

Soloing with Block Chords Part 3: Half-Whole diminished



George Benson Cookbook

One of my favorite scales to use over a dominant chord is the half-whole diminished. The symmetrical nature of this scale really lends itself to block chords. (half-step, whole step, half, whole, etc.). The tensions that we get over a dominant chord are the flat-9, sharp-9, and sharp-11. This was also one of Wes Montgomery's favorite. He would sometimes harmonize an entire dominant 7 line with the same diminished voicing. Not only does this technique sound great, it is also very easy to utilize and to integrate into your playing. We like that.

Some short movie clips of the examples

Here is a short movie clip of me playing the examples below.

The Raw Material

The image displays musical notation for a half-whole diminished scale over a C7 chord. The top staff is in 4/4 time, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The scale is written as a series of block chords, each containing a half-whole diminished interval. The notes are: C# (half), D (whole), E (half), F# (whole), G (half), A (whole), B (half), and C# (whole). Below the staff is a guitar tablature (TAB) with six lines. The notes are written as numbers on the lines: 8, 7, 8, 7, 8, 7 on the first line; 9, 8, 9, 8, 9, 8 on the second line; 11, 10, 11, 10, 11, 10 on the third line; 12, 11, 12, 11, 12, 11 on the fourth line; 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1 on the fifth line; and 3, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2 on the sixth line. The tablature ends with a double bar line. The website 'ChordAddict.com' is visible in the bottom right corner.

Video Example 1: Half-Whole Diminished on High Strings

ChordAddict.com

Half-Whole Diminished on Middle Strings

ChordAddict.com

Half-Whole Diminished on Low Strings

Some 5 chord(Dom.7) to 1 Chord (Major 7) Lines

Here are a few examples of some 5 to 1 chord passages. Be sure to make some of your own lines. Try to use these ideas in other chord progressions and other keys. It is your job to create your own material.

ChordAddict.com

Video Example 2: C7 to FMaj Chordal Line

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Video Example 3: C7 to FMaj Chordal Line

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Video Example 4: G7 to CMaj Chordal Line

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Video Example 5: G7 to CMaj Chordal Line

Backing Tracks