



## Adding to the Structure: 3rds & 6ths, LH Expanders & Vamps

~ HANDOUT DATE: NOV. 3, 2016 ~

These are the notes I use to create the course pages. They're often not verbatim what I say in the videos or write on the pages of the website, but I hope they'll be useful as a start for your own note-taking!

### BEFORE YOU START

[Click this link and fill out the very short Roll-Call Check-in Form](#) (or scroll to the bottom of the page and fill it out right here.)

### PREFACE TO MODULE 3 – READ ME FIRST!

Welcome to Module 3! There are a LOT of separate pages in this module, but that's because I tried to break the main part of this module into very short segments (1-2 minutes).

Some of the more advanced pages are longer – **but unless you're taking this course for the 2nd, 3rd or more time, or you're an advanced player, you don't need to go beyond page "G" unless you just want to explore for fun.**

Here's what we'll be working on this week:

1. **Building DOWN from the TOP and UP from the BOTTOM.** In other words, enriching a **melody** by building harmony DOWN below it – and enriching a bass note by building UP from it. Basically what you're doing is adding the *accompaniment element* either BELOW the melody note, or ABOVE the bass note. (*And if you're taking this for the first time, you can choose to do EITHER or these – and not worry about doing both*)
2. **Learning one way to create simple VAMPS**
3. **Learning WHERE to put vamps to use**

4. **Singers** – there's also a page especially for you (and it can also be for anyone accompanying a melodic instrument)!
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*Before you start this week's lesson:*

## 1. CHAT Replays

You can find chat replays on the "Chat Replays" page in the sidebar

## 2. YOU DON'T HAVE TO 'GET' EVERYTHING

*(oops ... this 'little' message to you turned into a dissertation!)*

**There's more in this course than it's realistic to 'get' the first (or 2nd or 3rd) time through.**

**Everyone in this course is at a different level**, so don't gauge what you 'should' be getting by what you *think* other people are getting.

**Some people are taking it for the second time or third time.** Why? Because they (like me) need to go through things more than once before they can fully integrate it. With my experience *taking* courses, it's realistic to 'get' it all the first time through. (Actually, you *never* get it all).

**What's important is to get a few (or sometimes just one!) takeaways from each lesson that you, personally – at your level of playing – can put into practice right now.** If you're having trouble doing that, then that's a great time to ask a question, and often the 'dumber' the question the more fascinating it is for me to answer.

Keep thinking: "How can I put this into play right now?" and then go do it.

When I was first *learning and figuring out* these things, there might have been weeks, months or even *years* between each thing I learned. **I had lots of time to implement them and get fluent with them. Each new concept or trick/technique expanded my ability, basically doubling my options each time** (*because every time I learned a new LH pattern, for example, I now had the option to use the OLD pattern or the NEW pattern – so I had double the options.*)

Now they're all here in this course – which is great – **but that doesn't mean you can understand all the concepts, implement them and become fluent with them all in eight weeks.** (*If you did, I might be kind of disappointed – I mean, it took me years to figure them all out and get them written out. If you were able to just put them all into*

*practice in 8 weeks I might just go shoot myself. OK, not really – I'd be proud but probably a little jealous — but happily so.)*

**But 'getting them all' isn't even important!** The *techniques* and *concepts* I'm teaching you aren't even what's important – they're just the techniques *I've* discovered – they're just *my* way 'in' to music. **The freedom they give you to sit down and explore and find your own voice is what's important.**

**You might find that freedom after lesson 1.** Seeing that 5-part form might be *all you need* to be off-and-running for 20 years. The idea you learn this week about how to build *down* from the melody and *up* from the bass might be *all you need* to spend years happily playing.

### 3. Course Check-In Survey

We've embedded a course check-in survey here which we would like you to fill out to let us know how you are doing in the class so far and to find out if you need help finding the class materials, chats, or Facebook group.

The survey should take you 30 seconds or less to fill out and submit. We would really appreciate your participation so we can help you out if you need it.

Thanks!!

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## Finding Your Wormhole – Your Way-In

This little story I was writing for the course became a blog (and you can see that blog here: <http://www.hipharp.com/blog/?p=8272>) – but below is the way I originally wrote it for this course (and then I added images I made for the blog).

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### **I recently learned something that completely changed my relationship to a skill I was trying to learn.**

I know that Social Media is an essential part of my ‘job’ as an artist now – and I’ve never had much natural ease in social situations online or off – and I especially struggled with **Twitter**.



**I’d open my Twitter account and panicked, feeling like I had to say something brilliant.** I described it to people who I’d ask for help as a kind of “stage fright” and often they’d pooh-pooh my experience, since I have no stage fright on a concert stage *and therefore something as simple as Twitter should be easy for me.*

But it wasn’t.

They’d give me techniques for organizing my tweets. They’d tell me the 5 (or 3 or 7) *kinds* of essential daily tweets I should make. Blah blah blah.

**I’d taken courses, read ebooks, done research, created databases, tried to just *make myself do it* – and I just couldn’t feel comfortable with Twitter. It just felt like a ‘chore’ that I was really *BAD* at.**

Then, a few weeks ago, in a podcast, a famous social media expert (Gary Vaynerchuk) said, somewhere in the middle of an interview, “Twitter is all about listening” – as if that was a given that everyone knew. And – BING! I thought, “Wait a second, here. *I KNOW how to listen!* That’s something I *really know how to do.*”

And the whole experience changed for me.

