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Thirds Pattern

Why Practise Scale Patterns?

Practising scale patterns is one of the most effective ways to develop finger dexterity, improve familiarity with your instrument, and build a strong foundation for confident improvisation. Patterns help your fingers learn how notes connect, making your playing feel more natural and fluid.

Understanding Thirds

In this lesson, we will look at a very common and extremely useful pattern known as thirds. To understand the idea clearly, we will begin in the key of C major.

The C Major Scale

C D E F G A B C

Building the Pattern

C → E

D → F

E → G

F → A

G → B

A → C

B → D

C → E

How the Pattern Works

Once these pairings are understood, we simply read across to create the thirds pattern. For practice, play the full pattern ascending and descending. For improvisation, you can use smaller fragments of the pattern.

Example Fragments

Ascending Ideas, question and answer format:

E G E G

F A F A

G B G

Descending Ideas, question and answer format:

D B D B

C A C A

B G B

Applying the Pattern to Chords

This pattern will work beautifully over all of the modes within the same key. In this example, working within C major, the pattern fits naturally over:

C Major

D-7

E-7

F Major

G7

A-7

B-7b5

Final Thoughts

Practising patterns like this is both musical and practical. They improve technical control while simultaneously strengthening your improvisational vocabulary. Over time, these patterns begin to appear naturally in your solos.

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