

The Rootless chords

(Often referred to as the *Bill Evans* voicings)

When you buy this lesson on the rootless chords there is something very important that I can't stress enough....

don't just read the rootless chords off the page!

You may be a proficient reader but if you use your reading skills to try to learn and play these chords you will not learn them in a useful way for improvisation. **You will want to memorizing them right away.** Don't start the process of memorizing, as you would do memorizing classical music. You want to know exactly where every chord tone is in all the chords without having to think about it. You want to get these voicings in your hip pocket and in your fingers so they are automatic. You will then have powerful tools for playing and creating jazz. If you start to lean on reading it will make your memorizing process more difficult.

I remember back in college when I was first learning them. I studied the order of the voicings (tones) for each chord. I left the piano completely and sat somewhere with eyes closed and meditated on them, focusing on each of three chord series in every key, just taking on a few at a time. I would mentally focus on each note in the chord and identify where each chord tone was located in the rootless chord. Then I would go to the piano and see if I could play them without the music. It's very exciting when you can sit down automatically and play them. Reading them from the page does not create that same excitement.

If meditating on them isn't your style, try thinking about them when you take a walk, swim or drive. *Anywhere away from the piano.* That's my method anyway. We all have our own way to memorize. Just try to get even one key down first, and then add another key when you have the one learned. The key of C is the easiest because it's all white notes. After you nail that one in your memory go for the next. You'll notice that only one finger

changes between the first chord (minor) and the second chord (dominant chord) everytime. It's the same through all the keys.

When you order the lesson you will get an important fact sheet on jazz dominant chords. What is a jazz dominant chord? If you don't know, please read this sheet. You need to understand about jazz dominants and their potential for playing jazz. They are the most colorful of all the jazz chords.

The next step following this is to play the scale with your right hand that goes with the ii-V-I progression. *Improvising!* Play the major scale that each set of rootless voicings comes from in your right hand while your left hand plays the progression.

Glen

PS. By the way, if you aren't familiar with *Bill Evans* playing here are a couple of YouTube links to get you started. He's always been one of my favorite jazz pianists and is one of our jazz icons.

[Bill Evans Trio at the Village Vanguard - My Romance](#)

[bill evans trio - my foolish heart](#)

[Bill Evans - Alice In Wonderland \(The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961 - take 1\)](#)