### **I'd found my "Way In."**

**Everything else in the interview was interesting but went by in a blur – yet this one statement hit home.** This was the "way in" I'd been looking for – but I was so lost, and felt so alien in the environment that I didn't even know there might BE a 'way in' for ME – *I just thought it was something I wasn't GOOD at and that's why I felt so uncomfortable with it.*

**So the 'thing YOU need to hear' or the 'thing you need to know,' YOUR "Way in" could be very simple. But it's likely different for each person, because YOUR Way-In is based on who YOU are, what YOU know, how YOU think and what YOU are already good at.**

**As adult learners, while it's important to learn 'new' skills and concepts, it's even more important to find OUR "Way-in" – our wormholes, the shortcuts between the two dimensions of What-we-deeply-KNOW-how-to-do and What-we're-trying-to-do-RIGHT-NOW.**



**But stumbling on my wormhole – the one thing I needed to hear – and *being ready to hear it so that it resonated when I heard it* — that was what took time, and practice** (all the practice of doing Twitter badly) – because I needed to find – or stumble upon – the one tiny thing that spoke to ME about MY way into Twitter and I needed to be fluent enough to be able to act on it when it showed up.

**So when you go through the lessons, look for the things that speak to you, the things that make you think, “Hey, I can do that!”** Then sit down and do that one thing over and over and over – because that’s your thing, **and by doing it over and over you own it.**

And meanwhile ... just focus on getting *fluent* at as many of the techniques, skills and ideas you’re comfortable with so that when your “Way In” – or your many “Ways In” – come along, you’ll have a foundation – even if it’s a very simple, rudimentary foundation – from which you can put them into action.

MY ‘Way In’ with Twitter now, is just to listen with my eyes and look for tweets that evoke a response in me, and then to add that response. Sometimes it’s a smart-ass response – sometimes it’s thoughtful – sometimes it’s emotional.

**But all I do is listen-and-respond — It took me years to find the thing I do naturally as an improvising musician and apply it in this new format.**

Eventually I might find other ways I love to engage there ... or not ... but for now, that’s *all I’m doing* and I’m doing it over and over and over and over, *because that’s what works for ME* right now. And the weird thing is — it’s really FUN.

So plunge right in and have fun with lesson #3! **I’d love to hear your thoughts about wormholes in learning below.**



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## **DISCUSSION:**

What are your takeaways from this story? Have you experienced wormholes in learning, ability, or skill? Tell us about it.

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# Intro: Filling out the 5-Part Arrangement Structure

## This module is about three things:

**1. Adding DETAILS** to the arrangement structure we've been using by **enriching the MELODY and BASS**

You'll learn to build **DOWN from the melody** by adding 6ths & 3rds below the melody note (and you'll learn to NOT do this when the melody becomes more complex)

You'll learn to build **UP from the bass note** by adding an octave (1-8), a 1-5-8, or my favorite, a 1-5-10

**2. Learning one way to create simple VAMPS**

You'll learn "shape-shifting" with triads and 1-5-10's — keeping one part of a chord and moving another part of it to create a 2-chord or 4-chord oscillating "vamp"

**3. Learning to PUT VAMPS TO USE** as intros, endings and to use them in the exploration section

**4. SINGERS will learn a simple accompaniment** they can use *all the time*

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## You'll also learn about the principles of:

**1. Location** (or instrumental geography): The lower you are on the instrument, the more you want to open out the spacing of the chord so it doesn't sound muddy

**2. Variety:** There's an infinite variety to how you can arrange or organize or play with the notes of any chord

**3. Alternation & Simplification:** ways to simplify your LH – or ways to alternate LH and RH to make it easier to play both hands 'at once'

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## There's a lot in this lesson ... and you don't have to get it all

If you're still just getting a handle on the 5-part arrangement structure from **Module 1**, then just watch this lesson and pull out one or two small useful things to add to what you're doing.

**Remember to respect your level of playing and what *you* can do right now.** This course is designed for *all levels* of players – but that doesn't mean that everyone needs to be able to *do everything* I show you.

**This lesson is just giving you additional details** for the LH (bass) and RH (melody) **and an *alternative way* to approach intros, endings and explorations** (by using vamps).

**Some of you will look at the vamps in this lesson and think:** "Oh, cool! This is going to make the whole 'exploration' thing so much easier." Others will think, "Oh, no! I'm still working on the idea of 'variations' for the exploration – I'm not going to even think about vamps right now – I'll think about them later."

**Some will look at the 1-5-10 left-hand idea and think:** "Yay! That makes it easy for me to play every song in the Leadsheets PDF and make it sound like I have a full harmony!" Others will think "Ugh! I can't get my fingers to fit that shape!"

**Both approaches are totally correct.**

**Take what works *for you* and if you're confused about how to make it work for you, ask questions.**

The course is built so that, if *all you get* is the idea that there's a 5-part structure, and you can do different things with it, that's a LOT.

**REMEMBER:** When I was figuring these things out, I was often playing with one concept or technique for months or years before I discovered the next. I'm showing them to you one week after the next.

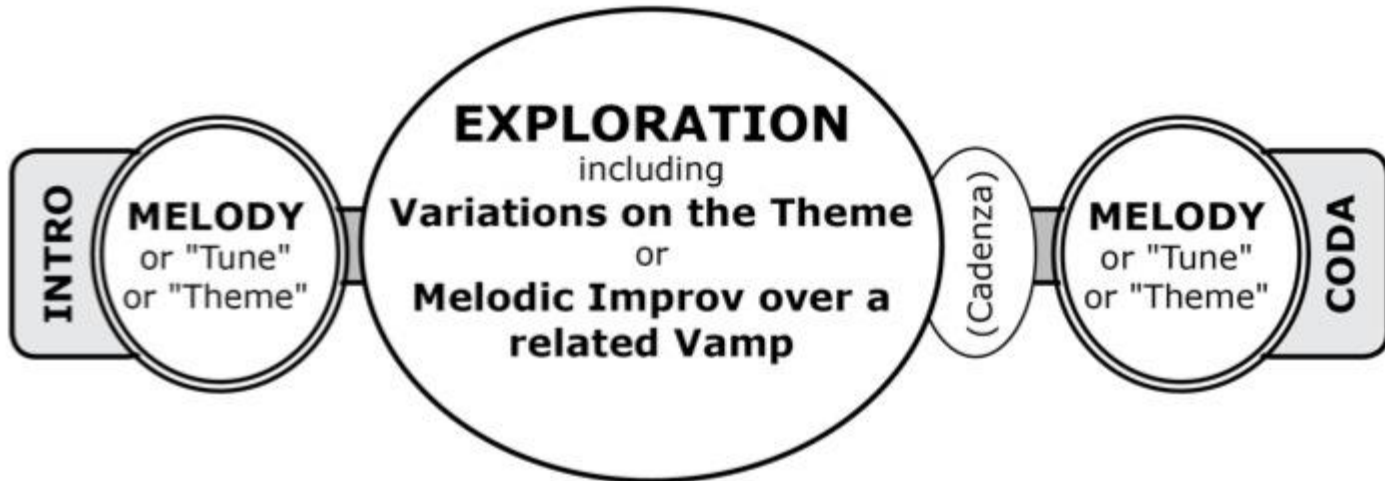
**So just take what 'clicks' for you and helps you play with that 5-part structure.**

