

# JAZZ PIANO VOICINGS: PART 1

THIS TUTORIAL IS IN TWO PARTS

PART A IS HOW TO VOICE SHELLS

PART B IS BUILDING THESE SHELLS INTO FOUR PART VOICINGS

THIS TUTORIAL WILL ONLY DEAL WITH MAJOR 7TH, MINOR 7THS AND DOMINANT 7THS

## PART A: SHELLS

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT NOTES BESIDES THE ROOT IS THE 3RD AND 7TH

SHELLS ARE THE 3RD AND 7TH OF THE CHORD

WE WILL VOICE MAJOR 7THS, DOMINANT 7THS AND MINOR 7THS USING SHELLS

## MAJOR 7TH SHELLS

THIS IS THE CMAJ7 CHORD AND THE ACCOMPANYING C IONIAN / C MAJOR SCALE

The image shows a single staff of music in treble clef. On the left, a C Major 7th chord (CMAJ7) is written with notes C, E, G, and B. To the right, the C Ionian/C Major scale is written as a sequence of notes: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The notes E and B are specifically labeled as 'MAJOR 3RD' and 'MAJOR 7TH' respectively.

THE MAJOR 3RD IS E AND THE MAJOR 7TH IS B

THIS IS THE CMAJ7 SHELL WITH  
3RD ON THE BOTTOM

The image shows a two-staff musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and contains two notes: E (the 3rd) and B (the 7th). The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains one note: C (the root). A large blue bracket on the left side groups both staves together.

THIS IS THE CMAJ7 SHELL WITH  
7TH ON THE BOTTOM

The image shows a two-staff musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and contains two notes: E (the 3rd) and B (the 7th). The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains one note: B (the 7th). A large blue bracket on the left side groups both staves together.

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF SHELLS IN THE KEY OF A. WE USE THE 3 AND 7 OF THE A IONIAN/A MAJOR SCALE TO MAKE THE SHELLS

### AMAJ7 SHELLS

Musical notation for Amaj7 shells and A Ionian/A Major scale. The first two measures show Amaj7 chords with the 3rd and 7th notes on the bottom. The scale is A Ionian/A Major, with the 3rd and 7th notes highlighted.

## DOMINANT 7TH SHELLS

DOMINANT SHELLS USE THE MIXOLYDIAN MODE FOR ITS VOICING  
LET'S USE B<sup>b</sup>7 AS OUR EXAMPLE

### B<sup>b</sup>7 SHELLS

Musical notation for B<sup>b</sup>7 shells and B<sup>b</sup> Mixolydian mode. The first two measures show B<sup>b</sup>7 chords with the 3rd and 7th notes on the bottom. The scale is B<sup>b</sup> Mixolydian, with the 3rd and 7th notes highlighted.

## MINOR 7TH SHELLS

MINOR 7TH SHELLS USE THE DORIAN MODE FOR ITS VOICING  
LET'S USE EMIN7 AS OUR EXAMPLE

### EMIN7 SHELLS

Musical notation for Emin7 shells and E Dorian mode. The first two measures show Emin7 chords with the 3rd and 7th notes on the bottom. The scale is E Dorian, with the 3rd and 7th notes highlighted.

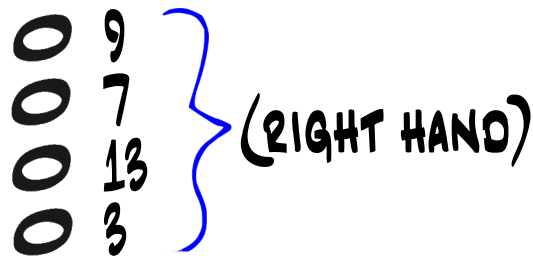
# PART 8

## BUILDING THESE SHELLS INTO FOUR PART VOICINGS

WE WILL FIRST TALK ABOUT MAJOR 7TH AND DOMINANT 7TH VOICINGS  
BECAUSE THEY ARE MAJOR CHORDS

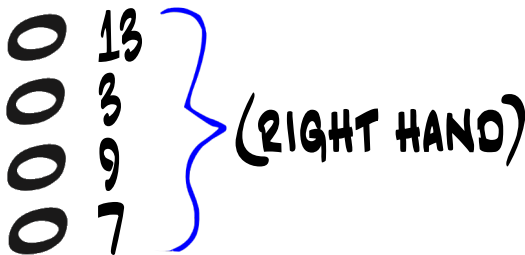
BOTH THESE CHORDS WILL USE THE 3RD, 7TH, 9TH AND 13TH

THE ORDER OF BOTTOM TO TOP IN THE RIGHT HAND IS 3, 13, 7 AND 9



○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)

