Real Easy Jazz Guitar

with Clay Moore

Transcriptions in music notation and tablature for all ten songs!

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Forward

Greetings, fellow jazz guitar enthusiast,

Thanks for purchasing the Real Easy Jazz Guitar course. When Claude Johnson first contacted me about this project I was very excited, because I had already been thinking about a course like this for some time, based on simple, easy-to-play versions of the standards that working jazz musicians play. In each of the ten songs/lessons you’ll not only be learning the basic chords, scales, and arpeggios needed for those songs, but the basic tools you can use any jazz setting, from playing solo to playing in full on jazz orchestra. You’ll also learn how to decode seemingly complicated chord progressions, reducing them into simple, easy to understand chunks.

Claude’s idea of combining the course with The New Real Book was a stroke of genius, a win-win for everyone. Chuck Sher’s New Real Book series set a standard for jazz books that everyone else has scrambled to emulate, leaving the old inaccurate, illegal fakebooks in the dust. As you master the material in the Real Easy Jazz Guitar course you’ll have the skills to keep learning and progressing from The New Real Book for years to come.

Of course no one can do it alone, and special thanks go out to Derek Lau, Dylan Stern, and Elias Swinehart, the crew who worked so hard during the filming and editing of this course, to Claude for his vision, creativity, good hosting, and stamina, and to my good friends Harry “Jack” Rudy and Bob Beach, who took time from their busy schedules to hang out with an old pal from out of town.

Musically yours,

Clay Moore
Like I said in the video, you have to walk before you run, so before we get to our first song we need to learn some chords, scales, and arpeggios. The lesson below is about the 7 chords in the key of C major. In traditional music theory those chords are:

- C major
- D minor
- E minor
- F major
- G major or G7
- A minor
- B diminished

In jazz we routinely use 7th chords instead of the basic triads above, so the list becomes:

- C major7
- D minor7
- E minor7
- F major7
- G7
- A minor7
- B minor7 flat 5, a.k.a. B half diminished7

These chord names are shortened to make them easier and quicker to read, so the new and improved list is:

- Cmaj7
- Dm7
- Em7
- Fmaj7
- G7
- Am7
- Bm7b5

In the exercise that follows, we will learn these 7 chords in the key of C major in the 7th position*, along with a two octave C major scale, scales for each chord, and the accompanying arpeggios. Learn these fingerings, names, and sounds until you can play them in your sleep.

*7th position means your first finger on your fretting hand is at the 7th fret.
Side note:

Chords in any major key can be named by their letter name, as in Cmaj7, Am7, etc., and by their number in the scale, using Roman numerals. In the key of C major, Cmaj7 is also known as the I chord, Am7 as the vi chord, and so on, using upper case numerals for major7 and 7th chords, and lower case numerals for minors and minor7 flat fives. In C it would look like this:

- The I chord is Cma7
- The ii chord is Dm7
- The iii chord is Em7
- The IV chord is Fmaj7
- The V chord is G7
- The vi chord is Am7
- The vii chord is Bm7b5

From this specific example in C major we learn a general rule, the I chord in any major key is maj7, the ii is m7, and so on. In the key of Ab, for example, the chords become:

- The I chord is Abma7
- The ii chord is Bbm7
- The iii chord is Cm7
- The IV chord is Dbmaj7
- The V chord is Eb7
- The vi chord is Fm7
- The vii chord is Gm7b5

You'll want to make it a long term project to know these basic chords backwards and forwards in every key.
Chapter One Addendum - Decoding Complex Jazz Chords

It’s easy to get confused by all the crazy sounding names for jazz chords, such as Bmaj9#11, Fm6/9, or Db13b9. But fear not, the vast majority of jazz chords can be reduced to just three types:

- Major chords
- Minor chords
- Dominant 7th chord, a.k.a. 7

If a chord has M, MA, maj, or a triangle after the letter, it’s a major-type chord, and we can use the maj7. Bmaj9#11 then becomes Bmaj7.