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## What We've Learned So Far

In Module 1 you were introduced to the underlying structure of a standard arrangement that we'll use throughout the course. And you learned that this concept is like a pattern versus a piece of clothing.



**A specific written out arrangement is like a specific piece of clothing** that one person can wear. *This* concept or structure is like a pattern that you can use to make many different kinds of clothing from simple to elaborate, but all based on the same basic underlying pattern.

**The beauty of a pattern is that many people can use the same pattern, and by the way they use it and infuse it with their own taste and ability, that same pattern is going to look like a completely different piece of clothing.**

The tune you use, for example, is like the type of cloth you choose. You can use the same pattern (the 5-part arrangement structure) with different tunes (like different cloth) and the same 'pattern' will sound different – or look different – simply because you used a different cloth (or melody) to build it on.

And depending on what your technical abilities are at any point in your life, the arrangement will sound different ... not better or worse ... just different, because you'll make different choices based on what you're *able* to do physically at a certain time.

**And if it's a simple, basic pattern like ours is, you can keep it simple ... or you can elaborate on it.**

## You can put it into play NOW!

**This concept is the basis of the course and you can put it into real practice immediately.**

**If you didn't take any of the other modules** – if you only got the basic pattern in your mind of an introduction, a melody, middle section of variations or explorations, the melody, and the coda – **you could spend your life exploring that, APPLYING that one idea to different melodies. You could spend a lifetime exploring that..**

This structure is the most important part of the course.

**It's the basic concept. Everything else is specifics**, different *ways* of elaborating or interpreting that pattern – **but you can start putting that basic concept into practice right now** in the music you are doing now.

## Some of you are already doing that

I got an email from a student about this the first time I taught this course, and I want to share it with you (*with a few changes to make it a little less personal*)

*'I played for an event this morning and everything was running behind. So about 2 hours into this 4-hour event, I made a rule that I had to play everything with intro, melody, at least 3 explorations, melody, coda.*

*This worked on a lot of levels. **It kept me focused.** It also enabled me **to limit the number of pieces I played**, since each piece took much longer (like, 4 or 5 times as long) as the printed music.*

*I **discovered chord combinations** I never thought would work. I used **ornamentation** I had never used successfully before. I played "The Nightingale" for about 15 minutes and only repeated the first 2 pages (of the easy version) twice. I played "Amazing Grace" so many different ways I eventually lost count.*

*This was a wonderful opportunity to put theory into practice, and really helped cement the concepts for me, as well as helping me get through a tough gig.'*  
(Betsy Chapman)

## Put these Ideas into Play

**Remember, doing your homework** is just to help you see if you're getting the basic idea, to help you see what you **ARE** doing, to help you see where you may know *more* than you think you know *and* most importantly, **to help your questions surface!**

**I encourage everyone to DO the homework.** I always love looking at it – but won't always be commenting on it.

The ideas are ready for you to start using now. **I want you to put this into practice.** Make sure you've printed out the worksheet you got last week, so you can add to it any ideas you learn this week.

[Download that worksheet by clicking here](#) or by clicking on the image below.

### 5-Part-Arrangement Structure Review Worksheet



Print this page & add notes from last week to remind you how to approach each section. This sheet will help you focus on the form, and remember your options – you can also add any new ideas you get as you're practicing.

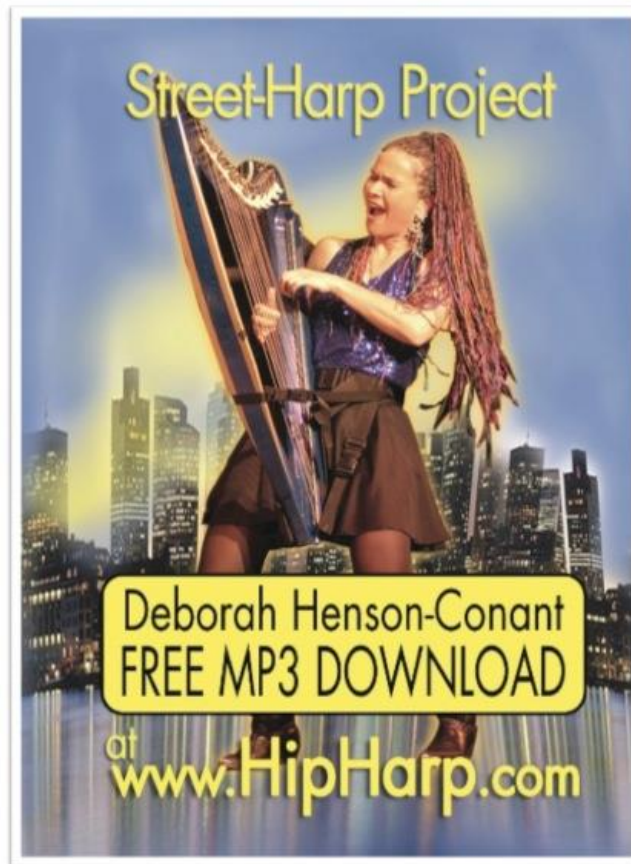
<b>Intro Ideas:</b>	(On the Dominant)
<b>"In-Melody" Ideas:</b>	(With a clear, strong melody & whatever level of bass-line you can play)
<b>Exploration Ideas:</b>	(2 or 3 VARIATIONS on the melody)
<b>"Out-Melody" Ideas</b>	(With a clear melody & whatever level of bass-line you can play)
<b>Coda Ideas</b>	(Including a 3X turn-around)

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## Don't just 'practice' – make sure you 'perform':

If you don't perform professionally, then *pretend perform* every day because there's a very different energy in performing than practicing. *Even if 'nobody' is listening* or you're playing for your houseplants, take some time each day away from 'practicing' to just 'play.'

