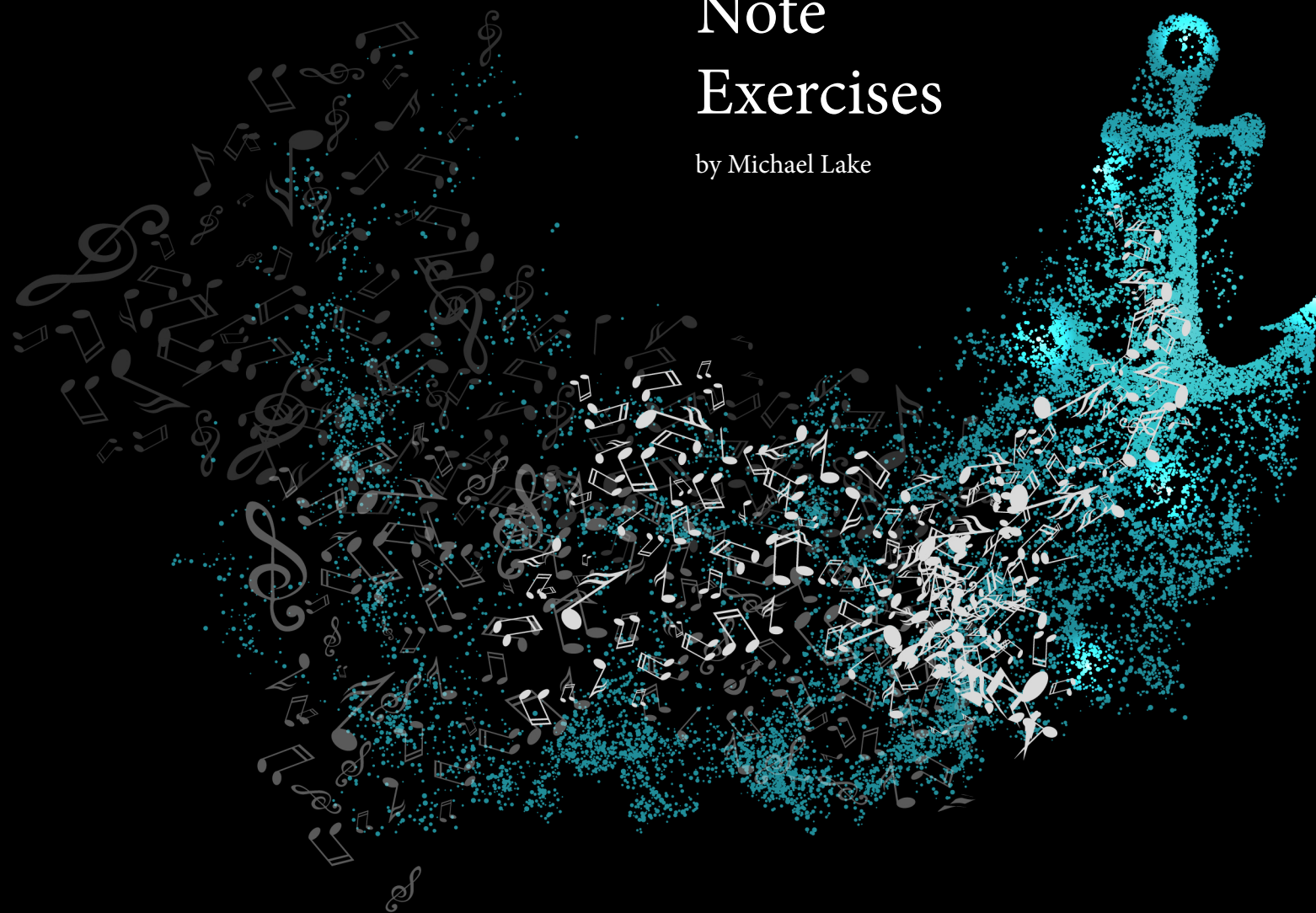


Anchor Note Exercises

by Michael Lake



Learning to play jazz, or improvise, usually starts with the question, “What do I play?”. Answers can be found in scales, patterns, and memorized licks, and those can be good resources, but what about a simpler and more fundamental answer to the question?



Anchor notes, as I’m introducing them, are single notes that can be played over a range of chord changes and sometimes over entire tunes. So, imagine if there was one note—G—that would work over every chord in a tune over which you wished to improvise.

Obviously, you’ll need to come up with other notes, but at least that G is a start and provides safe haven if you don’t know what to play over certain changes within that tune. G will always work in this case.

For example, play a Bb blues rhythm track. Now, play Bb on your instrument. Hear how it sounds over the chords? Now, play two or three other notes using that Bb as the starting point. Maybe end your short phrase back on the Bb.

Anchor notes provide a starting point and ending point for improvised phrases. They also provide you with a place back to tonal “safety”, meaning that Bb will always give you a note within the Bb blues that centers you within the harmony.