If a chord has M1, m, min, or a minus sign (−) after the letter, it’s a minor chord, and we can usually substitute the m7. Fm6/9 becomes Fm7.

If a chord has a number 7 or larger after the letter it's a 7th chord, also called a dominant 7th. Db13b9 is D7.
Chapter Two - Dearly Beloved

This is a perfect song to get started with, because it’s extremely easy, but changes keys briefly twice during the progression, giving you a chance to get your feet wet soloing with your newly-learned scales and arpeggios. Almost all jazz songs move around to different keys, so by analyzing this simple progression you’ll learn how to figure out much more complicated ones with ease. Here’s how we do it.

In any major key there are two maj7 chords, three m7 chords, but only one 7th chord, which is the V chord. In the key of C major the V chord is G7. Dearly Beloved starts out in C major with the chords Dm7, G7, and Cmaj7* (the written chord in The New Real Book is C6. Use Cmaj7, and we’ll explain later). In measures 15 and 16, however, the chords are Ebm7 and Ab7, neither of which is one of the 7 chords we learned in the key of C. But we know 7th chords are V chords, so Ab7 is the V chord in Db major (count backwards. Ab, Gb, F, Eb, Db). Now we can easily see that Ebm7 is the ii chord in Db, so for those two measures we’re in the key of Db.

Move your C major scale fingering from the 7th to the 8th fret and you’re good to go.

For the rest of the song the chords move between Dm7, G7, and C, except for measures 27 and 28, where the chord is D13. D13 is a 7th chord with some extra notes, which are not necessary right now. Instead we’ll play D7, which is the V chord in G major (D, C, B, A, G). Our major scale fingering moves to the 2nd fret, and we’re in G for those two measures, then back to 7th fret in measure 29. That’s all the analysis you need!

Quick road map:

- Measures 1-14 in C major
- Measures 15-16 in Db major
- Measures 17-26 in C major
- Measures 27-28 in G major
- Measures 29-32 in C major

Tip:

Check out guitarist Wes Montgomery’s great recording of Dearly Beloved, which he plays in the key of G major.

*C6, also known as Cmaj6, is a major-type chord very similar in sound and usage to the Cmaj7. You often see the maj6 chord in songbooks when the melody note is the same letter name as the chord root, but the maj7 chord works just fine as well.

The music on the next two pages is the transcription of the melody and solo as played on the DVD.
DEARLY BELOVED MELODY AND SOLO

[Musical notation image]

Dm7 G7

Eb7 bAb7

Cmaj7

Dm7 G7
Chapter Three - Autumn Leaves

Next we’re going to tackle a very well-known standard called Autumn Leaves. This song has been recorded countless times by such artists as Joe Pass, Wynton Marsalis, Kenny Burrell, Chick Corea, and Miles Davis. Two of my favorite versions include Nat King Cole’s beautiful ballad rendition with strings, and Cannonball Adderly’s recording on his album called *Somethin’ Else*.

Autumn Leaves is fairly simple to play and improvise on, because even though it changes chords frequently it centers on the key of Bb major and its relative minor key of G minor. Cannonball’s recording is in the same key as *The New Real Book*, but he uses simpler changes, staying on Bbmaj7 in measure 24 instead of changing to Ebmaj7, and omitting the C9, Fm7, and Bb7 in measures 27 and 28, staying on Gm. I’ve based the Real Easy Jazz Guitar version on Cannonball’s changes.

As far as analyzing the progression, the only chord that deviates from the diatonic chords (in the key) in Bb is the D7, which acts as a V chord going to Gm. When you improvise you can add that F# note to the Bb/Gm scale when you’re on the D7 - it makes a nice sound.

The chords below are all the ones you’ll need to play Autumn Leaves, including two ways to play both the D7 and Gm7 chords.