## "Street Harp": A story of performance as practice



A few years ago, I did a project that I called "Street Harp" where I took my harp out into the streets into places that I normally didn't play, like in front of a subway station or sometimes out on the grass somewhere.

I did it for fun because I just wanted to do it — but one of the things that surprised me about it was that, **because I was spending more time each day actually performing**, whether people were listening to me or not, **I was in a performance situation vis-a-vis my mind** (versus a practice-type situation where I was just sort of 'trying things out') – **and my playing improved dramatically.**

**I wasn't playing more hours or more time, but the focus I was using was very different.** It was a focus of *performance* versus a focus of *practice*, and that focus of performance really made me connect the things that I was doing in ways that practice didn't. I want you to think about that so that you take a little time each day to "perform."

## Ride the Arc (Ravel)

**You create a sense of the “arc” of the piece by *playing* that arc – even if every note is wrong!**

When I was in college, I'd end each practice session playing the whole arc of the piece I was working on — *even if it sounded like utter drivel.*

This is something that I would do especially when I was practicing concertos and pieces that felt way beyond my technical ability.

**I would spend 90% of my time practicing little bits of it with a metronome, getting it ‘faster and faster’ and getting more and more notes — and then each day, at the end of each practice session, I allowed myself to, or made myself, ‘play’ the whole piece.**

If you were listening from outside, you'd have no idea what I was doing (for example, playing Ravel's “Introduction & Allegro”) because sometimes I was playing the *gestures* of the piece, but playing completely wrong notes — **but I was playing the arc of the piece.**

You would have heard something with the ‘shape’ of the piece I was playing, but almost none of the right notes.

**I did this to get a sense of the ‘whole’** and how it ‘worked’ together, in addition to practicing each little part of it.

I want you to be doing that at least once a day. Just ‘play’ *as if you could actually play all the notes.* Just make sure nobody's listening — **unless it's someone with an open mind** who knows what you're doing and won't make snide comments, or even semi-snide faces.

*(Years later I realized this was basically the “Think” method that was depicted in “The Music Man” – it was just as successful – and just as ripe for criticism the way I did it ... except that I never let anyone hear me do it!)*

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# Protect Your Spirit from Criticism: Isolation & Home-Free

We talked about this last week, but it bears repeating again ... and again. Be aware of when you're taking musical risks and consciously *protect* yourself from criticism so you don't have to *defend* yourself from it.

## Two ways to do this:

1. **Isolate Yourself:** Make sure no one can hear you if you're at home
2. **Be very clear about the melody** if you're in a semi-public situation

**Yes, you can actually take musical risks in semi-public if you're strategic about it.** And background music situations are perfect for setting up structures that include risk. So long as your melody is clear and the basic arc is clear, you can have some flexibility in your explorations.

**If you suspect people think you're lost (or if you know you're lost),** gracefully end the current exploration, gently segue back to a very clear melody, play it very clearly, get very centered there with that melody, and then you can either end the tune with a coda, or you can try another exploration.

If you've taken my "Baroque Flamenco Beyond the Page" course, you'll know that that's actually how I originally created that piece: by creating a series of improv sections based on simple vamps, and then returning to the melody any time I got lost.

**Just make sure you have a Home-Free** – a strong place to 'land' where you can feel clear and safe so that you'll feel safe going off on these explorations. The Home-Free is almost always a clear melody. And the more solid it is, the safer you'll feel exploring musically and the safer people will feel listening to you.

**This is another way in which structure creates freedom.** This "home-free" is a kind of structure that, when it is strong and you feel confident in it, can allow you to go on more experimental explorations because you know you have this safe place to come back to.

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# Let's Get Started! 3 of my favorite Building Blocks

I wanted to build this course in such a way that if you stopped at any point of the course, you'd be able to use what you've already learned and put it into practice and that would be enough.

So the first module was about the overall structure – and this week we'll talk about 3 building-blocks in that structure.

These are 3 of my favorite arrangement building blocks. **So this is a pretty hefty week, but these ideas all work together** – and you can add them little-by-little, one at a time – or all at once.

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## 3 of my favorite Building Blocks

**There are 3 things in this week's lesson and they can all be used together:**

- **3rds & 6ths:** The first is a very simple and very effective idea of using 3rds and 6ths to enhance a melody by building down from the melody note
- **Building up from the Left-Hand Bass:** The 2nd is what to do with your left hand – or you could call it 'building an accompaniment from the bottom up' so it's about both the bass & the accompaniment
- **Vamps for Intros, Endings & Exploration:** The 3rd is the idea of vamps – which are great for introductions, endings and explorations and it will introduce you to the cadenza
- And then ... I added a special page for singers – and if you're accompanying other instruments, you can use the same ideas



## Building Down from the Top: Enriching the Melody with 3rds & 6ths

One of the simplest ways to enrich a melody is to put a 6th or a 3rd below it. This is especially good for simple melodies like "Frere Jacques" (below).

Simple bass - play melody with thumb and put 6th or 3rd under it

When a melody gets more complex, simplify the accompaniment\*

*\*In this case, we kept the idea of 6ths in the melody in measure 5 & 6 but played them with the left hand and removed the bass*

**6ths seem to be a little bit safer** in general (than 3rds) but you can try either one or mix and match. I often think about it as keeping my hand in the 'shape' of a 6th and then playing the melody with my thumb all the time (this is going to come in big-time once you start playing jazz or when you start putting whole chords under the melody, by the way – so it's great to start getting comfortable doing it now).