How to use these exercises

Within this ebook are seven rhythm tracks over which you can practice using anchor notes for improvisation.

For each rhythm track, one note can be played throughout nearly every chord change. On some tracks, there may be one or two chords that are exceptions, but every other chord will accommodate that one anchor note.

Using the written chord changes or by listening to the track, determine the best note to use as the anchor. You will know you have found the right note after playing it over the entire tune and hearing that it fits well within each chord.

Once you have found the note, improvise over the rhythm track. Your improvisation can take the form of two or three note phrases all starting on that anchor note. You can also play lengthier phrases that reference the anchor note but take greater liberties with what you play over the chord changes.

For each rhythm track, Michael has recorded a solo that relies pretty heavily on the anchor note for that progression. If you have difficulty determining the best anchor note for a track, listen to Michael’s solo and pick out the anchor note.

Each of these seven tracks use the same chord changes as a famous jazz tune. The tune has deliberately not been identified so that you

will not be tempted to rely on the melody or memorized phrases to improvise through the track. If you must know that tune associated with these changes, they are on the last page of this ebook on the lower left of the page. Even if you recognize the progression or read it from the last page, try to avoid using your learned licks or the melody and instead, rely on anchor notes to launch your improvised phrases or to serve as a phrase resolution.

The point of this last request is to help you hear the changes from a different perspective and therefore, to inspire you to play something different over what may be familiar changes.

Keep in mind that anchor notes are also very useful for helping you get back on track if you stumble over parts of the progression. If you start to veer from the “right” notes of the chord, play the anchor note in order to begin a new phrase that “anchors” you back into the changes.

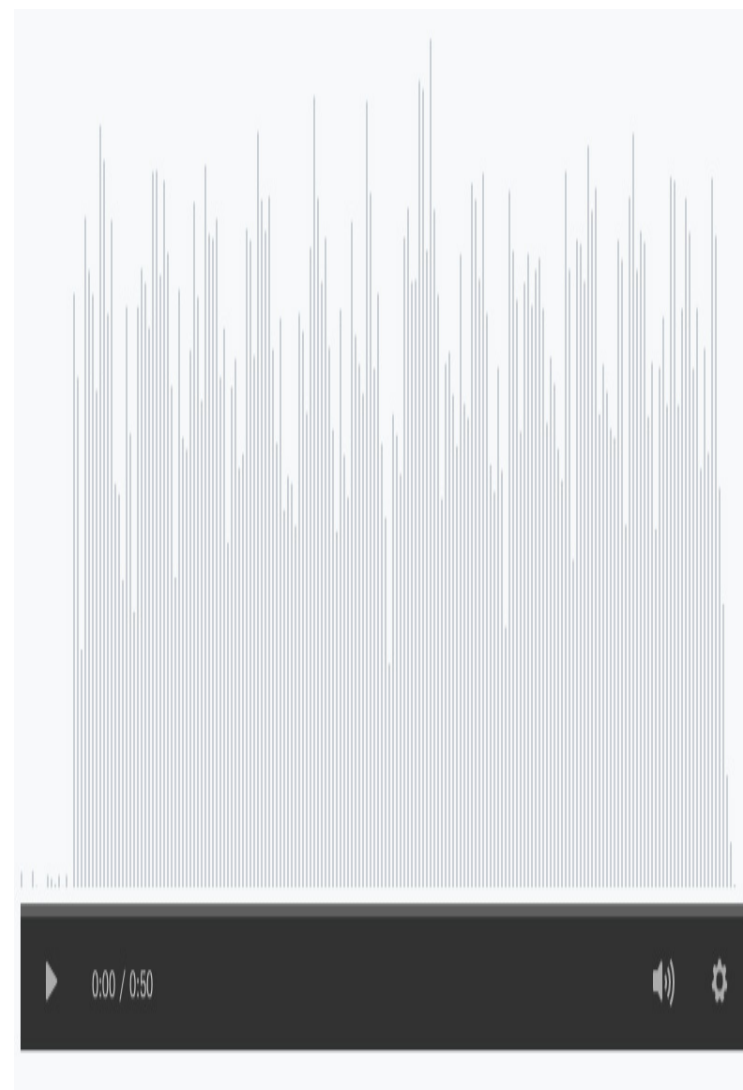
The Audio Files

Each exercise in the book is associated with an audio file within Dropbox.

Simply click or tap the icon associated with the file to bring it up in a Dropbox audio player window. The audio files stream from Dropbox. Play the files in your browser by tapping play, stop, pause and repeat. Download each file as you wish from Dropbox.



The rhythm track icon plays the audio file associated with each exercise.



