

INTRODUCTION to the SCALE SYLLABUS

Each chord/scale symbol (C7, C-, CΔ+4, etc.) represents a series of tones which the improviser can use when improvising or soloing. These series of tones have traditionally been called scales. The scales listed here are the ones I most often hear musicians play. I have listed the Scale Syllabus in the key of C Concert so you can have a frame of reference and can compare the similarities and differences between the various chords/scales.

This SCALE SYLLABUS is intended to give the improviser a variety of scale choices which may be used over any chord—major, minor, dominant 7th, half-diminished, diminished and sus 4. Western music, especially jazz and pop, uses major, dominant 7th, dorian minor and Blues scales and chords more than any other. Scales and chords used less often are the half-diminished, diminished and sus 4. If we agree on these five chord/scale families as being the most predominant, then we can set them up as categories and list substitute scales beneath each heading...see the **Scale Syllabus** page. You should also check out **Volume 26 "The Scale Syllabus"** for more help with scales.

Each category begins with the scale most closely resembling the chord/scale symbol given to the left. The scales are arranged according to the degree of dissonance they produce in relation to the basic chord/scale sound. Scales near the top of each category will sound mild or consonant and scale choices further down the list will become increasingly tense or dissonant. Each player is urged to start with the scales at the top and with practice and experimentation gradually work his way down the list to the more dissonant or tension-producing scales. You should work with a new scale sound on your instrument until your ears and fingers become comfortable with all the tones in the scale. Also try singing the scale with your voice. Improvise with your voice over the scale you are learning and then play on your instrument what your voice sang.

Music is made of tension and release. Scale tones produce tension or they produce relaxation. The improvisor's ability to control the amount and frequency of tension and release will in large measure determine whether he is successful in communicating to the listener. Remember—you, the player, are also a listener! Read pages 43 to 45 in **Volume 1 "JAZZ: How To Play And Improvise" (Sixth Edition)** for a more detailed explanation of tension and release in melodic development.

Any of the various practice procedures and patterns listed in **Volumes 1, 2, 3, 21, 24 or 84** can be applied to the learning and assimilation of any of the scale choices listed in this Scale Syllabus. Needless to say, any Scale you want to learn should be transposed and practiced in all twelve keys. The column on whole and half step construction I listed for each scale on the syllabus should prove helpful when transposing a scale to any of the twelve keys.

For additional information on scale substitution, I recommend "**Scales for Jazz Improvisation**" by Dan Haerle, "**Jazz Improvisation**" by David Baker, "**Patterns for Jazz**" and "**Complete Method for Jazz Improvisation**" by Jerry Coker, and "**Repository of Scales & Melodic Patterns**" by Yusef Lateef. These books are available from **Jamey Aebersold Jazz, Inc., PO Box 1244, New Albany, IN 47151-1244 U.S.A.**, your local music store, or <http://www.jazzbooks.com>.

Several play-a-long sets offer you an opportunity to practice the various scales in all twelve keys. They are: **Vol. 24 "Major & Minor"**; **Vol. 84 "Dominant 7th Workout"**; **Vol.21 "Gettin' It Together"**; and **Vol.16 "Turnarounds, Cycles & II/V7's."** You might also check out the play-a-longs which have tunes in all keys: **Vol. 42 "Blues In All Keys"**; **Vol. 47 "Rhythm In All Keys"**; **Vol. 57 "Minor Blues In All Keys"**; and two more volumes, **Vol. 67 "Tune Up"** and **Vol. 68 "Giant Steps"**—each has several classic tunes in all twelve keys.

Scales and chords are the backbone of our music and the better you equip yourself, the more fun you will have playing music.