**If you can't play 6ths on all the notes, just play it on the first note of each measure**– it'll still give the same basic feeling. You can also put a 3rd underneath it. Sometimes the 3rd will sound good – or even 'better' than the 6ths and sometimes it won't – so I just try both and see what you like.

**Doing this while playing even a single bass note is very pretty** and a perfectly good choice for enriching a melody at any level of technical ability (meaning, this isn't something you grow out of – it'll be pretty forever).

## 2 Notes = Rhythmic Options!

And as soon as you have 2 notes you have the possibility for oscillating between them, creating simple (or complex) rhythmic accompaniments.

## When the melody gets complicated ... ... the accompaniment gets simpler!

You don't necessarily keep playing 6ths through a whole tune, especially when the melody gets more complicated (see the 5th & 6th measures of "Frere Jacques" above).

When the melody gets complex, you can simplify the accompaniment – or simply leave the LH out!!

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**Stop and try this out.** Take the 6 melodies in your repertoire and just play through them adding 6ths and 3rds under the melody notes – sometimes playing the 6th (or 3rd) in your RH with the melody note in the thumb and playing a single bass note w/LH (*like m. 1-4 in "Frere Jacques" above*) – and sometimes playing the melody note with your RH and the 6th below it with your LH (*like m. 5 & 6 above*).

If this is PLENTY for you, then don't worry about going any further in this module, or just skip around for fun and come back to really focus on this one idea this week.

If you're taking this course again for the 2nd, 3rd or more time or if you're an advanced player – there's plenty more ahead for you to add into your arrangements!

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## Building UP from the Bottom: Expanding up from a single bass note to create a whole harmony

The easiest bass note to play is just a single note: the “big letter” of a leadsheet, or the root of a chord. And a single note is a beautiful sound on a harp.

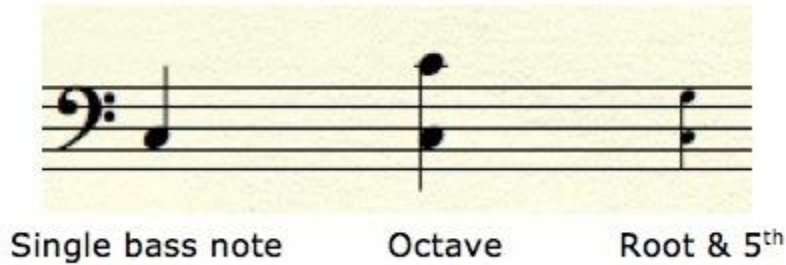
When I say “the big letter” the circled letters on the leadsheet below are what I mean.

This is a simplified version of a chart (also known as a ‘leadsheet’) that we’ll be looking at later in the course – but you’re welcome to try it now. Just play the melody notes and a single note or octave in the bass and you’ll see that you’re playing the leadsheet.

**Bossa**

The image shows four staves of musical notation for a piece titled "Bossa". Each staff begins with a circled chord symbol. The first staff starts at measure 25 and has circled symbols: A-7, FΔ, A-7, B-7(b5), and E7. The second staff starts at measure 29 and has circled symbols: A-7, A-7/G, FΔ, E-7, and A-7. A red annotation with an arrow points to the A-7/G symbol, stating "(you can play either 'big letter' on beat 3)". The third staff starts at measure 33 and has circled symbols: D-7, G7, CΔ, and FΔ. The fourth staff starts at measure 37 and has circled symbols: B-7(b5), E7, A-7 (with a first ending bracket), B-7(b5), E7, and A-7 (with a second ending bracket). The circled symbols represent the "big letter" or root of each chord.

The next step to building a bass, is an octave. And that doesn't mean that you'll ever 'get over' playing a single bass note – because that's also a great sound.



The minute you have two notes, you can oscillate them or create a rhythm out of them (you can also create a rhythm with a single note, but it's *really easy* to do when you have two notes). Then you can improvise melodies 'over that' with your right hand.

## Using Alternation to play '2 Hands at (almost) the same time'

When you're putting a LH pattern or structure together with RH melodies or melodic improv – *you don't always have to play them together at the same time in order for them to sound like they're working 'together.'* Depending on your skill-level or preference, you might alternate between playing the LH and the RH (i.e. play the LH note or octave, then RH noodling, then LH note(s), then RH noodling, and so on.)

I just really want you to think about how powerful and useful octaves can be.



## Stop and try this out:

**Try playing single notes or octaves with your LH and 'improvising' with your RH using scales and little parts of melodies (i.e. noodling). Then try creating a rhythmic pattern by breaking the octave apart and try noodling over that.**

**For now, just think of this as 'noodling' with your RH and don't worry too much about doing it in rhythm.**

**Get an idea of where you're at – can you play LH notes and noodle with RH at the same time? If you slow it down does that help? Do you need to alternate the LH and RH to be comfortable doing 'both at once'? Can you add a *greater* challenge (a more complex RH, or stronger rhythm between hands), and still keep a strong sense of rhythm? **Just get a sense of where you're at technically right now, so you have an idea of what to expect of yourself. And be kind.****

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## Discussion:

*What are your thoughts and takeaways about this? Are there things about it that are easy? Things about it that are hard? What are they?*

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## Adding a 3rd note: 1-5-8 (UP from the Bottom continued)

So going on from the simple octave, you can add a 5<sup>th</sup> ...



...and then you have even *more* opportunity for rhythm.

You can play a basic latin beat, a simple waltz or a more complicating oscillating waltz:



If your coordination is developed enough, you can play a LH and improvise melodically (noodle) with your RH. If not, you can alternate, playing the LH rhythm, then playing the RH *in rhythm*, then playing the LH, etc.



