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Audio Tracks

TRACK	DESCRIPTION/TITLE
[1]	Tuning Notes (A = 440)
[2]	E \flat major Triad Piece (Example 5)
[3]	E \flat major Triad Piece (without guitar)
[4]	G Shuffle Blues (Examples 7–10 and 12–13)
[5]	G Shuffle Blues (without guitar)
[6]	G Gospel Blues (Examples 18–19) For play-along, use track [5]
[7]	Blues/Rock Shuffle (use with any G blues)
[8]	G Blues/Latin (use with any G blues)
[9]	G Minor Blues (Example 11)
[10]	G Minor Blues (without guitar)
[11]	F Jazz Blues (Examples 14–15)
[12]	F Jazz Blues (without guitar)
[13]	Harmony Across the Strings (B \flat maj) (Example 20–31)
[14]	ii–V–I–VI7 (B \flat maj) (without guitar)
[15]	ii–V–I–VI7 over G Pedal (even 8th-notes) (Examples 32–36)
[16]	G Pedal (even 8th-notes) (without guitar)
[17]	Chord Exercise in Sequence over C Pedal (Examples 41–44)
[18]	C Pedal (even 8th-notes) (without guitar)
[19]	Style—3/4 Latin Vamp in G (Examples 45–47)
[20]	3/4 Latin Vamp in G (without guitar)
[21]	ii–V–I Cadences (B \flat maj) (Examples 52A–D)
[22]	ii–V–I (B \flat maj) (without guitar)
[23]	ii $^{\circ}$ –V–i Cadences (Gm) (Examples 53A–D)
[24]	ii $^{\circ}$ –V–i (Gm) (without guitar)
[25]	Major/minor Exercise in G (Example 58–62) For play-along, use track [16]
[26]	G Pedal/Latin
[27]	“Mundo Desmondo” (Examples 63–65)
[28]	“Mundo Desmondo” (without guitar)
[29]	“Some Things You’re Not” (Examples 66A–C)
[30]	“Some Things You’re Not” (without guitar)
[31]	Gm7–E \flat maj7#4 Exercise (examples 67–69)
[32]	Gm7–E \flat maj7#4 Exercise (without guitar)
[33]	“Don Grolnelius” (Unit 19—improvised piece)
[34]	C Pedal Shuffle (without guitar)
[35]	“Cintura City” (A \flat 7–B \flat m7 Latin Vamp)
[36]	A \flat 7–B \flat m7 Latin Vamp (without guitar)
[37]	“Sliceville” (B \flat Latin Blues)
[38]	B \flat Latin Blues (without guitar)
[39]	“Khalatmo” (F7–B \flat 7–B \flat 7–F7 Latin Vamp)
[40]	F7–B \flat 7–B \flat 7–F7 Latin Vamp (without guitar)
[41]	“Gracinha” (ii–V–I–VI7 B \flat maj Latin Vamp)
[42]	ii–V–I–VI7 B \flat maj Latin Vamp (without guitar)



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Dedication

The work in this book is dedicated with love and gratitude to my mother, Gloria and to my sister, Laurie . . . and, as always, to my dear son, Heath.

Correspondence

Please feel free to visit my website: <http://www.stevekhan.com> and, if you like, write to me anytime via the **CONTACT STEVE** page at the site.

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It seems strange that with our instrument, in the world of pop and rock music, there could exist such a thing as a “rhythm guitar” player. A guitarist who just plays the chords. And, a “lead guitar” player, one who only plays solos, fills, and licks. I find this odd because I believe that you must try to play ALL of the instrument as best you can. Obviously, you’ll have strong and weak points, but don’t let your shortcomings get the best of you. You CAN develop into a well-rounded musician and guitarist.

Since the '80s, music education has advanced faster than one can keep up with. During the '60s, when I was trying to learn how to play the guitar, you had private teachers, a few books, and exchanges of information with friends, but mainly YOU HAD YOUR EARS! If you couldn’t hear things quickly, you were lost. No play along CDs, no videos, instructional books with cassettes, no “REAL BOOK,” and no Jamey Aebersold’s “JAZZ AIDS” service.

As a teacher I’ve been amazed at the technical advances on the instrument. Never has there been so many players with such incredible technique. Often-times that ability has come at the expense of a comprehensive knowledge of music: harmony and theory. In my experience, that has translated into students allowing their chordal knowledge to lag far, far behind. So, as a teacher, I’ve tried to bring in the extremes and share my concepts about being able to put to use all the possibilities the guitar offers for more complete expression.

After I had moved to New York City in January of 1970, I began to slowly add more guitar and music books to my library. I recall purchasing several “Chord Dictionary” publications, some with as many as 80,000 chords. I remember thinking, “How could there possibly be THAT many chords?” As I studied these books and continued to learn about the guitar, I realized that most of these chords just fulfilled a number in the book but proved to be virtually useless when making music with other musicians. In this book, I’ve tried my best to make certain that everything presented has the potential to be used in a variety of settings. I would be the first to admit that I have not covered every single possibility, but, the work assembled here will certainly serve as an excellent source to which to refer anytime.

In a sense, for my own approach, I’ve tried to view things in a more pianistic manner. The pianist can accompany their right-hand lines with their left-hand. So, in part, I’ve worked at playing the guitar with this kind of approach in mind, but, the key difference for me is NEVER view the left-hand aspect as “just a bunch of chords!” The concept is to ALWAYS hear the top note of any chord as having melodic content. This is of crucial importance. Your lines and your chords are of equal import and can function beautifully together in your hands.

My method for sharing this concept is actually a complete contradiction to the end result we hope to achieve. By that I mean, I treat chords as totally separate from the linear work. At the start, the two are only joined by harmonic theory. And, as the work progresses, the lines and chords slowly begin to function together. As there are many excellent books and videos which concentrate on the linear side of the instrument and improvising, I have chosen to focus on a chordal approach which can join those lines.