The following three pages is Autumn Leaves from the DVD, with an improvised solo.
Next is a comping example using the basic chords. Note the varied rhythms and embellishments used.
The next two pages of music is a solo exercise, playing the scales in Bb/Gm, starting with the root of each chord and playing in 8th notes up to the octave. Once you get the hang of this type of drill you can create all kinds of variations, such as playing the scales backwards, or play one scale going up and the next coming down.
Other scale possibilities for D7

- D Phrygian Dominant (G harmonic minor from D)
- D Mixolydian Mode (G major scale from D)
Blue Bossa was written by Texas trumpeter Kenny Dorham, which he first recorded on Joe Henderson's debut album, Page One. The title refers to the Brazilian style of music known as bossa nova, which means "new thing" in Portuguese. During the 1960s many North American musicians became interested in this beautiful music, with its lilting rhythms and jazz harmonies.

Blue Bossa uses two keys, C minor for eight measures, Db major for four measures, and back to C minor for four measures. We'll be using a new scale position for these keys, which we'll start with below.

The same scale moved from the 5th fret to the 3rd fret gives us our Db major scale and chords.

Next we'll move on to the DVD recorded version with the improvised solo and comping. You'll notice I played a lot of double-time runs, but it certainly isn't necessary for a good solo. Listen to Page One and check out how Kenny Dorham stays mostly to the melody for his solo.
The next page is a basic bossa nova rhythm you can use for comping. Once you master this you'll want to get ahold of some genuine Brazilian music, such as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Baden Powell, and Bola Sete, and copy what they do.
Our final example for Blue Bossa is the simplified melody and a solo exercise similar to the one we learned for Autumn Leaves.
Here’s That Rainy Day gives us the opportunity to learn a full chord melody, using the chords we've learned from our two major scale forms. When you're learning these it's best to follow Joe Pass's advice and **not worry about putting it into tempo right away**. The most important thing about chord melody is stating the melody clearly and with good expression, so practice playing *rubato* (no steady or fixed tempo) until you can play it smoothly in your sleep. *Then*, and only then will you want to begin putting it into a *slow* tempo.

Here’s That Rainy Day also takes a leap forward from the soloing we've been doing in one of two keys, moving through G major, Eb major, Bb major, and a couple of temporary trips into C and D major. Note that the Dm7 to G7 in measure 8 takes you into a Cm7 chord - the ii chord in Bb - and in measure 16 into Cmaj7. The A7 chord in measure 20 doesn't resolve into D, but you still will want to solo using the D major or A mixolydian (same notes, different ways of looking at them).
This tune isn't as well-known as some of the others we've covered so far, but it's another opportunity for us to learn a chord melody with a bluesy flavor. Along the way we'll get to learn some new chords and apply some familiar ones in new ways.

One chordal concept that you can begin to apply is substitute chords. A substitute chord is one used in place of another. One simple way to get started is to use chords we already know in the major keys, by substituting a chord a 3rd higher or lower than your original chord.

For Cmaj7 substitute Em7 (3rd higher) or Am7 (3rd lower). Em7 for Cmaj7 gives us a Cmaj9 sound. Am7 gives us a C6 sound. Hint: use voicings that have the roots on higher pitched strings.

In this song we use Cm7b5 for Ab7 (Ab9) and Em7b5 for C7 (C9). Cool trick, yes?

Another note. I've written the time signature as 12/8 instead of 4/4. 12/8 gives us that triplet drenched sound of slow blues, without having to read (and write!) all those cumbersome triplets. You can still count it in as a slow 4/4, but also hear the underlying 1 2 3, 4 5 6, 7 8 9, 10 11 12.
Gee Baby Simple Chord Melody

Jazz Guitar

4

I. Qtr.

5

I. Qtr.

6

I. Qtr.

7

I. Qtr.

8

I. Qtr.

9

I. Qtr.
The next example is a solo exercise using mostly arpeggios on each of the chords. On a song such as this, where you’re changing chords every couple of beats you’ll want to get really comfortable with outlining the notes in those chords, and that means arpeggios!
Chapter Seven - Sandu

There's saying that all jazz comes from the song I Got Rhythm and the blues. Sandu is a blues written and recorded by the fantastic trumpeter Clifford Brown. It's a catchy little melody and offers some challenges to us that we've not seen yet in this course. In order to emulate the trumpet and saxophone type phrasing you have to pay strict attention to the fingerings in the tab. Blues in jazz is the most versatile music, because you can play as simply as you want, using the notes of the blues scale, or as complex as you dare, with altered dominant chords and exotic scales.
Next up is the transcription of the comping example.
And last here's how to play Sandu in both low and high octaves, a cool variation.