## **Stop and try this out:**

**Create a rhythmic pattern with your left hand** using root, octave and 5<sup>th</sup>.

Then try improvising (noodling) with your RH while you're playing the LH. As always, observe yourself like a parent watching a child.

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## **Discussion:**

How do you-the-parent, need to set up the work/exercise so that you-the-child can have fun with it while avoiding frustration?

How can you-the-parent build in challenges along with comfortable patterns that leave you freer to experiment with your RH?

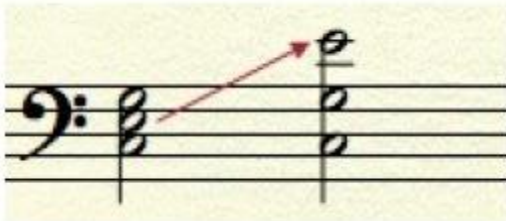
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## My favorite LH structure: 1-5-10 (UP from the Bottom continued)

**"The '1-5-10' tells you everything – that's the good news AND the bad news"**

The 1-5-10 LH is basically a triad, but opened up by taking the 3rd out from between the root & the 5th and putting it up an octave. This makes a beautiful, rich LH accompaniment that combines a clear bass note with the full harmony of a chord.

That full harmony is both the good news ... and the bad news.



If you know for sure your pedals or levers are set up for the right harmony – it's beautiful. If you're not sure, then it can be nerve-wracking because it can sound really, really 'wrong' ... or really, really right.

**So if you get confused about whether a chord is major or minor or if you can't get up there fast enough to change a lever to make the right harmony just go back to either an octave or an octave-and-a-fifth in the bass because that avoids the whole issue of whether you're playing a major or a minor chord.**





## Stop and Try this Out:

Go back to your 6-tune repertoire from week 2. Play through the melodies only, adding 6ths, 3rds, or octaves below the melody note in your RH if you want.

Play through each 3 times, first with just a single note in the bass, but then with an octave, then with 1-5-10 and just listen. Are there times you choose an octave or a single note simply because your RH and LH are colliding? Great! That's a perfect example of the tune making arrangement choices for you – and you responding to them on the fly.

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## REVIEW: Building up a bass

[NOTE: This page intentionally has no video — don't worry, it's not missing]

As you develop your ability to play a bass, or to accompany your right hand, here's one of the easiest orders to develop it in. By "order" I mean "order of complexity" or "order of easiness-to-play."

Single bass note	Octave	1-5-1 or 1-5-8	1-5-10
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- **SINGLE NOTE BASS:** Just play a single note as the bass note
- **OCTAVE BASS:** Add an octave to the bass
- **1-5-8:** Play the bass as 1-5-8
- **1-5-10:** Play the bass as 1-5-10

**NOTE:** *When I say 1-5-8 or 1-5-1 it basically means the same thing. I mean to say '1-5-8' – so if I make that mistake, just correct it in your mind.*

### ALSO TRY:

- **1-5:** You can also add a 5th above the bass (i.e: C-G). This isn't very common, except in Rock where the 5th is often thought of as a "power chord"
- I also use **1 – 7**, and **1-5-9** especially in jazzier music

### What these allow you to do:

- **Having the simple alternative (the single bass note)** gives you a simple default when needed (and I use it a lot, especially the first time I'm playing a piece).
- **Once you have 2 notes** you can make simple rhythms.
- **Once you have 3 notes**, you can make rhythms *and* outline the full harmony.

- **You can also AVOID outlining the harmony** – which you sometimes WANT to do – especially on the harp, if you're not sure whether a chord is major or minor – or if you know but you can't change the pedal or lever – by leaving the 3rd out and *choosing* to play an octave or 1-5-8 bass. One of the beautiful things about the harp is that it has such a rich sound that even a single note sounds beautiful.
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# Specially for Singers: The 1-5-10 as Accompaniment

**NOTE: This can be used for accompaniment with any instrument that's singing/playing melody.**

**You could accompany yourself with this 1-5-10, which you can put into two hands, and could theoretically never have to learn another accompaniment.**

And of course you can 'mess around with it' (playing it in rhythm). In the video, I play a kind of bossa nova even though I'm still just playing an octave in the LH. **It's just a different *rhythmic approach* but using the same *NOTES*.**

*On the video, I also use oscillating RH notes when I'm singing a sort of folk song like "Foggy Foggy Dew."*

There are many different ways that you can play with that. So I encourage you to take your music and figure out what the chords are and then just go through playing it like that (with the 1-5-10, and again, if you're having trouble playing and singing *at the same time*, you can always alternate between singing and playing, like you'll see me do in the video.

I can show you specific patterns in future modules, but for now I really just want you to play with these ideas and find patterns you like yourself.



## So Singers, try this out

Spend some time just experimenting with the different rhythms you can create with that 1-5-10 pattern – because this is one of my favorite things to do.

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# LH Concepts: Location, Variety, Alternation & Simplification

THIS 1-5-10 highlights several arrangement CONCEPTS:

## A. Location:

The lower you are on the instrument, the more you want to open out the spacing of the chord so it doesn't sound muddy – and the 1-5-10 is pretty much always a safe bet as a Left Hand accompaniment.

## B. Variety:

There's an infinite variety to how you can arrange or organize or play with the notes of any chord, just like there's an infinite variety of ways you can interpret the basic arrangement.

These notes are just ways of creating the harmony. You can do them all with your left hand, you can split up the hands, you can do them high, do them low.

## C. Alternation & Simplification:

If you can't do the left hand pattern & play RH melodies (i.e. noodling or improvisation) *at the same time*, you can always alternate, or simplify – if you can't play 1-5-10, play 1-5-8, or an octave or a single note ... or nothing.

## NOTE: Simplification isn't "Dumbing Down"

The structure of the overall arrangement can exist equally – and equally as musically and artistically — at a very simple level of playing or a very elaborate level. That will change as your playing develops, but the underlying arrangement structure is always there.