Anchor Note Track #1

Anchor Note Track #1

Chord progression for Anchor Note Track #1 (4/4 time):

- Measures 1-4: E δ , A7(b9), C-7, F7
- Measures 5-8: F-7, B $\flat$ 7, E $\flat$ MA7, A $\flat$ 7
- Measures 9-12: B $\flat$ MA7, E δ , A7(b9), D-7, D-7/C, B $\flat$ -7, E $\flat$ 7
- Measures 13-16: FMA7, E δ , A7(b9), A δ , D7(b9)
- Measures 17-20: G7(#9), C-7, A $\flat$ 7(#11), B $\flat$ MA7
- Measures 21-24: E δ , A7(b9), D δ , G7(b9)
- Measures 25-28: C δ , F7(b9), B $\flat$ MA7

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #1 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #1

Anchor Note Track #2

Handwritten musical notation for Anchor Note Track #2, showing 8 measures of music across 8 staves. The notation includes various chords and a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Measures and Chords:

- Measure 1: E^b_{MA7}
- Measure 2: $D^{\flat}$
- Measure 3: $G7(b9)$
- Measure 4: $C-7$
- Measure 5: B^b-7
- Measure 6: E^b7
- Measure 7: A^b_{MA7} , $F^{\flat}$, B^b7 , E^b_{MA7}
- Measure 8: $C-7$
- Measure 9: $F7$
- Measure 10: $C-7$
- Measure 11: $F7$
- Measure 12: $F-7$
- Measure 13: B^b7
- Measure 14: E^b_{MA7}
- Measure 15: $D^{\flat}$
- Measure 16: $G7(b9)$
- Measure 17: $C-7$
- Measure 18: B^b-7
- Measure 19: E^b7
- Measure 20: A^b_{MA7} , $F^{\flat}$, $B^b7(b9)$, E^b_{MA7}
- Measure 21: $G-7$, $C7$
- Measure 22: E^b_{MA7} , $D7$, $G7$, $C7$, $F-7$, B^b7 , E^b

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #2 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #2

Anchor Note Track #3

Chord progression for Anchor Note Track #3 (4/4 time):

- Measures 1-4: Cmaj7, C-7, F7
- Measures 5-8: Gmaj7, Bb-7, Eb7
- Measures 9-12: A-7, D7, B-7, E-7
- Measures 13-16: A7, A-7, D7, Db7
- Measures 17-20: Cmaj7, C-7, F7
- Measures 21-24: Gmaj7, Bb-7, Eb7
- Measures 25-28: A-7, D7, B-7, E-7
- Measures 29-32: A7, A-7, D7, Gb

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #3 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #3

Anchor Note Track #4

Handwritten musical notation for Anchor Note Track #4, showing 32 measures across 8 staves. The notation includes various chords and rests, with measure numbers 5, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, and 31 indicated.

Chords and notation details:

- Staff 1: FMA7, G7
- Staff 2: G-7, Gb7, 1. FMA7, Gb7, 2. FMA7
- Staff 3: GbMA7, B7
- Staff 4: F#-7, D7
- Staff 5: G-7, Eb7
- Staff 6: A-7, D7(b9), G-7, C7(b9)
- Staff 7: FMA7, G7
- Staff 8: G-7, Gb7, FMA7

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #4 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #4

Anchor Note Track #5

G-7 C7 Fmaj7 Bb7 A-7 Ab7

G-7 C7 G-7 C7 Fmaj7 A-7 D7

G-7 C7 Fmaj7 Bb7 E7(b9)

Amaj7 F#-7 B-7 E7 A7 D7

G-7 C7 Fmaj7 Bb7 A-7 Ab7

G-7 C7 G-7 C7 Eb7 D7

G-7 G-7/F E7 A7(b9) D-7 G7

G-7 C7 Fmaj7

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #5 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #5

Anchor Note Track #6

Chord progression for Anchor Note Track #6:

- Staff 1: $Bb7$, $Eb7$, A^b_{MA7}
- Staff 2: E^b-7 , A^b7 , D^b_{MA7}
- Staff 3: D^b , D^o , A^b_{MA7}/E^b , $F7$
- Staff 4: $Bb7$, E^b7 , $F7$
- Staff 5: $Bb7$, E^b7 , A^b_{MA7}
- Staff 6: E^b-7 , A^b7 , D^b_{MA7} , D^b7
- Staff 7: D^b7 , D^o , A^b_{MA7}/E^b , $F7$
- Staff 8: $Bb7$, E^b7 , A^b_{MA7}

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #6 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #6

Anchor Note Track #7

Gmaj7
 F#7
 E-7 A7
 Dmaj7 Gmaj7
 C#7 F#7
 B-7 B7

Tap to play the audio file



Anchor note track #7 rhythm track



Michael Lake improvising over
Anchor Note track #7

#1 Chords to Stella By Starlight - Anchor note: D
 #2 Chords to There Will Never be Another You - Anchor note: F
 #3 Chords to Just Friends - Anchor note: G
 #4 Chords to Girl From Ipanema - Anchor note: A
 #5 Chords to Tangerine - Anchor note: A
 #6 Chords to In a Mellow Tone - Anchor note: F
 #7 Chords to the solo section of Spain - Anchor note: F#