

# The Five Jazz-Chord Types Video Lesson. (Parts 1 and 2)

## Introduction

The most important lesson to begin with for learning to play by chord concept is the *Five Jazz Chord Types* Video lesson. Understanding how to make the five basic jazz chords (four-note 7<sup>th</sup> chords) and play them from any given note, is fundamental to your evolving understanding of playing piano by chord concept and for playing from a fakebook. Once you understand how the five basic chord qualities are made, you can use them to harmonize melodies in various ways when reading from a fakebook.

**We do not use the five basic jazz chords in their root position to play from fakebooks.**

It is very important to stress that we do not use the five basic jazz chords in their root position to play from fakebooks. A common mistake that beginning chord concept students make is to play chords in the left hand and a single melody note in the right hand. Playing in this manner creates a non-musical and amateurish sound. After you learn the five basic jazz chords then the lessons that follow will show you two fundamental ways to use them to create pleasing, simple cocktail type piano arrangements.

The two common ways of using the basic chords to harmonize melody are:

1. Dividing the chords into open voicings and placing under melody. \*
2. Matching the correct jazz-chord inversion to melody in the right hand.

The goal is to learn how to make each of the five jazz-chord types on every one of the twelve tones in music, sixty chords in all. While that is the goal, It is not necessary to learn all sixty chords right away in order to begin applying them to your playing. As long as you understand how each of the five chord qualities can be made, and get them comfortably under your fingers, then you can start working with the *Open Voicings Study*\*. Those lessons show how to convert them to open voiced chords to support melody lines in fakebooks, focusing on one song and one set of chords at a time.

**Why do we learn the five basic jazz chords in root position?**

The reason we need to understand and learn the five basic jazz chords in root position first (Four-note chords of the 7<sup>th</sup>) is so we can then manipulate them in various ways to harmonize melody lines, make fill and play solos. But it is essential to have a firm understand of the chords in their root positions first so that when you manipulate them you can always refer them back to their root position so as to not lost track of the chord notes that you are re-arranging.

The better you know them in root position then the easier it will be for you to invert them and play them as open-voiced chords to harmonize melody lines

\*The open voicings study is on a separate page on the

GlenRoseJazz.com website: <https://www.glenrosejazz.com/open-voicings-study.html>

# Contents

## The Five Jazz Chord Types -Part One

**00:04** Opening title and new introduction begins.

I made this lesson several years before. I re-edited and updated it and included a new introduction that you will be greeted with first. Then you will see a difference in the video as the old introduction begins and the part of the original video lesson begins.

**2:57** Old title from original lesson begins here.

**5x12=60**

**Introduction**

**5:00** Building major 7 chords

**6:28**

**The Five Basic Jazz Chord Types**

- 1.CMaj7
- 2.C dominant 7
- 3.Cm7
- 4.Cm7b5
- 5.Cdim7

**7:42** Practice by going down in whole steps

A. This is a learning tool to organize your practice. If you want to study and learn all of the 60 chords this is a recommended method but not the only one. It's very easy to get lost and disoriented in the practice so going down in whole steps while helps keep your study organized helping to keep your place and remember which chords you have studied.

B. Explanation of what whole tone scales are

C. Demonstration, playing thru all the 5 chord types descending thru the whole-tone scale. This covers half of the jazz chords.

D. Add rhythms to the exercise to make the practice more enjoyable

E. Arpeggiate the chords for practice. This creates a classical sound

**11:20** Musical exercise for practicing in whole step

**Practice with 6/8 rhythm in the right hand (or any rhythm)**

This creates a classical sound and make practice more interesting  
Practice while going down in whole steps  
Use the pedal to make a smoother blending of the chords

**14:35**

**Practice with arpeggiated chords ( Classical sound)**

Another way to make practicing and learning the chords more enjoyable.

**16:21**

**Use the other whole tone scale to play the other six sets of chords**

**18:35**

**Play the chords in both hands**

practice playing the chords hand-over-hand

Helps to train both hands and creates a pleasant harp like effect

**22:13** Talk about why we are learning these chords –

**22:33** Open-voices chords under melody

**22:44** Excerpt from to Playing from a Fake book lessons. Danny Boy (Key of F)

**25:40** Talk after open voicings under melody demonstration

**26:28** Title: Continue to second half of this lesson (Part 2) where we explore ways to help  
Get familiar with the five jazz chord types in root position.

## The Five Jazz Chord Types – Part Two

**00:04** First goal: Learn all of the basic chords

**02:39** “Chords for chords sake: The enjoyment of the sound of chords by themselves.

**04:31** Recite the five jazz chord types. Learn to say all of the chord types in order

**Maj7 - Dom7 - m7 - m7b5 - dim**

**05:10** Maj 7 practice – Practice major 7 chords going down in whole steps.

**09:19** Look for chords with similar hand formations

**09:41** White note chords that that have the same hand formations

**Am7 – Dm7 – Em7**

**11:56** Cm7 and Fm7 are made with the same hand formations.

White-black-white-black. **Cm7 – Fm7**

**12:58** C#m7 and F#m7 are made with the same hand formations.

White-black-white-black. **C#m7 – F#m7**

**14:36** C#m7 Roll the chords

**15:26 Ebm7** – All black notes

**16:18 Amaj7 – Dmaj7 – Emaj7** made with the same hand formations.

White-black-white-black.

**17:48** Dominant chords (**C7 – F7**) with the same hand formations

white – white – white – black

**18:54** Dominant chords (**A7 – D7**) with the same hand formations

white – black– white – white

**20:12** Practice with the organization of descending whole steps.

**26:49** The diminished chords

**26:49** Inverting diminished chords

**33:00** Minor 7b5 (m7b5) jazz shorthand =  $\emptyset$

**37:51** Once again... The purpose for learning these basic chords is to learn how to use them for reading from a fakebook.

**39:01** End of lesson. Proceed to the **Open-Voicings** lessons or the **Matching Inversions to Melody** lessons to begin applying the five jazz chord types to playing from a fakebook.

**The five chord types are:**

<u>Chord qualities</u>	<u>Jazz shorthand for chord names</u>
Major 7	$\Delta$
Dominant 7	7
Minor 7	m7
Minor 7(b5)	m7 $\emptyset$
Diminished	o

## **A note from me about my beginnings in jazz....**

I remember back when I was a young hot-shot-wanna-be, jazz pianist just starting out with jazz in junior college. I was working along side my father in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox studios music department where he was in charge of editing and writing out by hand all the music for the studio, orchestra recording sessions. One of his colleagues with us there was a brilliant studio rehearsal pianist. One day I got up the nerve to ask him for some jazz piano pointers. He said sure and wrote out a lesson for me with all the 5 basic-jazz chords (four-note 7<sup>th</sup>) and told me to learn them in all inversions and to arpeggiate them in a few octaves. I was incredibly disappointed but was polite and thanked him. I couldn't believe how square this supposed great professional tip was. I thought, *"Hey, this isn't jazz, this is just basic stuff anyone who has studied classical piano can do."*

I pretty much ignored the advice and went back to my hot-shot playing pursuits. But it kept gnawing at me as time went by. Could I do this simple, basic square stuff he showed me? The answer was no. Well, I couldn't let that stand. I might as well learn the stupid stuff just to prove how useless it was. Well, I think you can guess the moral of this story. There was never a more important lesson that I ever learned. My playing started to really blossom after I mastered them. (took a long, long time by the way) it filled in a tremendous gap in my musicianship and understandings about music in general. It's really like learning the alphabet. Once you have command over these basic chords everything evolves out of them for your playing, arranging/composition and overall musicianship.