SCALE SYLLABUS

LEGEND: H = Half Step, W = Whole Step.; Δ = Major 7th; + or # = raise H; b or - = lower H; ∅ = Half-diminished; -3 = 3H (Minor Third)

<u>CHORD/SCALE SYMBOL</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>WHOLE & HALF STEP CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
C C7 C- C∅ C°	FIVE BASIC CATEGORIES	Major	C D E F G A B C	C E G B D
		Dominant 7th (Mixolydian)	C D E F G A Bb C	C E G Bb D
		Minor (Dorian)	C D Eb F G A Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
		Half Diminished (Locrian)	C Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C	C Eb Gb Bb
		Diminished (8 tone scale)	C D Eb F Gb Ab A B C	C Eb Gb A (Bbb)
1. MAJOR SCALE CHOICES				
<u>1. MAJOR SCALE CHOICES</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>W & H CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
CΔ (Can be written C)	Major (don't emphasize the 4th)	W W H W W W H	C D E F G A B C	C E G B D
C	Major Pentatonic	W W -3 W -3	C D E G A C	C E G B
CΔ+4	Lydian (major scale with +4)	W W W H W W H	C D E F# G A B C	C E G B D
CΔ	Bebop (Major)	W W H W H H W H	C D E F G# A B C	C E G B D
CΔb6	Harmonic Major	W W H W H -3 H	C D E F G Ab B C	C E G B D
CΔ+5, +4	Lydian Augmented	W W W W H W H	C D E F# G# A B C	C E G# B D
C	Augmented	-3 H -3 H -3 H	C D# E G Ab B C	C E G B D
C	6th Mode of Harmonic Minor	-3 H W H W W H	C D# E F# G A B C	C E G B D
C	Diminished (begin with H step)	H W H W H W H W	C Db D# E F# G A Bb C	C E G B D
C	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C Eb F F# G Bb C	C E G B D
2. DOMINANT 7th SCALE CHOICES				
<u>2. DOMINANT 7th SCALE CHOICES</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>W & H CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
C7	Dominant 7th	W W H W W H W	C D E F G A Bb C	C E G Bb D
C7	Major Pentatonic	W W -3 W -3	C D E G A C	C E G Bb D
C7	Bebop (Dominant)	W W H W W H H H	C D E F G A Bb B C	C E G Bb D
C7b9	Spanish or Jewish scale	H -3 H W H W W	C Db E F G Ab Bb C	C E G Bb (Db)
C7+4	Lydian Dominant	W W W H W H W	C D E F# G A Bb C	C E G Bb D
C7b6	Hindu	W W H W H W W	C D E F G Ab Bb C	C E G Bb D
C7+ (has #4 & #5)	Whole Tone (6 tone scale)	W W W W W W	C D E F# G# Bb C	C E G# Bb D
C7b9 (also has #9 & #4)	Diminished (begin with H step)	H W H W H W H W	C Db D# E F# G A Bb C	C E G Bb Db (D#)
C7+9 (also has b9, #4, #5)	Diminished Whole Tone	H W H W W W W	C Db D# E F# G# Bb C	C E G# Bb D# (Db)
C7	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C Eb F F# G Bb C	C E G Bb D (D#)
<u>DOMINANT 7th SUSPENDED 4th</u>				
C7 sus 4	MAY BE WRITTEN G-C	W W H W W H W	C D E F G A Bb C	C F G Bb D
C7 sus 4		Dom. 7th scale but don't emphasize the third	Bb C D F G Bb	C F G Bb D
C7 sus 4		Major Pentatonic built on b7	W W -3 W -3	C D E F G A Bb B C
	Bebop Scale	W W H W H H H	C D E F G A Bb B C	C F G Bb D
3. MINOR SCALE CHOICES*				
<u>3. MINOR SCALE CHOICES*</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>W & H CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
C- or C-7	Minor (Dorian)	W H W W W H W	C D Eb F G A Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
C- or C-7	Pentatonic (Minor Pentatonic)	-3 W W -3 W	C Eb F G Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
C- or C-7	Bebop (Minor)	W H H W W H W	C D Eb E F G A Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
C-Δ (maj. 7th)	Melodic Minor (ascending)	W H W W W H W	C D Eb F G A B C	C Eb G B D
C- or C-6 or C-	Bebop Minor No. 2	W H W W H H W H	C D Eb F G G# A B C	C Eb G B D
C- or C-7	Blues Scale	-3 W H H -3 W	C Eb F F# G Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
C-Δ (b6 & maj. 7th)	Harmonic Minor	W H W W H -3 H	C D Eb F G Ab B C	C Eb G B D
C- or C-7	Diminished (begin with W step)	W H W H W H W	C D Eb F# G# A B C	C Eb G B D
C- or C-b9b6	Phrygian	H W W W H W W	C Db Eb F G Ab Bb C	C Eb G Bb
C- or C-b6	Pure or Natural Minor, Aeolian	W H W W H W W	C D Eb F G Ab Bb C	C Eb G Bb D
4. HALF DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES				
<u>4. HALF DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>W & H CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
C∅	Half Diminished (Locrian)	H W W H W W W	C Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C	C Eb Gb Bb
C∅#2 (C∅9)	Half Diminished #2 (Locrian #2)	W H W H W W W	C D Eb F Gb Ab Bb C	C Eb Gb Bb D
C∅ (with or without #2)	Bebop Scale	H W W H H H W W	C Db Eb F Gb G Ab Bb C	C Eb Gb Bb
5. DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES				
<u>5. DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES</u>	<u>SCALE NAME</u>	<u>W & H CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>SCALE IN KEY OF C</u>	<u>BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C</u>
C°	Diminished (8 tone scale)	W H W H W H W H	C D Eb F Gb Ab A B C	C Eb Gb A

