

MAJOR BEBOP SCALE APPLICATION

The major bebop scale is primarily applied over a **major ii-V-I**. For example, the D major bebop scale can be used over an Em7 – A7 – Dmaj7 chord progression. Here is a basic example of how each scale position can fit over a ii-V-I to allow for a resolution to the 5th on the downbeat of the Dmaj7.

The figure consists of four staves of music, each illustrating a different starting point for the major bebop scale over the Em7 - A7 - Dmaj7 progression. The scale notes are: E, F#, G, A, B, C, D, E. The 5th of the Dmaj7 chord (F#) is the final note on the downbeat of the Dmaj7 chord in each example.

- Staff 1:** Scale starts on E (root of Em7). Notes: E, F#, G, A, B, C, D, E. Chords: Em7, A7, Dmaj7.
- Staff 2:** Scale starts on F# (3rd of Em7). Notes: F#, G, A, B, C, D, E, F#. Chords: Em7, A7, Dmaj7.
- Staff 3:** Scale starts on G (4th of Em7). Notes: G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. Chords: Em7, A7, Dmaj7.
- Staff 4:** Scale starts on A (5th of Em7). Notes: A, B, C, D, E, F#, G, A. Chords: Em7, A7, Dmaj7.

Figure 52 – Major Bebop Scale ii-V-I application

The major bebop scale can also be used over a ii, V, or I chord that is not associated with a ii-V-I. For example, the D major bebop scale can be used over an Em7, A7, or Dmaj7 chord. Be sure to practice these scales in all 12 keys with chordal accompaniment to help you learn how the scale fits over the sound of the chord progression. This aural understanding will benefit you greatly in real musical settings.

The purpose of learning these scales is to provide tools to connect different shapes together to formulate lines with bebop-style vocabulary. This means that you do not have to play the entire scale in your improvisation. These scales are devised to simplify your learning process and allow you to play bebop-style phrases starting on different chord tones that are musical. Therefore, you will see that in many of the following listening examples, the entire scale is not played. Instead, the key portions of the scales are the **approach notes that allow you to reach the 5th**. Additionally, they are also not always utilized over a major ii-V-I progression – all that matters is that it sounds musical! Remember not to lose sight of the true purpose of these concepts – we are trying to play music, not technical exercises.

Wabash | Night and Day (2015) | Vincent Herring | Alto Saxophone

Musical notation for 'Wabash' in E Major Bebop. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notation shows a melodic line with several triplet markings. Chord symbols F#m7 and B7 are placed above the staff. A bracket labeled '3' spans the first triplet, and another bracket labeled '3' spans the second triplet.

And Then Again | Secret Love (1992) | Vincent Herring | Alto Saxophone

Musical notation for 'And Then Again' in D Major Bebop. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The notation shows a melodic line with a triplet marking. Chord symbols Em7, A7, and D7 are placed above the staff. A bracket labeled '3' spans the triplet.

Stars Fell on Alabama | Ballads (2009) – USA Good Fellows | Vincent Herring | Alto Saxophone

Musical notation for 'Stars Fell on Alabama' in B Major Bebop. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The notation is split into two staves. The first staff shows a melodic line with a triplet marking and chord symbols C#m7 and F#7. The second staff continues the melodic line with chord symbols Bmaj7, Am7, D7, and Gmaj7. A bracket labeled '3' spans the triplet in the first staff.

Rounder's Mood | Simple Pleasure (2001) | Vincent Herring | Alto Saxophone

Musical notation for 'Rounder's Mood' in E Major Bebop (Tritone Sub - B7). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notation shows a melodic line with a triplet marking. Chord symbols Cm7, F7, Fm7, and Bb7 are placed above the staff. A bracket labeled '3' spans the triplet.

Au Privave (Take 2) | Bird: The Complete Charlie Parker on Verve (1951) | Charlie Parker | Alto Saxophone

Musical notation for 'Au Privave (Take 2)' in G Major Bebop. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notation shows a melodic line with a triplet marking. Chord symbols D7, G7, and G#o7 are placed above the staff. A bracket labeled '3' spans the triplet.