WE CAN INVERT THIS CHORD WITH THE 7TH ON THE BOTTOM  
IN THE RIGHT HAND



○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)

WE WILL NOW USE THIS FORMULA TO MAKE VOICINGS

WE WILL ALSO START WITH THE MAJOR 7THS

THIS IS THE  $D^b$  MAJOR SCALE AND  $D^b$  MAJOR HAS 5 FLATS

THOSE NOTES ARE  $B^b$ ,  $E^b$ ,  $A^b$ ,  $D^b$ , AND  $G^b$

### $D^b$ MAJOR SCALE



WE WILL NOW MAKE THE  $D^b$  MAJOR 7TH VOICING WITH THE 3RD ON THE BOTTOM

$D^b$  MAJ<sup>7</sup>

$\begin{matrix} \circ & 9 \\ \circ & 7 \\ \circ & 13 \\ \circ & 3 \end{matrix}$  } (RIGHT HAND)

$\circ$  ROOT (LEFT HAND)

A musical staff diagram showing the  $D^b$  major 7th chord. The bass clef has a single note  $D^b$  (labeled 'LEFT HAND'). The treble clef has four notes:  $F$  (labeled '3'),  $A^b$  (labeled '13'),  $B^b$  (labeled '7'), and  $E^b$  (labeled '9'). Red arrows point from the labels to the notes.

THIS IS THE  $D^b$  MAJOR 7TH CHORD WITH THE 7TH ON THE BOTTOM

$D^b$  MAJ<sup>7</sup>

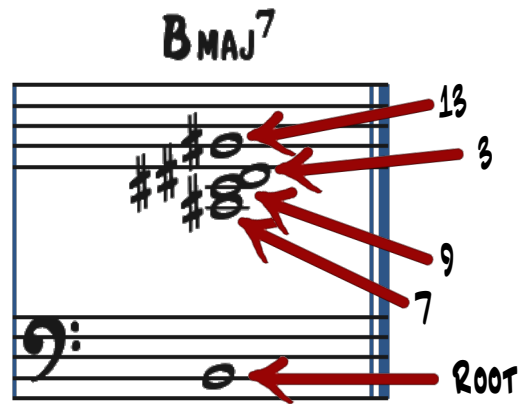
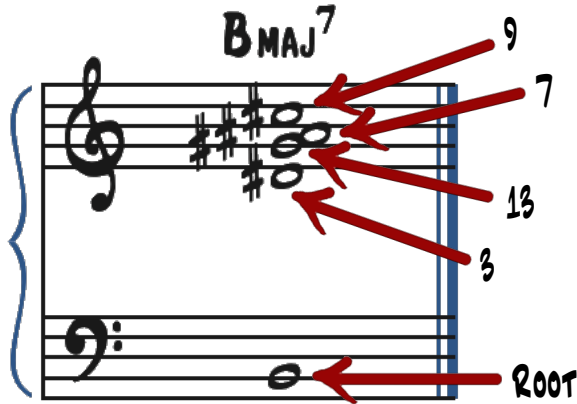
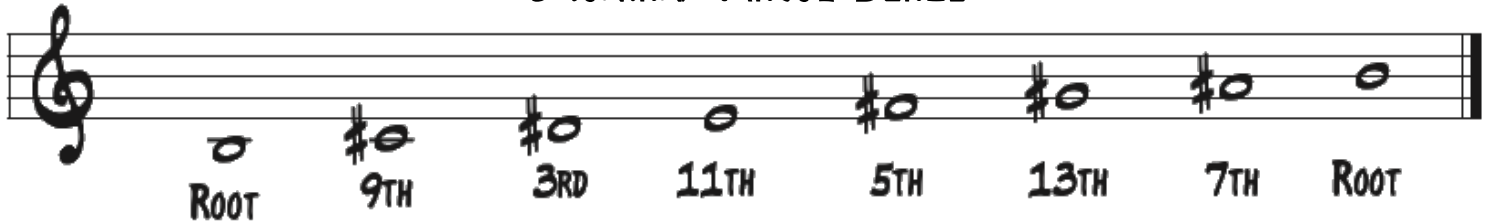
$\begin{matrix} \circ & 13 \\ \circ & 3 \\ \circ & 9 \\ \circ & 7 \end{matrix}$  } (RIGHT HAND)

$\circ$  ROOT (LEFT HAND)

A musical staff diagram showing the  $D^b$  major 7th chord. The bass clef has a single note  $D^b$  (labeled 'LEFT HAND'). The treble clef has four notes:  $E^b$  (labeled '7'),  $F$  (labeled '3'),  $A^b$  (labeled '13'), and  $B^b$  (labeled '9'). Red arrows point from the labels to the notes.

**B MAJOR HAS FIVE SHARPS  
THOSE SHARPS ARE F#, C#, G#, D#, AND A#**

**B IONIAN/ MAJOR SCALE**



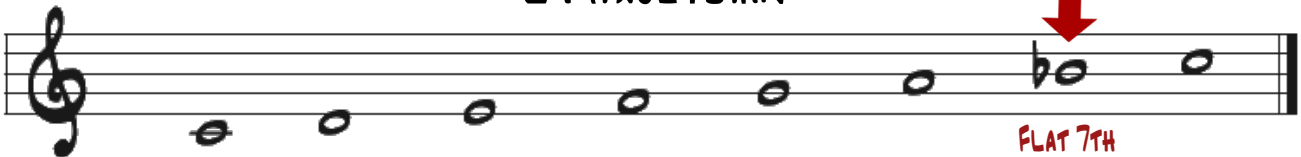
**DOMINANT 7TH**

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MAJOR 7TH AND DOMINANT 7TH IS THE 7TH DEGREE**

**C IONIAN/MAJOR SCALE**



**C MIXOLYDIAN**

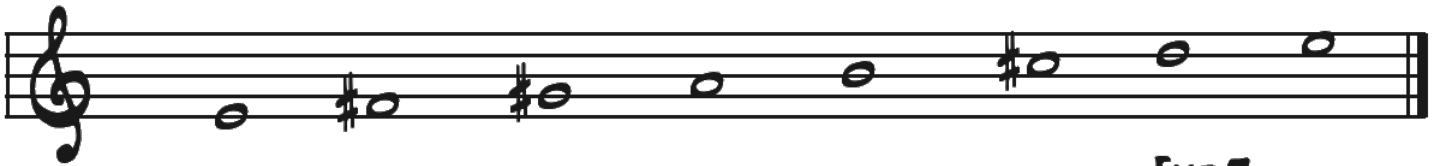


**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MAJOR 7TH AND DOMINANT 7TH VOICING  
IS THE 7TH DEGREE**



WE'LL USE E MIXOLYDIAN AND E7 AS OUR EXAMPLE

E MIXOLYDIAN



FLAT 7

WE WILL USE THE SAME FORMULA FOR THE MAJOR 7TH VOICING AND USE THE MIXOLYDIAN MODE WITH THE FLAT 7TH

○ 9  
 ○ b7  
 ○ 13  
 ○ 3

(RIGHT HAND)

○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)

E7

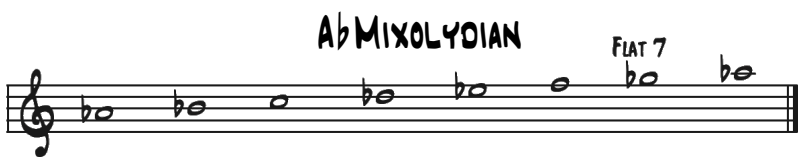
○ 13  
 ○ 3  
 ○ 9  
 ○ 7

(RIGHT HAND)

○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)

E7

WE'LL USE Ab MIXOLYDIAN AND COME UP WITH THESE TWO Ab7 VOICINGS



Ab7

Ab7 WITH THE 3RD ON THE BOTTOM

Ab7

Ab7 WITH THE FLAT 7TH ON THE BOTTOM

# MINOR 7TH

THIS IS THE FORMULA FOR MAJOR AND DOMINANT 7THS AND MINOR 7TH VOICINGS

THE DORIAN MODE WILL BE USED FOR MINOR 7THS SO WE WILL HAVE A FLAT THREE AND FLAT SEVEN

IN MINOR CHORDS, WE WILL USE THE 5TH INSTEAD OF THE 13TH IN OUR VOICING, AND THE REST IS VERY SIMILAR

MAJOR 7TH/DOMINANT 7TH	MINOR 7TH
<p>           ○ 9            ○ 7/b7            ○ 13            ○ 3            } (RIGHT HAND)            ○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)         </p>	<p>           ○ 9            ○ b7            ○ 5            ○ b3            } (RIGHT HAND)            ○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)         </p>
<p>           ○ 13            ○ 3            ○ 9            ○ 7/b7            } (RIGHT HAND)            ○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)         </p>	<p>           ○ 5            ○ b3            ○ 9            ○ b7            } (RIGHT HAND)            ○ ROOT (LEFT HAND)         </p>

WE WILL USE D DORIAN AND COME UP WITH THESE TWO VOICINGS

## D DORIAN

D MIN<sup>7</sup> 9 b7 5 b3  
 3RD ON THE BOTTOM

D MIN<sup>7</sup> 5 b3 9 b7  
 b7TH ON THE BOTTOM

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES HAVE EXERCISES FOR YOU TO PRACTICE THESE VOICINGS**

**THE FIRST PAGE OF THESE EXERCISE IS THE PRACTICE SHEET AND THE FOLLOWING TWO PAGES ARE THE "ANSWER KEY"**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DOUBLE CHECK YOUR ANSWER YOU CAN USE THE ANSWER KEY**

**THIS IS A LOT OF INFORMATION SO DON'T GET TOO INTIMIDATED BY ALL THESE KEYS**

**START SLOW AND LEARN JUST A COUPLE OR A FEW AND SLOWLY BUILD**

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU KNOW THE MODE AS WELL AS THE VOICINGS**

**AS I SAID EARLIER IT IS BEST TO PRACTICE RANDOMLY AND DON'T GET INTO PLAYING CHROMATICALLY UP OR DOWN, OR EVEN THE CYCLE OF 5THS BECAUSE THOSE VOICE LEAD VERY WELL AND YOU WILL RELY ON MOVING YOUR HAND AS OPPOSED TO KNOWING THE DETAILS OF KEYS AND MODES**

**ONCE YOU MASTER THESE YOU CAN CHANGE THE ORDER AND GO BACKWARDS, UP AND DOWN, DOWN AND UP, OR JUST FLIP ALL OVER THE CHART**

**GOOD LUCK AND ENJOY!**



# EXERCISE A-MAJOR 7THS

$E_{MAJ}^7$	$F^{\#}_{MAJ}^7$	$G_{MAJ}^7$	$D^b_{MAJ}^7$	$F_{MAJ}^7$
$C_{MAJ}^7$	$E^b_{MAJ}^7$	$B_{MAJ}^7$	$G^b_{MAJ}^7$	$B^b_{MAJ}^7$
$D_{MAJ}^7$	$A^b_{MAJ}^7$	$C^{\#}_{MAJ}^7$	$A_{MAJ}^7$	$C^b_{MAJ}^7$

# EXERCISE B-DOMINANT 7TH

$E^b7$	$C^7$	$F^{\#}7$	$E^7$	$D^b7$
$A^7$	$C^b7$	$D^7$	$G^b7$	$A^b7$
$B^7$	$G^7$	$B^b7$	$C^{\#}7$	$F^7$

# EXERCISE C/ MINOR 7TH

$D_{MIN}^7$	$F^{\#}_{MIN}^7$	$C_{MIN}^7$	$A^b_{MIN}^7$	$C^{\#}_{MIN}^7$
$A_{MIN}^7$	$E_{MIN}^7$	$C^b_{MIN}^7$	$D^b_{MIN}^7$	$F_{MIN}^7$
$G^b_{MIN}^7$	$E^b_{MIN}^7$	$B^b_{MIN}^7$	$G_{MIN}^7$	$B_{MIN}^7$

## EXERCISE A-MAJOR 7THS

**E<sup>MAJ7</sup>** **F<sup>#MAJ7</sup>** **G<sup>MAJ7</sup>**

**D<sup>bMAJ7</sup>** **F<sup>MAJ7</sup>** **C<sup>MAJ7</sup>**

**E<sup>bMAJ7</sup>** **B<sup>MAJ7</sup>** **G<sup>bMAJ7</sup>**

**B<sup>bMAJ7</sup>** **D<sup>MAJ7</sup>** **A<sup>bMAJ7</sup>**

**C<sup>#MAJ7</sup>** **A<sup>MAJ7</sup>** **C<sup>bMAJ7</sup>**

## EXERCISE B-DOMINANT 7TH

**E<sup>b7</sup>** **C<sup>7</sup>** **F<sup>#7</sup>**

**E<sup>7</sup>** **D<sup>b7</sup>** **A<sup>7</sup>**

**C<sup>b7</sup>** **D<sup>7</sup>** **G<sup>b7</sup>**

Two staves of musical notation showing chord voicings. The first staff contains  $A^{b7}$ ,  $B^7$ , and  $G^7$ . The second staff contains  $B^{b7}$ ,  $C^{\#7}$ , and  $F^7$ . Each chord is represented by a set of notes on a five-line staff.

## EXERCISE C/ MINOR 7TH

Five staves of musical notation showing chord voicings for various minor 7th chords. The first staff contains  $D^{MIN7}$ ,  $F^{\#MIN7}$ , and  $C^{MIN7}$ . The second staff contains  $A^{bMIN7}$ ,  $C^{\#MIN7}$ , and  $A^{MIN7}$ . The third staff contains  $E^{MIN7}$ ,  $C^{bMIN7}$ , and  $D^{bMIN7}$ . The fourth staff contains  $F^{MIN7}$ ,  $G^{bMIN7}$ , and  $E^{bMIN7}$ . The fifth staff contains  $B^{bMIN7}$ ,  $G^{MIN7}$ , and  $B^{MIN7}$ . Each chord is represented by a set of notes on a five-line staff.