

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF EVERY PRACTICE SESSION!



Practicing Turnarounds

By Gunnar Mossblad

A "turnaround," as the name implies, is a harmonic progression that leads back or directs the harmony to a place in a piece of music that has already been played. The purpose is to make a smooth harmonic transition from one section of a tune to another. The most common and easily identified turnaround happens at the end of a song, usually the last 2-bars (beginning after the final resolution). This series of chords serve to lead back to the top of the song form. The second most common turnaround is at the end of the first 'A' section of an A-A-B-A song. This leads back to the top of the tune.

Turnarounds are not limited to chord progressions that lead back to something. Turnarounds can also serve as a transition or "lead into" a subsequent section of a piece of music. For example, a turnaround is often utilized to lead into the Bridge or 'B' section of a tune. This turnaround serves to set up a smooth

transition into what is often a new key on the bridge. Similarly, a bridge will have a turnaround to lead back the last 'A' section.

Turnarounds that are vital to the integrity of a composition are included in the written music. A good example of many turnarounds integrated in a beautiful tune is Clifford Brown's composition *Joy Spring* (Example 1). The prevailing turnaround is a diatonic II-V7, and there are not only turnarounds that lead to each major section of the 32-bar song form, there are II-V7 turnarounds that lead into each four bar phrase.

Other common song forms like the blues have implied turnarounds (Example 2). These turnarounds as well as other turnarounds are used at the discretion of the rhythm section and/or soloist based on the musical conversation that is taking place at the time. Even if the rhythm section does not use a particular turnaround, an improviser may superimpose a turn-

around that serve to connect their melodic ideas and phrases over the fundamental harmony.

The importance of turnarounds to the flow of both compositions and improvised solos dictates that a jazz musician be able to hear and execute a variety of

turnarounds. Exercise 1 and 2 present a few of the most common turnarounds with a few examples of harmonic and melodic lines, which navigate the changes. These exercises can serve as a starting point for developing a vocabulary of creative and personal

Example 1

Harmonic Progression To *Joy Spring*, by Clifford Brown, with ii-7/V7 & ii-7/V7/I Turnarounds Throughout

The musical score consists of seven staves of music, each with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The notes are represented by slanted lines, indicating a specific melodic line. Handwritten chord symbols are placed above the staves to indicate the harmonic progression. The progression is as follows:

- Staff 1: F Δ 7, G-7, C7, F Δ 7, B \flat -7, E \flat 7
- Staff 2: A-7, D7(#9), G-7, C7, F Δ 7, A \flat -7, D \flat 7
- Staff 3: G \flat Δ 7, A \flat -7, D \flat 7, G \flat Δ 7, A-7, D7(#9)
- Staff 4: G Δ 7, G-7, C7, F Δ 7, F-7, B \flat 7
- Staff 5: E \flat Δ 7, A \flat -7, D \flat 7, G \flat Δ 7, G-7, C7
- Staff 6: F Δ 7, G-7, C7, F Δ 7, B \flat -7, E \flat 7
- Staff 7: A-7, D7(#9), G-7, C7, F Δ 7

approaches to turnarounds and transitions.

The exercises should be practiced in all keys, and although the exercises are written in continuous eighth notes, after a basic level of execution is attained, they should be played in various rhythms. The turnarounds should also be played in minor keys, and after the fundamental harmonies and melodies can be heard, non-harmonic and altered notes to create smoother and/or colorful voice leading can be incorporated.

Exercise 2 is really an extension of the IIm7-V7 turnaround presented in Exercise 1, and is probably

the most common turnaround. Notice that I have presented a slightly more scale like approach to some of the exercises. After you can execute the chord progressions using the fundamental harmony (1-3-5-7), exercises using the upper partials as well as scale like patterns should be utilized.

Once you have a basic understanding of how melodies for the turnarounds are constructed, try writing some of your own melodies. Example 3 has several other very common chord progressions that can be used. §

Example 2
F Blues With Optional Turnarounds In (...)

Example 3
Try Writing Your Own Exercises On These Turnarounds

Exercise 1

ii-7/V7 Diatonic Turnarounds (Practice Each Measure Until Comfortable The Move To Next Exercise)

A) ASCENDING FROM THE ROOT

D-7 G7

B) ASCENDING FROM THE 3RD

D-7 G7

C) ASCENDING FROM THE 7TH

D-7 G7

D) ASCENDING FROM THE 5TH

D-7 G7

E) DESCENDING FROM THE ROOT

D-7 G7

F) DESCENDING FROM THE 3RD

D-7 G7

G) DESCENDING FROM THE 7TH

D-7 G7

H) DESCENDING FROM THE 5TH

D-7 G7

I) THE 1-2-3-5 PATTERN FROM THE ROOT

D-7 G7

J) 1-2-3-5 FROM THE 3RD

D-7 G7

K) 1-2-3-5 FROM THE 7TH

D-7 G7

L) 1-2-3-5 FROM THE 5TH

D-7 G7

M) CREATIVE APPLICATIONS

D-7 G7

D-7

G7

D-7

G7

D-7

G7

D-7

G7

D-7

G7

Exercise 1 - cont'd

ii-7/V7 Diatonic Turnarounds (Practice Each Measure Until Comfortable Then Move To Next Exercise)

19 D-7 G7 D-7 G7 D-7 G7

22 D-7 G7 D-7 G7 D-7 G7

25 D-7 G7 D-7 G7 D-7 G7

Exercise 2

IM7 (or IIIM7)/VI-7/IM7/V7 Diatonic Turnarounds (Practice Each Exercise Until Comfortable, Then Move To Next Exercise)

A) STARTING ON THE ROOT

B) STARTING ON THE 3RD

CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7 CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7

C) STARTING ON THE 7TH

D) STARTING ON THE 5TH

CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7 CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7

OTHER DIATONIC EXERCISES SHOULD BE INSERTED HERE

E) MELODIC APPLICATIONS WITH MELODIC ALTERATIONS

CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7 CΔ7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7 C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7 C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7 C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7 C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7 C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

C Δ 7 A-7 D-7 G7

Etc.,