NOTES: 1) The above chord symbol guide is my system of notation. I feel it best represents the sounds I hear in jazz. The player should be aware that each chord symbol represents a series of tones called a scale. 2) Even though a C7+9 would appear to have only a raised 9th, it also has a b9, +4 and +5. So the entire C7+9 scale would look like: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, +5, b7 & root (C, Db, D#, E, F#, G#, Bb, C). My chord symbol C7+9 is therefore an abbreviation, while the complete name of this scale is Diminished Whole Tone (sometimes called Super Locrian or Altered Scale). Similarly, C7b9 also appears to have only one altered tone (b9) but it actually has three: b9, +9 and +4. The entire scale looks like this: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, 5th, 6th, b7 & root (C, Db, D#, E, F#, G, A, Bb, C). This is called a Diminished scale and my chord symbol abbreviation is C7b9. 3) All scales under the Dominant 7th category are scales that embellish the basic Dominant 7th sound. Some scales provide much more tension than the basic dominant 7th sound and require practice and patience to grasp the essence of their meaning. I encourage you to work with the first side of Volume 3 "The 11-V7-1 Progression" since it emphasizes Diminished and Diminished Whole Tone scales and chords. 4) * - In category #3, MINOR SCALE CHOICES, the PURE MINOR scale choice is not used very often. I have found the order of preference to be Dorian, Bebop, Melodic, Blues, Pentatonic, and then any of the remaining Minor scale choices.

NOMENCLATURE

+ or # = raise 1/2 step - or b = lower 1/2 step H = Half step W = Whole step

Because jazz players, composers, educators and authors haven't agreed on a common nomenclature for writing chord and scale symbols, the novice will have to become familiar with several different ways of writing the same scale sound.

Listed below are the most common symbols in order of usage—most-used to least-used. The symbol that is boldface is the one I use most often. Notice that throughout this book you will see **CΔ** and **C** to designate a major chord/scale sound. I am doing this so you can begin to get better acquainted with various nomenclature.

Δ = major scale/chord or major seventh (CΔ). A (7) after a letter means to lower the 7th note of the scale, making it a Dominant 7th quality (C7). A dash (-) when located beside a letter means to lower the third and seventh of the scale 1/2 step, thus making it a minor tonality (Dorian minor) (C-). ∅ means half-diminished (C∅). C-Δ means a minor scale/chord with a major 7th. -3 means 3 half-steps (a minor 3rd).

CHORD/SCALE TYPE	ABBREVIATED CHORD/SCALE SYMBOL
* MAJOR (Ionian) (WWHWWWH) C D E F G A B C	C CΔ Cmaj, Cma, Cma7, Cmaj7, CM, CM7, Cmaj9, Cmaj13
* DOMINANT SEVENTH (Mixolydian) (WWHWWHW) 5th mode of Major C D E F G A Bb C	C7 C9, C11, C13
* MINOR SEVENTH (Dorian) (WHWWWHW) 2nd mode of Major C D Eb F G A Bb C	C- C-7 Cmi, Cmi7, Cm7, Cmin, Cmin7, Cm9, Cm11, Cm13
LYDIAN (Major scale with #4) (WWWLHWWH) 4th mode of Major C D E F# G A B C	CΔ+4 Cmaj+4, CM+4, CΔ+11, CΔb5, Cmajb5
* HALF-DIMINISHED (Locrian) (HWWLHWWW) 7th mode of Major C Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C	C∅ Cmi7(b5), C-7b5
HALF-DIMINISHED #2 (Locrian #2) (WHLHWWW) 6th mode of Melodic Minor C D Eb F Gb Ab Bb C	C∅#2 C∅+2, C∅9
DIMINISHED (WHLHWHWH) C D Eb F Gb Ab A B C	C° Cdim, C°7, Cdim7, C°9
LYDIAN DOMINANT (Dom. 7th with #4) (WWWLHWH) 4th mode of Melodic Minor C D E F# G A Bb C	C7+4 C7+11, C7b5, C9+11, C13+11
WHOLE-TONE (WWWLWWW) C D E F# G# Bb C	C7+ C7aug, C7 ⁺⁴ , C7+5
DOMINANT SEVENTH Using a Dim. Scale (HWHLHWH) C Db D# E F# G A Bb C	C7b9 C7b9 ⁺⁴ , C13b9 ⁺¹¹
DIMINISHED WHOLE-TONE (Altered scale) (HWHLWWW) 7th mode of Melodic Minor C Db D# E F# G# Bb G	C7+9 C7alt, C7b9 ⁺⁴ , C7b9 ⁺¹¹
LYDIAN AUGMENTED (Major with #4 & #5) (WWWLHWH) 3rd mode of Melodic minor C D E F# G# A B C	CΔ+4 CΔ+5
MELODIC MINOR (ascending only) (WHLHWWWH) C D Eb F G A B C	C-Δ Cmin(maj7), CmiΔ, C-Δ (Melodic), Cm6
HARMONIC MINOR (WHLHWH-3H) C D Eb F G Ab B C	C-Δ CmiΔ, C-Δ (Har), C-Δb6
SUSPENDED 4th (W-3WWHW) or (WWWLHWH) C D F G A Bb C C D E F G A Bb C	G- C G-7, C7sus4, C7sus, C4, C11
* BLUES SCALE (use at player's discretion) (-3WHH-3W) (1, b3, 4, #4, 5, b7, 1) C Eb F F# G Bb C	(There is no chord symbol for the Blues scale) Used mostly with dominant and minor chords

* These are the most common chord/scales in Western music.

I believe in a reduced chord/scale notation that allows our creative side, our natural side (right brain function) to have direction and guidance without feeling inhibited or limited.

When we speak of "quality" we mean whether it is Major, Minor, Dim., or whatever.

I have tried to standardize the chord/scale symbol notation in my books. Since some have been out many years there are instances where I may have used a different chord symbol in one book than I used in this one.

