

Creative Practicing

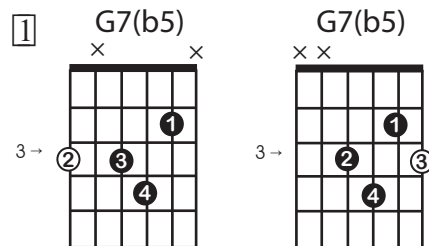
By Jimmy Wyble edited by David Oakes

Editors Note: This material is an excerpt from Jimmy's lecture that he presented at Musicians Institute on April 24, 2008. This was the third week of a ten-week quarter. In the previous weeks, he had been working with chord scales and other basic concepts with this new group of students. When I arrived at the class today, Jimmy had worked out some moves that he wanted to share with the students. I ended up transcribing these ideas and notating them on the board for him. Jimmy was thinking in terms of trying to spark the creativity and imagination in their (GIT students) practicing. This packet will outline his thought process.

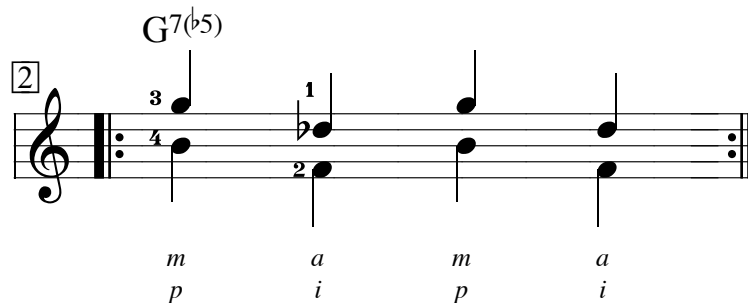
Fingering explanation: Here we will use standard classical guitar notation:

- Numbers around the note heads represent left hand fingering
- Circled numbers are the string that the note is played one.
- Right hand fingering: p – thumb, I – index finger, m – middle finger, a – ring finger.

Let's begin by looking at the G7(b5) chord. This voicing is a jazz guitar standby that is used over and over again. What if we changed this voicing around. First let's move the root from the 6th string to the 1st string. We have to alter our left hand fingering slightly to do this. (Example 1).



We can break down this voicing into two note groups. Repeat working carefully on the right hand fingering. This is not a natural move that needs much practice to perfect. Lift your fingers but keep the voices connected. (Example 2)



What if we expanded this idea back down to the 6th string with two note groups. (Example 3)

G7(b5)

m a m a m a m
p i p i p i p

Example 4 is a V – I idea based off of our new G7(b5) voicing. Always try to find lines and voice movement inside of your chord shapes.

m a m a a
p i p i m i p

Lets also look at that C6/9 voicing from example 4. That voicing has some interesting elements. The first problem in playing that chord is not playing on the 3rd string and splitting the chord voicing between your thumb and index playing the lower notes and your middle and ring finger playing the upper notes.

Break the chord up into two note voices. (see Example 5)

C6/9

a m a m
p i p i

Try playing this voicing as a chord scale. Use four fingers for four notes. (i.e. no bars).

<p>C 6/9</p>	<p>Dmi 6/9</p>	<p>E mi (b6/b9)</p>	<p>F 6/9</p>
<p>G 6/9</p>	<p>A mi b6/9</p>	<p>B mi b6/b9</p>	<p>C 6/9</p>

The interesting chord here is the E minor voicing. What if we move the root down a 1/2 step. The chord voicing takes on more of a Eb dom.13 shape. (see example 6)

6 Eb13 (no 7th)

What if we broke up the chord into two note voices. (see example 7)

Example 7: Musical notation for $E\flat^{13}$ chord broken into two voices. The notation shows a treble clef staff with notes G4, A4, B4, C5 and a bass clef staff with notes E3, F3, G3, A3. Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-5. The notes are labeled with *m* and *a* above and *p* and *i* below.

Lets create a line based off of this shape. (see example 8)

Example 8: Musical notation showing a line based on the shape from Example 7. It features a treble clef staff with notes G4, A4, B4, C5 and a bass clef staff with notes E3, F3, G3, A3. The notation includes a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one flat, and a change to 3/4 time. Chords $E\flat^{13(b5)}$ and $A\flat^{maj7}$ are indicated. Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-6. The notes are labeled with *m* and *a* above and *p* and *i* below.

Editors Note: Example 8 is an idea that Jimmy also used in etude 7 from the book “Art of Two Line Improvisation”.

What if we connected examples 3 and 8 together. (see example 9)

Example 9: Musical notation connecting the shapes from Examples 3 and 8. It features a treble clef staff with notes G4, A4, B4, C5 and a bass clef staff with notes E3, F3, G3, A3. The notation includes a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one flat, and a change to 3/4 time. Chords $E\flat^{13(b5)}$ and $A\flat^{maj7}$ are indicated. Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-4. The notes are labeled with *m* and *a* above and *p* and *i* below.

Editors Note: In Jimmy’s first seminar at Musicians Institute in February 2007, he said that his musical growth had always consisted of musical questions that always began with “What if”. What if I play this major scale with a lowered 3rd scale degree? What if I play a major scale and raise the 4th degree? Jimmy came before much of the conventional jazz nomenclature that we use today in education. There was no one who back in the 1930’s and early 1940’s could tell him that this sound is melodic minor or that this sound is lydian and this is how they are used. Jimmy had to discover all of these sounds by asking what if and challenging himself to always continue learning. This lesson is a great example of this thought process that started from one chord and continued to develop in a very creative way. Remember that all of these ideas started with a G7(b5) voicing and went from there. I hope that this lesson will inspire you to ask the “what if” question in your own playing. Below is my arrangement of “Green Dolphin Street” (first 16 bars) using ideas from this lesson plan. Enjoy!

- Measures 2, 3, 4 and 5 use concepts from the chord scale on page 3. Don’t play on the 3rd string.
- Measure 8 uses an idea from the “Contrapuntal Concepts” packet. (pg. 3 example 4)
- Measures 9 and 10 use the conterpoint idea similar to example 4 on page 2 of this packet. Measures 12 and 13 transposes the same idea up a minor 3rd.
- Bar 16 uses the idea on page 4 example 8.

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing two staves. The first system shows measures 1-5 with chords C6/9 and Cm7. The second system shows measures 6-10 with chords D(add2)/C, D♭(add2)/C, C6/9, and A7(b9). The third system shows measures 11-15 with chords Dm11, G7, and C6/9. The fourth system shows measures 16-16 with chords Fm11, B♭7, E♭6/9, and G+7. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and fingering numbers (1-4) and circled numbers (1-5) indicating specific techniques or string positions.