

TIPS FOR LEARNING A NEW TUNE

1. Listen to the song over and over.
2. Memorize the melody in your mind. Be able to sing it.
3. Listen carefully to the bass line and the harmony in general. Get an overall sense of how the song is put together.
4. Try playing the melody from memory, slowly at first.
5. Then play the melody along with the recording. Copy inflections, articulations, slurs, phrasing, dynamics, etc.
6. Learn the scales and chords in the order as they appear in the song. Make sure you've got the right changes (chord progression). Get them from a reliable source, such as the play-along books.
7. Improvise over the harmony, keeping in mind the original melody as a frame of reference.
8. Emphasize the thirds and sevenths of scales in your soloing.
9. Memorize both melody and chord/scales if you haven't already. Know where the chord tones are ON YOUR INSTRUMENT.
10. Improvise your original melodies based on what your mind HEARS. Let your mind guide your choice of notes, phrasing, rhythms, articulations, etc...
11. Listen constantly to the original recording of the song to further stir your imagination. Incorporate ideas of the recording into your solos.
12. Learn the lyrics if the song has any. Mentally sing the lyrics while playing the melody.
13. Fall in love with the melodies to songs. Play them like YOU wrote them.

"I've always tried to recreate melodies even better than the composers who wrote them. I've always tried to come up with something that never even occurred to them. This is the challenge: not to rearrange the intentions of the composers but to stay within the parameters or what the composers have in mind and be creative and imaginative and meaningful." -- **tenor saxophonist Joe Henderson**

(Taken from Jamey's volume 1 book: "How to Play and Improvise")

PRACTICE PROCEDURES FOR MEMORIZING SCALES AND CHORDS TO ANY SONG

1. Play root/tonic note of each chord/scale
2. Play first 2 notes of each scale
3. Play first 3 notes of each scale
4. Play the first five notes of each scale
5. Play triad of the scale (1, 3, and 5 of the scale)
6. Play 7th chords (1, 3, 5, and 7th tones of the scale)
7. Play 9th chords (1, 3, 5, 7, and 9th tones of the scale)
8. Play the entire scale up and down
9. Play 6th chords (1, 3, 5, and 6th tones of the scale)
10. Play up the scale to the 9th and back down the chord tones
11. Play up the 9th chord and then come back down the scale
12. Play the scale in broken thirds up and down (1, 3, 2, 4, 3, 5, 4, 6, 5, 7, etc., up & down)

The above approach can be used when learning the scales and chords to ANY song, or, when learning any new scale. You may want to use a metronome when the tempo on the recording is too fast for you. You'll want to play these exercises UP and DOWN. If you feel you need further practice with any particular scale/chord there are many more patterns and exercises available from various practice books.

Once you become familiar with the various scales and chords and gain adequate facility you won't have to practice these type exercises any more. Remember, the exercises are merely to help you MAKE MUSIC.