I feel the improviser needs as little notation as possible in order to transcend the actual nomenclature on the page. The more numbers, letters and alterations that appear on the page, the less chance they will have to remove their thoughts from the written page and express what is being heard in their mind. That is why I prefer **C, C7, C-, C∅, C7+9, C7b9**. Remember, we are playing a music called jazz, and it contains many altered tones. Once we learn the various alterations and their corresponding abbreviated chord symbol, why keep writing all the alterations beside the chord symbol? Check out carefully the Scale Syllabus! Listen to Volume 26 "The Scale Syllabus."

Remember: 2nd's are the same as 9th's, 4th's are the same as 11th's, 13th's are the same as 6th's. Example: Key of C ... the 2nd, D, is the same as the 9th, D. Often a composer will simply write their preferred name of the scale beside the chord symbol, such as Eb-Δ (melodic minor), F- (phrygian), F-(phry).

THE DOMINANT 7th TREE of SCALE CHOICES

The two most important notes in any scale are the 3rd and 7th. They tell the listener what the quality is and indicate the harmonic motion. The **3rd** tells us if it's major or minor. The **7th** tells whether the sound is stable (doesn't want to move to another chord) or if it wants to move on to a chord of resolution. Dominants typically want to resolve to a chord up a perfect 4th (C7 wants to resolve to F, F-, F7 etc.). The **root** or tonic is taken for granted. If it wasn't there we wouldn't be able to identify the sound.

Any of these scales (qualities/sounds/sonorities) may be played when a dominant 7th chord/scale RESOLVES to a chord/scale whose ROOT lies a perfect 4th (5 half-steps) above the root of the dominant 7th chord.

EXAMPLE: || C7 | C7 | F | F | Ab7 | Ab7 | Db- | Db- ||
Embellish the measures with these chords: C7 and Ab7

The altered tones are in **bold type**. Those tones usually resolve by *half-step* to a scale or chord tone. This amounts to **tension then release**. It's a natural occurrence in music. The 3rd's and 7th's are underlined.

SCALES

- 1. DOM.7th = C7 = C D E F G A Bb C**
This is the basic dominant 7th sound. Be careful how you treat the 4th tone. Use it as a passing tone.
- 2. BEBOP = C7 = C D E F G A Bb **B** C**
Play B natural as a passing tone. It should always appear on an upbeat never on the downbeat.
- 3. LYDIAN DOM. = C7#4 = C D E **F#** G A Bb C**
The #4 was/is a favorite note. It used to be called a b5.
- 4. WHOLE-TONE = C7+ = C D E **F# G#** Bb C**
This scale only has 6 tones. It is a symmetrical scale used often in cartoon music and by Debussy and Ravel. **[Has a #4 and #5]**
- 5. DIMINISHED = C7b9 = C **Db D#** E **F#** G A Bb C**
This scale has 8 different tones. It is symmetrical and is also used in cartoon music. Michael Brecker is a master of this scale sound. **[Has a b9, #9 and #4]**
- 6. DIM. WHOLE-TONE = C7+9 = C **Db D#** E **F# G#** Bb C**
This scale has four altered tones which help create tension. **[Has a b9, #9, #4 and #5]**
- 7. SPANISH or JEWISH SCALE = C7 (b9) = C **Db** E F G **Ab** Bb C**
This scale is used often when playing in a minor key. It's the same as F harmonic minor. **[Has a b9 and b6]**
- 8. CHROMATIC SCALE = C7 = C **C#** D **D#** E F **F#** G **G#** A **A#** B C**
(the Musical Alphabet) C **Db** D **Eb** E F **Gb** G **Ab** A **Bb** B C

Any time there is a dominant 7th, you may want to experiment with these scales. The proper use of these various scales is part of what makes jazz so appealing. Endless variety in the hands of a master makes beautiful music. Don't be afraid to try these sounds. It may take some time for your ears to become accustomed to the sound and the fingerings. The book called *Patterns For Jazz* (Aebersold product code "P-T" for treble clef instruments, "P-B" for bass clef) lists jazz phrases based on many of the scales above.