It’s my sincere hope that you will work slowly through this method from the building blocks to the more sophisticated concepts. Approach things in small study units by making a series of short term goals for yourself — something you CAN accomplish in a reasonable amount of time. You might find it difficult to place a specific time frame for the mastery of these concepts, but patience and a steady course will surely win out in the end.

All the best,



New York City, November 1996

triad superimposition

The following "Triad Superimposition" chart is an important one; once you understand its usage you can continually refer back to it. What I've done is to take a single bass note, the root in most cases, and used triads (both major and minor) which ascend chromatically over the root. As you're provided with a long "G" pedal vamp on the recording this work is presented over "G." I've analyzed the "real chord" function (its theoretically correct name) and the mode or scale one might need to know for improvising. When all is said and done, you'll actually have to know this information for the eleven other roots.

Let's look at the first example: F/G (an F triad over a G bass note). Although this chord can serve several functions, it's usually thought of as a dominant 7th (G7) type of sound. Because it contains no third (B \flat or B \natural), it could be part of the dominant or minor chord families. "F" is the \flat 7 of "G." When you superimpose a triad built from the \flat 7 degree over a bass note, that triad supplies the \flat 7th, 9th, and 11th chord tones which gives us G9(11) or Gm9(11). The 11th degree can also be referred to as the 4th or as a suspension: G9sus or Gm9sus.

One additional thought I'd like to add. You will hear these kinds of "slash" chords (F/G) referred to, incorrectly, as poly-chords. A poly-chord refers to harmony where two or more chords are actually being played simultaneously. You will find this kind of fantastic harmony, most often, in 20th century classical music. Such harmony is extremely difficult to associate one mode or chord scale with, and as you can see, with the conventional "slash" chords presented here, they all readily give us either a diatonic scale/mode or familiar scale-type with which to improvise. A true poly-chord would not do that so easily.

Example 4: triad superimposition chart

Major Triads

Triad/Root or Bass Note	Chord Name (most functional)	Mode/Scale
F triad/G	G7(9,11)	G Mixolydian, G Blues
F \sharp triad/G	This sound can function like a V7(alt.) chord	G whole-tone/half-tone diminished [G] A [B \flat] C [C \sharp] D \sharp E [F \sharp] B Harmonic Minor B [C \sharp] D E [F \sharp] [G] [A \sharp]B
G triad/G	Gmaj	G Major, G Lydian
A \flat triad/G	Fm/G	G Phrygian
A triad/G	G7(13, 9, \sharp 11) or Gmaj7 \sharp 4(6, 9)	G Lydian \flat 7 G Lydian
B \flat triad/G	Gm7	G Dorian
B triad/G	Gmaj7(\sharp 5)	G Lydian Augmented
C triad/G	Cmaj/G This sound is used in many ways, and tends to help create a Gospel or Blues feeling	C Major, C Blues, C Lydian G Major, G Blues
D \flat triad/G	G7(\flat 9, \flat 5)	G half-tone/whole-tone diminished [G] [A \flat] B \flat B [D \flat] D E [F]
D triad/G	Gmaj7(9)	G Major, G Lydian
E \flat triad/G	Cm7/G	C Dorian
E triad/G	G7(13, \flat 9)	G half-tone/whole-tone diminished [G] [G \sharp] B \flat [B] D \flat D [E] F

Minor Triads

Fm triad/G	Fm/G	G Phrygian
F \sharp m triad/G	Gmaj7(\sharp 4, 9)	G Lydian
Gm triad/G	Gm	G Dorian
A \flat m triad/G	G7(\sharp 5, \flat 9)	G Altered Dominant Super Locrian
Am triad/G	C6/G This is a sound used a lot in Gospel music	G Major, G Mixolydian, G Blues
B \flat m triad/G	Gm7 \flat 5	G Locrian/B \flat Dorian
Bm triad/G	Gmaj7	G Major, G Lydian
Cm triad/G	Cm/G	C Dorian
D \flat m triad/G	G7(13, \flat 9, \flat 5)	G half-tone/whole-tone diminished
Dm triad/G	G7(9)	G Mixolydian, G Blues
E \flat m triad/G	G \flat 13(\flat 9)/G \flat 9 in bass (rarely used)	G \flat half-tone/whole-tone diminished
Em triad/G	G6	G Major, G Mixolydian, G Blues

rhythm and blues/ gospel chordal approach

Though I wouldn't dare attempt to posture myself as a complete historian on the growth of gospel music's chordal style and its deep rooted place in American popular music, I am certain that I have a good feeling for this music. And, always keep in mind that no matter how far out you may aspire to play, the blues should always be present somewhere in your music.

The reference sheet which follows (Example 17) is offered simply as a place to begin. As you'll notice, on the guitar (like the right-hand of a pianist), the style is rooted in simple major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads. If you'd like to delve deeper into the style from a pianists' point of view, make the effort to watch and listen to the videos and recordings of Ray Charles, Richard Tee, and Dr. John.

With two sample choruses of a 12-bar "G" blues (Examples 18 and 19), I've tried to give you most of the basics as I might employ them. Obviously one could devote an entire text to this area alone, but I hope that this will inspire you to explore this wonderful genre at greater length. I've also offered an alternate introduction, or pick-up, in the style of Wes Montgomery because he did so many clever things with his blues oriented compositions, especially in his usage of parallel diminished 7th chords.

Example 17: Derivation of Gospel / Rhythm & Blues Chordal Style

G7 Chord Scale (G Mixolydian):

Triad Stacks:

G Blues Scale:

Additional Triads:

Ascending on Guitar:

Optional voicings: