

Piano Voicing Overview

Practice until you can play it without error or hesitation at the indicated tempo. Practice in segments (two measures at a time, if necessary) until you can play the entire passage. When comfortable with the harmony, try playing different styles: swing, bossa, samba, pop, funk, etc.

1. Basic voicings with good voice leading shown through key center cycle:

♩ = 60 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Fmaj7 Bø7 E7 Am7 A7^{b9}

Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Fmaj7 Bø7 E7 Am7 A7^{b9}₁₃

2. Basic voicings with good voice leading shown through key center cycle:

Gm7 C7 Fmaj7 Bbmaj7 Eø7 A7 Dm7 D7^{b9}

Gm7 C7 Fmaj7 Bbmaj7 Eø7 A7 Dm7 D7^{b9}

3. Example no.1 shown with “drop 2” open voicings through key center cycle. Inner voices are more easily heard. Some altered dominants have been used, but voice leading remains the same:

Dm7
G7
Cmaj7
Fmaj7
Bø7
E7
Am7
A7^{b9}

Dm7
G7
Cmaj7
Fmaj7
Bø7
E7
Am7
A7^{b9}_{b13}

4. Example no.2 shown with “drop 2” open voicings through key center cycle. Inner voices are more easily heard. Some altered dominants have been used, but voice leading remains the same:

Gm9
C7^{#9}_{b13} C7^{b9}_{b13}
Fmaj7
Bbmaj7
Eø7
A7^{#9}_{b13} A7^{b9}_{b13}
Dm9
D7^{#9}_{b13} D7^{b9}_{b13}

Gm9
C7^{#9}_{b13} C7^{b9}_{b13}
Fmaj7
Bbmaj7
Eø7
A7^{#9}_{b13} A7^{b9}_{b13}
Dm9
D7^{#9}_{b13} D7^{b9}_{b13}

5. Basic left hand voicings useful when playing with a bass player. Right hand can play single notes, octaves, triad shapes, upper extensions, or single line solos over the top.

Dm9 G13 G13^{b9} Cmaj7 Dm9 G7^{#9}_{b13} Cmaj7
 Gm9 C13 Fmaj7 Gm9 C7^{#9}_{b13} Fmaj7

6. Sample F blues chorus shown using basic left hand chords, octave right hand melody, typical comping rhythms:

F7 Bb7 F7 C7^{#9}_{b13} F7 F7^{#9}_{b13}
 Bb7 F7^{#9}_{b13} Bb7 F7 Eb7 D7^{#9}_{b13} Gm9
 C9sus4 C7^{#9}_{b13} F7 D7^{#9}_{b5} G7^{#9}_{b13} C9sus4 C7^{#9}_{b13}F7