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## SHAPE-SHIFTING

*In this video, I didn't give this concept a name. I've decided to call it "shape-shifting" – which is a technique that's especially effective on the harp.*

Once you have that shape: 1-5-10 you can shift parts of it to create a kind of oscillating harmony:



**ABOVE: Shifting the top two notes of a 1-5-10 LH shape.** In the first example, they shift up and then back. In the 2nd, they shift down and then back. In the 3rd, they shift up, back, and down.

The sense of harmony shifts when you do this. In the first example from C to F (but with C in the bass). In the second example, from C to a kind of Dm7 (with a C in the bass).

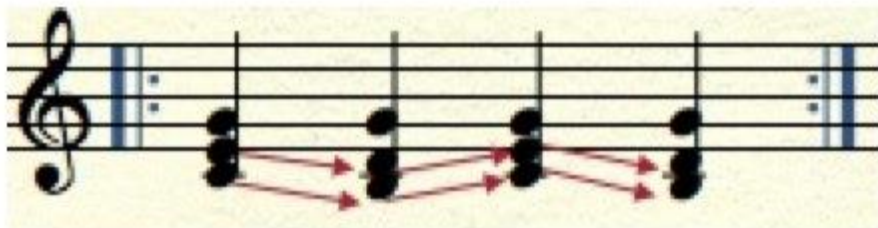
## You can do the same thing with triads.

**BELOW: Shifting the top two notes of a 1-3-5 triad.** In the first example, they shift up and then back (from C to F). In the 2nd, they shift down and then back (from C to a kind of Dm7). In the 3rd, they shift up, back, and down.



## You can do it with the bottom note or notes of a shape as well.

**BELOW: Shifting the BOTTOM two notes of a 1-3-5 triad.**



Interestingly, this shift gives you the chords C & G (with B in the bass) – and that G can act like a dominant making it easy to get from this kind of a vamp into either a dominant arpeggio, or gliss – or easily just shifting right into a tune.

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# VAMPS

People always ask me about vamps, so I'm adding information about them to this module. If you're a fledgling player and feeling overwhelmed, feel free to just skim this, and don't worry about working on it.

**The word "vamp" isn't as easily described as many other musical terms** – and if you search it in Google you'll get a lot of different definitions, most of them unhelpful.

In my experience, a vamp is usually a repeated set of chords – often an accompaniment that cycles. If you've seen me perform with a looper, I'm basically programming a vamp into the looper every time I use it – it could be as little as 2 chords. It's especially useful if it:

- **Is easy to play** – often playable in just the LH
- **Provides a short, simple, repeated accompaniment** – often just in the LH – that you can improvise over melodically with your RH
- **Creates a 'sense' of harmonic movement**, but doesn't really move anywhere – so it's easy to get back to the melody

At its best, a vamp can become a compelling rhythmic hook – the kind of rhythm and harmony you want to dance to, and interesting enough harmonically and rhythmically that it actually inspires melodic improvisation.

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## There are an infinite number of vamps.

**A vamp can be short or long. The salient detail is that it is repeated.**

One of the easiest ways I've found to create a vamp I like is to find one chord or note cluster I like, shift one part of it but keep at least one note the same – like we learned to do in the last video.

That gives me two chords or clusters that *feel related* because of the note I maintain – but *feel different* because of the notes I've shifted.

**Then I oscillate between those two shapes to create a sense of movement** – and I'll break the chord or cluster apart to make it rhythmic.





**Example 1** above is the basic shape-shift.

**In the 2nd example**, I've broken it apart to create a simple waltz rhythm.

**In the 3rd example**, I'm still using exactly the same notes and the same underlying harmonic- or shape-shift, but I've broken it apart more to create an even more complex rhythm (a jazz-waltz).

## A Vamp is, basically, a loop

Whenever I use my looper-pedal to create a loop, that loop is, in essence, a vamp that I improvise over. But I often also create vamps with my LH and improvise over them with my RH.

A vamp is one of the most useful concepts in arrangement, because you can use vamps in many situations and ways.

A vamp can be as simple as an oscillating shape-shift (like the ones you learned to create earlier in this module). Or you can make it rhythmic.

## Supporting a melody

A melody (or melodic improv, i.e. noodling) can be supported by a bass note, or a 1-5-10 bass structure. I think of that kind of support as "vertical support." A bass note or bass note-plus (1-5-10) is a support that's 'directly underneath' the melody, supporting it like a cement block.

A vamp also supports melodic improv – but it's a *moving* support – more like moving water than a cement block.

**I think of a 'Vamp' as being a horizontal concept: a vamp doesn't exist unless the music is moving**, because it relies on a combination of repetition and movement. It also supports the melody, but it's moving, and because it's moving, it's ready within one or two notes to move to a new place, often back to the melody.

- **One of the characteristics of a vamp is that it has an oscillating feeling.** Overall, it's static but there's movement within it, so it gives the sense of moving
- **It's generally fairly short**, often just two chords
- **Often the 2nd chord has a kind of dominant feeling** – with the benefit that whenever you're on that second chord, you're 'ready' to go right into the melody.
- **It can be done rhythmically or with rubato.** The shape-shift chords on the previous page can be used as vamps – either exactly as is, or by adding some kind of rhythmic element to them as you see here. Here I've broken them apart so they become little rhythmic shape-shifting 4-bar vamps.

*(Important note: I sometimes get "horizontal" and "vertical" mixed up, so if you hear me using them wrong in the video, that's why!)*

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# Using Vamps as Intros & Endings

We're going to use vamps in 3 different places:

1. The introduction
2. The exploration
3. The coda (or ending)

## As Intros:

A classic use of vamps is "Vamp until Ready" – so it's something that you can repeat as needed, but that's short enough that when it's time to start the tune, you can launch into it.

## In the Exploration:

(There's more about this on the next page)

## As Endings:

Another classic use of the vamp is the "Vamp and Fade" ending – you repeat it and then either add an arpeggio to 'end' the piece or simply keep playing the vamp and get softer and softer.

