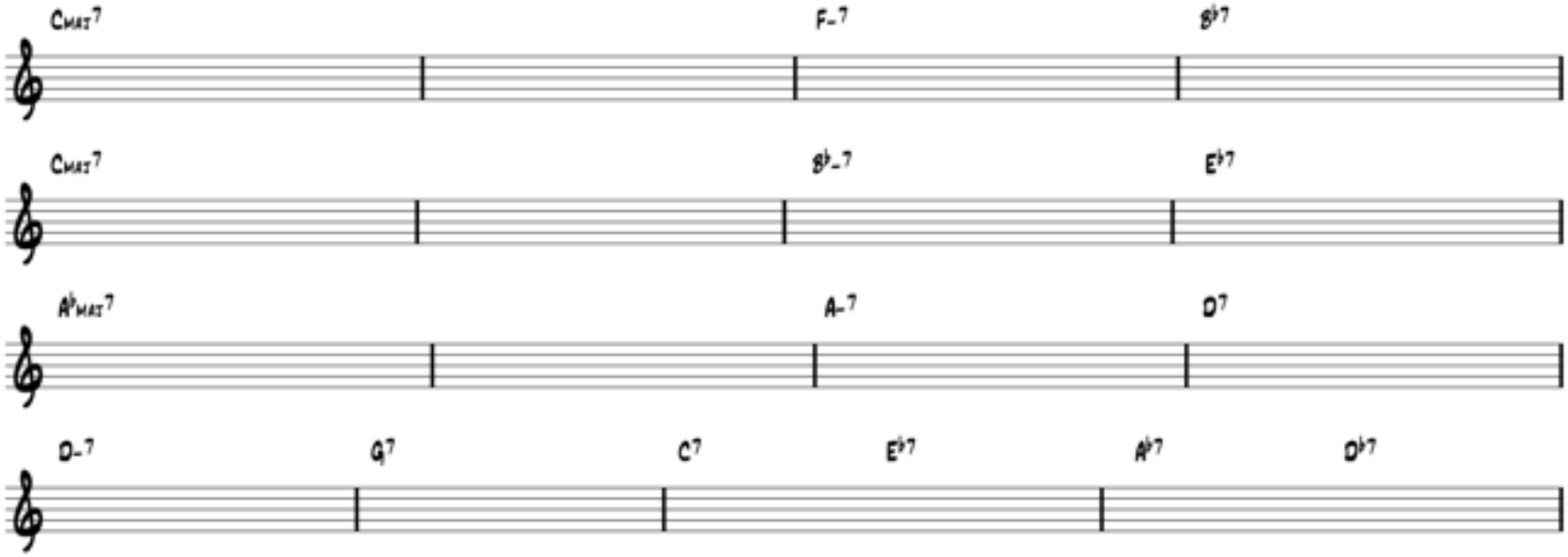
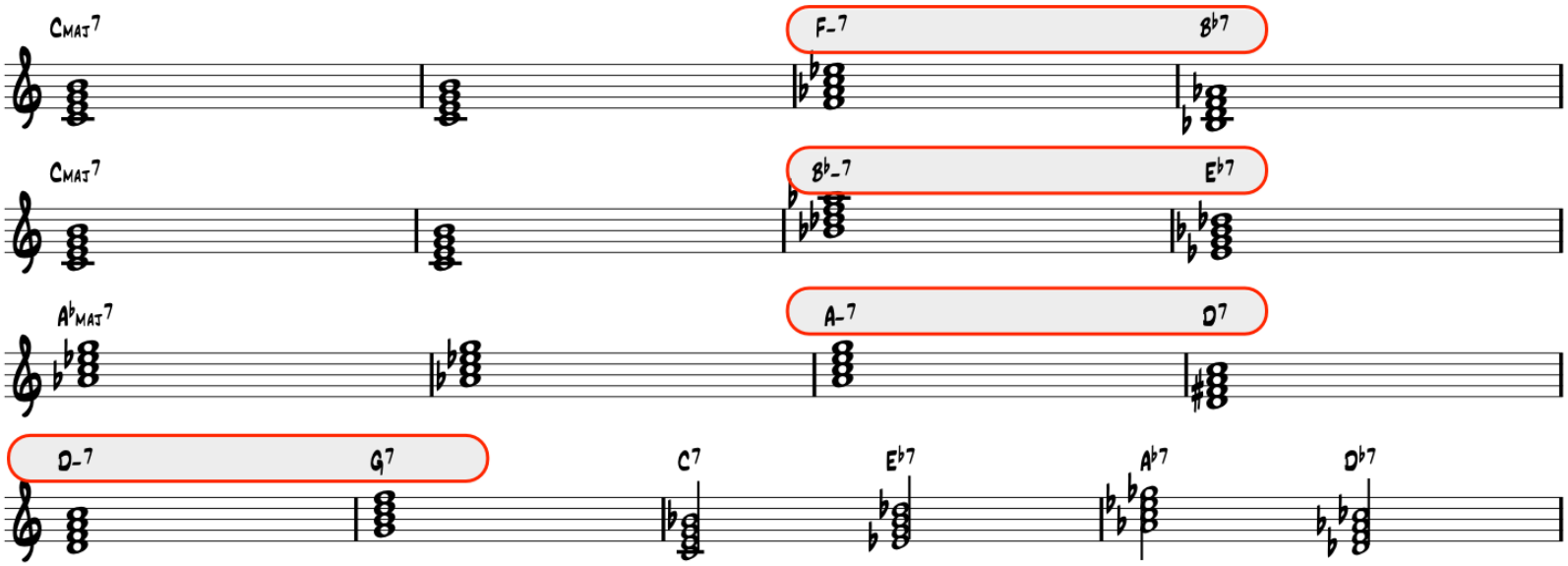
Chord changes for "Lady Bird" without notes



