

DIMINISHED SCALE PATTERNS

DIMINISHED SCALES ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES: HALF-WHOLE DIMINISHED SCALES, AND WHOLE-HALF DIMINISHED SCALES. THE SCALES AND PATTERNS SHOWN IN THIS LESSON ARE BASED ON THE HALF-WHOLE VERSIONS OF THE DIMINISHED SCALES. THIS MEANS THAT THE SCALES ARE CONSTRUCTED USING A REPEATED PATTERN OF HALF AND WHOLE STEPS. THE HALF-STEP AND WHOLE-STEP INTERVALS ARE IDENTIFIED IN THE FIRST EXAMPLE SHOWN TO THE RIGHT.

BECAUSE OF THEIR SYMMETRICAL NATURE, THERE ARE ONLY THREE DIFFERENT DIMINISHED SCALES. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS FOR THESE SCALES.

THE HALF-WHOLE DIMINISHED SCALES ARE OFTEN REFERRED TO AS DOMINANT DIMINISHED SCALES, BECAUSE THEIR APPLICATION IS GENERALLY FOR USE WITH DOMINANT CHORDS.* THE SECOND EXAMPLE TO THE RIGHT IDENTIFIES THE DOMINANT CHORDS MOST ASSOCIATED WITH THAT PARTICULAR SCALE. NOTICE THE MINOR THIRD SYMMETRY FROM CHORD TO CHORD. LOCATE AND IDENTIFY THE APPROPRIATE CHORDS FOR THE OTHER SCALES.

DIMINISHED SCALES ARE USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF FLAT NINE (ALSO KNOWN AS SHARP NINE) CHORDS, BUT MAY ALSO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH MOST DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS. THIS IS LARGELY BECAUSE DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS ARE CHORDS OF TRANSITION. THIS MEANS THERE IS HARMONIC MOVEMENT OCCURRING AROUND THESE CHORDS. DIMINISHED SCALES OFFER SEVERAL ALTERED TONES THAT ENHANCE, OR MAKE MORE INTERESTING, THE HARMONIC MOTION. EXAMPLE 3 IDENTIFIES THE DIMINISHED SCALE ALTERATIONS AS THEY APPLY TO A C7 FLAT NINE CHORD. NOTICE THAT IN ADDITION TO THE LOWERED 7TH ARE FLAT 9, SHARP 9, AND SHARP 11 ALTERATIONS. THE SAME ALTERATIONS ARE FOUND FOR THE DOMINANT CHORDS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH OF THE SCALES.

*DIMINISHED SCALES ARE ALSO USED WITH UNALTERED DOMINANT CHORDS BECAUSE OF THE EXOTIC SOUNDS CREATED BY THE ALTERATIONS. THEY MAY ALSO BE USED WITH SHARP 11 CHORDS.

EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2



EXAMPLE 3



PATTERN 4



THE MOTIF IN PATTERN 4 REPEATS EVERY THREE NOTES AT THE DESCENDING INTERVAL OF A MINOR THIRD.

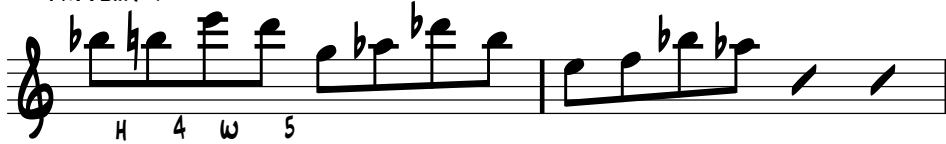
PATTERN 5



PATTERN 6



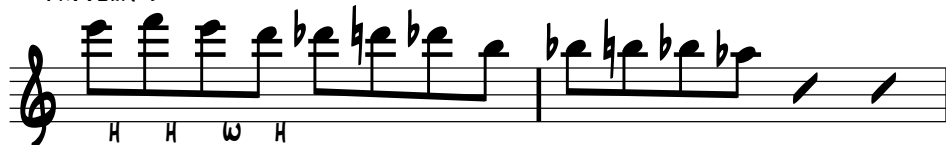
PATTERN 7



PATTERN 8



PATTERN 9



PATTERN 10

