

PART 4 Coltrane's Changes: Giant Steps and Countdown

Most of you are probably already familiar with these tunes from John Coltrane's famous "Giant Steps" album—which was released in 1959—and contained some innovative harmonic sequences for soloing that jazz players have been grappling with ever since!

These chord changes require a lot of practicing - needless to say - to master. But the same principles that we have already discussed apply to them as well. We can use melodic variations on the exact arpeggios for each chord (which is the best way to make sure the harmony is *absolutely clearly stated* in our solos) as in this example on 16 bars of "Giant Steps":

Musical notation for 16 bars of "Giant Steps" in B major. The notation is arranged in four systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chords are indicated above the notes.

Bar 1: BMAJ7, D7
Bar 2: GMAJ7, Bb7
Bar 3: EbMAJ7
Bar 4: AM7, D7
Bar 5: GMAJ7(9), Bb7
Bar 6: EbMAJ7, F#7
Bar 7: BMAJ7(9), FM7, Bb7
Bar 8: EbMAJ7, AM7, D7
Bar 9: GMAJ7, C#M7, F#7
Bar 10: BMAJ7, FM7, Bb7
Bar 11: EbMAJ7, C#M7, F#7
Bar 12: BMAJ7, D7
Bar 13: GMAJ7, Bb7
Bar 14: EbMAJ7
Bar 15: AM7, D7
Bar 16: BMAJ7, D7

Or we can use our various scale options, while making *sure* to place a chord tone—or if need be, a color tone that *resolves* to a chord tone—on every strong beat:

Musical notation for 16 bars of "Giant Steps" in B major, showing scale options. The notation is arranged in two systems, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The chords are indicated above the notes.

Bar 1: BMAJ7, D7
Bar 2: GMAJ7, Bb7
Bar 3: EbMAJ7
Bar 4: AM7, D7
Bar 5: GMAJ7(9), Bb7
Bar 6: EbMAJ7, F#7
Bar 7: BMAJ7(9), FM7, Bb7
Bar 8: EbMAJ7, C#M7, F#7
Bar 9: BMAJ7, D7
Bar 10: GMAJ7, Bb7
Bar 11: EbMAJ7
Bar 12: AM7, D7
Bar 13: BMAJ7, D7
Bar 14: GMAJ7, Bb7
Bar 15: EbMAJ7
Bar 16: BMAJ7, D7

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