Chord changes for "Lady Bird" with notes and major ii-V-I progressions



Self Assessment

1. If you can identify the major ii-V-Is and play the chords by reading the notes and/or the chord symbols at tempo without mistakes or difficulty, try this again with the tune "Out of Nowhere" below.
2. If you are struggling to play the voicings at tempo, download the playalong source files in MIDI or Band-in-a-Box format to slow down the tempo to help you learn the voicings. Continue to play this exercise until you can play the voicings fluently by reading both the notated voicings and the chord symbols alone.
3. Feel free to ask questions about anything you don't understand.

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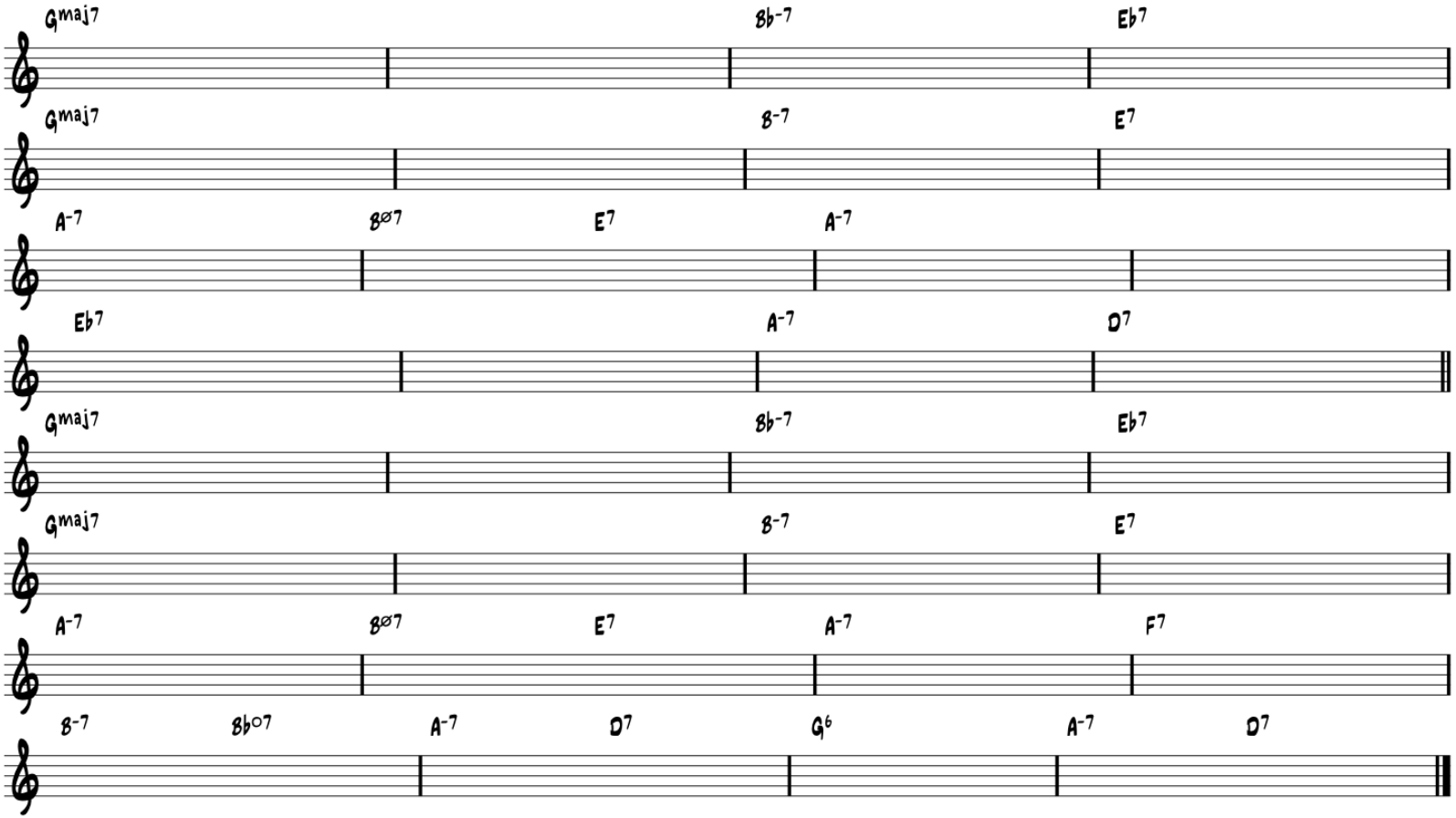
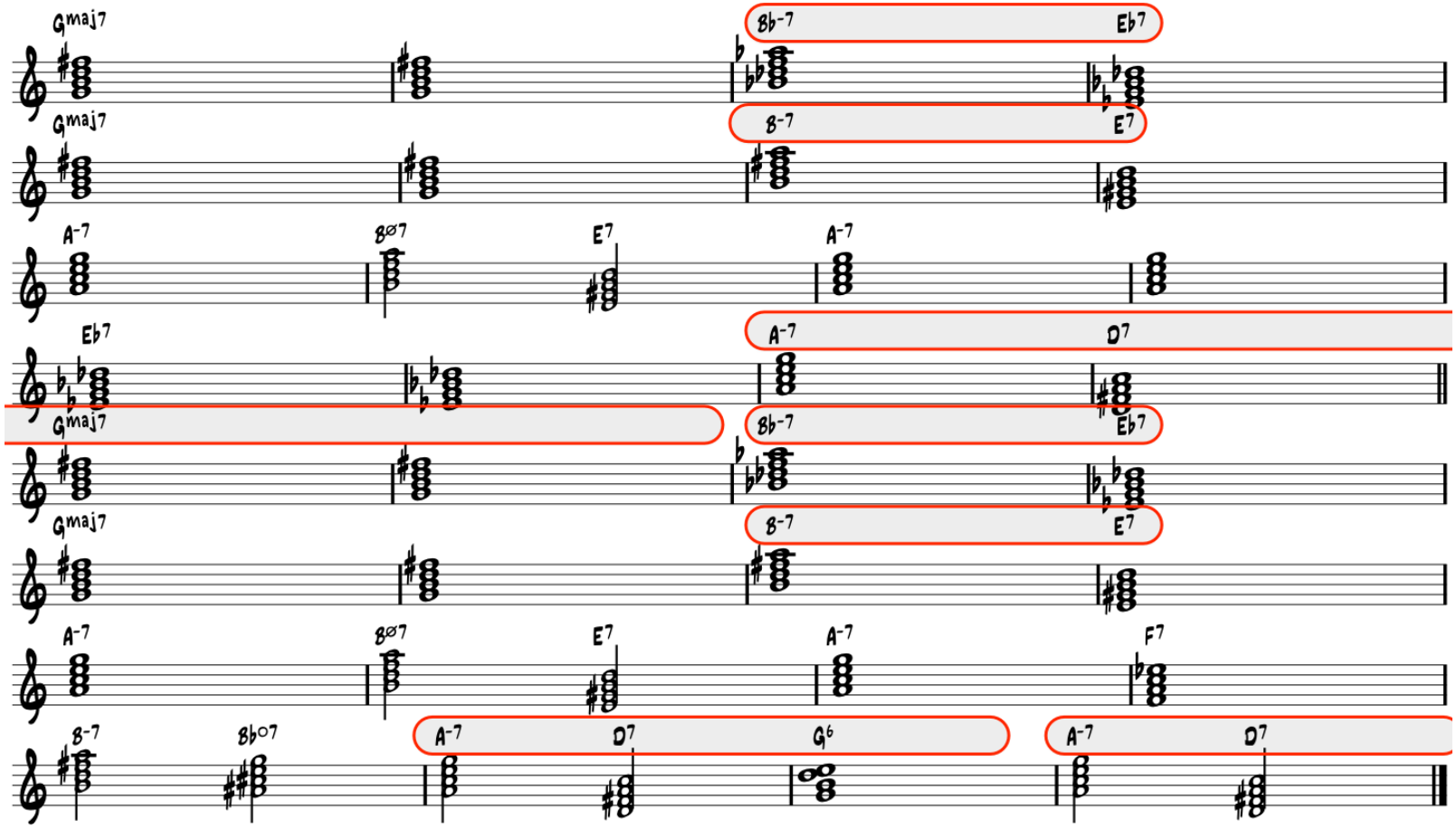
Chord changes for "Out of Nowhere" without notes



Chord changes for "Out of Nowhere" with notes and major ii-V-I progressions



Next Steps

Congratulations! You are just getting started with the major ii-V-I progressions! Continue to develop your skill with this concept by reading through tunes of your choice from the Real Book and identifying and playing major ii-V-I progressions.

There are two types of ii-V-I progressions: major and minor. Now that you know about major ii-V-Is, take a look at the minor ii-V-I progression lesson.

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