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## Using Vamps for Exploration

**For me, one of the most fun uses of vamps is as the foundation of the exploration,** so in this video I'm showing you how you might use a vamp as the Exploration for the tune "*Frere Jacques*."

**This is part of what you're going to be experimenting with this week in your homework.** You're going to be using some kind of a vamp – don't worry if it doesn't sound great because we can work on making it sound great later on. I just want you to work with the idea of the vamp.

If you don't want to find one, then just use any of the vamps I outlined, or variations of them that rhythmically fit your tune – or simplify them if they're too challenging – or add dissonance or more rhythm if they're not challenging enough.

**One big point of the vamp is that it gives you something simpler to improvise over than following the harmony of the tune,** which is what you do when you create variations.

**You want it to be simple enough to really be able to focus on noodling/improvising with your right hand and** – in a perfect world – fun to play over and harmonically built so they dovetail well with the dominant chord.

But don't worry about any of that for now. It's better just to try to create them, and if you get lost or frustrated, ask for help.

But just to remind you: the idea of creating a vamp that we're using this week is to take a shape – like a chord or the 1-5-10 bass shape and shift part of it to create an oscillating bed to support your RH noodling/improvising.

And remember – you can make it as simple as you want. And if you can't play both the vamp and the RH noodling at the same time, then you alternate them.

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# Review of what you learned this week

## 1. Enrich a Melody line with 6ths or 3rds:

You learned how to add a 6th or a 3rd underneath a melody line [to enrich it] while playing the melody with your thumb

## 2. Build LH structures to support RH Melodies

- You learned how to build up a LH accompaniment from a single note to an octave, to an octave & a 5th, to 1-5-10
- How to add simple rhythm to that shape by breaking it apart
- How to go BACK to a single bass note or octave when the melody gets more complicated

## 3. Create & Use Vamps as Intros, Endings & to support Explorations

You learned how to 'Shape-shift' — to take part of a harmonic structure — like 1-5-10 or 1-3-5 — and keep one part the same and move another part to make what's called a 'vamp' which is a static but oscillating, moving, underpinning that you can then improvise over — or that you can begin or end tunes with instead of — or in addition to the ending and beginning ideas we've worked on like arpeggios, glissandos and 3x turnaround endings.

## 4. Singers can use the 1-5-10 split into 2 hands as a simple — yet complete — accompaniment

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## Greensleeves Vamps (2 Examples) Watch at Your Own Peril

I'm hesitant to add these because it gets into a completely different area of harmony – so watch at your own peril! This video shows me exploring the use of a vamp with "Greensleeves."

These are the two Greensleeves vamps I played.

The image displays two musical staves in bass clef, each representing a different vamp for the piece "Greensleeves". The first staff consists of four measures of chords: a triad of G2, B2, and D3; a dyad of G2 and B2; a triad of G2, B2, and D3; and a dyad of G2 and B2. The second staff consists of four measures of single notes: G2, B2, D3, and G2.

## >>M3 HOMEWORK SUBMISSION IS STILL OPEN<<

**Official homework deadline is Mondays at Midnight.** BUT we don't usually download it until Tuesday morning, so you can use your own midnight or midnight in New York City (Eastern Standard Time) as your guide, and either should work.

When you see a note above that reads, "Homework Submission is Closed," that means we won't be accepting anymore homework.

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## WHAT IS THE HOMEWORK?

(Do any or all of this)

### Homework #1: Create an Arrangement adding 6ths, 3rds or 1-5-10 chords

Use the basic arrangement form, just add either 6ths or 3rds below the melody OR use the 1-5-10 pattern with your left-hand OR both. I just want you to practice adding these elements to a simple arrangement.

### Homework #2: Create 3 Vamps

Create 3 vamps that start with the 1-5-10 or 1-3-5 hand position. Play each vamp alone, and then noodle over them for 3-5 minutes straight.

**Then make a video** where you 'set up' each vamp (play it alone for 1-2 measures) and then noodle over it for 15-20 seconds each. You'll have 3 vamps total.

### Homework #3: Create an arrangement using Vamps

Choose a tune from your repertoire – play it with the 'old' intro (arpeggio, gliss, references to the melody), exploration (based on variations of the melody) and ending (3x turnaround).

Then play the same tune doing one or all of the following:

1. Add 6ths or 3rds somewhere (or everywhere) in the melody
2. Enhance the bass (by adding an octave, 1-5-8, or 1-5-10). If that's easy for you, then further enhance it with rhythm if you want.
3. Use a VAMP in one or all of these 3 places: intro, exploration, ending.

**Try this on several different tunes. Then choose one of them and videotape your new arrangement.**

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## **If this is too much too soon...**

No problem. If you're still working on the basic arrangement form from Module 1, then continue with that and just add the one concept from this week that you like the most or that makes your life easier.

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## **Remember these guidelines:**

1. Homework videos can be no longer than 90 seconds
2. Make sure your hands and all the strings of your harp are visible in the video
3. Use your name (at least your last name) when you name the video in YouTube so I can make sure I'm linking up the person and the video correctly.
4. If there are two parts to the homework, make sure you clearly indicate which video is which - and if you can also add it to the video name in YouTube, that's great.

**Also, read the "How to Upload a Video on YouTube" link from the sidebar before you upload your homework to make sure I can actually access it from YouTube (they're under the "FAQ" module in the sidebar).**

I look forward to seeing your videos and especially your takeaways! Thanks!!!

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## **Discussion**

**EVERYONE:** Include your takeaways from this module in the comments section below, even if you think you barely scratched the surface of the module.

1. What are your takeaways from this module?
  2. Add a link to your video if you want to share it (except VIPs – share on the VIP sharing page)
  3. Explain what you did in your video
  4. What adjustments do you have to make to make this work for you?
  5. Did you simplify any of the ideas?
  6. What did you simplify and how did you do it?
-