**SANDU MELODY, LOW AND HIGH OCTAVES**
Chapter Eight - Tenderly

Tenderly is a beautiful standard that can be played as a ballad, swing, or bossa nova. Hey, this is a good time to mention that you can do that! It's a good idea to practice all your tunes in a variety of keys and rhythmic feels. And be sure you know the melodies by themselves, not just as chord melodies, and practice comping and soloing on all the tunes. Jazz is all about being versatile in how you approach material.

The first page that follows is a simple chord melody version, suitable for a rubato solo piece or with a group. Following that is a bit more embellished version with an improvised solo.
St. Thomas was written and recorded by Sonny Rollins, and it is a perennial jam session favorite. Rollins' version is taken at a medium tempo, but it often is played much faster, which can make it a bit more difficult to solo on. Fortunately the changes are fairly simple and you can get by with using the C major or even C major pentatonic scale.

You'll want to start with learning the melody slowly, with good time and articulation.

On the following pages is the transcription of the DVD version. Notice that I'm embellishing the melody and playing with a somewhat staccato (short note duration) feel.
Last we have a simpler solo, using some motifs and chord tones.
Chapter 10 - Satin Doll

Satin Doll was one of the first chord melody songs I taught myself after playing guitar for a little over two years. It’s a fairly easy tune to play chord melody style, and the only reason I’m putting it here toward the end is it changes keys a number of times, making it a bit more of a challenge to improvise over. However, if you've been diligently learning and applying what we've covered so far you should have no problems! Let's do a quick breakdown:

Measure 1 and 2 are Dm7 to G7, ii V in the key of C.
Measure 3 and 4 are Em7 to A7, ii V in the key of D
Measure 5 and 6 are D7, V in the key of G
Measure 7 and 8 are Db9 (Db7), V in the key of Gb*

The first 8 measures repeats.

Measure 17-20 (letter B) are Gm7 to C7 2x, then Fmaj7, ii V I in the key of F.
Measure 21 and 22 are Am7 D7, a ii V in the key of G.
Measure 23 and 24 are G7, the V in the key of C

Letter C is the same as the first 8 measures.

The transcription that follows is from the DVD, to give you some soloing ideas, then a few measures of the comping. By now you should have a pretty good idea of how comping works from all our previous examples, and you can make up your own variations.

*The Db9 or Db7 is substituting for G7 moving back to a C chord. This is called a tritone substitution. When you have a V chord resolving to a I chord you can replace the V with a chord that is a 1/2 step (1 fret) above the I.

Example: Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 can become Dm7 Db7 Cmaj7. This works great no matter what type of chord the "I" is - could be Cmaj7, C7, Cm7, even Cm7b5.
Chapter 11 - Little Sunflower

Our last song is something different than all the others, a modal song written and recorded by vibraphonist Milt Jackson, which also featured the signature trumpet sound of Freddie Hubbard. This is another song that gets played a lot at jam sessions, but the form is often played incorrectly because of it being written out wrong in the old illegal Real Book, so you'll want to make sure everyone is on the same page if you call it.

Modal jazz usually means staying on a particular chord for a long time and using the modal scale of that chord to improvise with. With Little Sunflower you'll spend most of your time playing on Dm7, which is played as the D dorian mode. D dorian has the same notes as C major - known as the parent key - and all the notes in that scale sound good over Dm7. The other two chords are Ebmaj7 and Dmaj7, two sections of four measures each. You can use major scales for these chords, but it sound hipper to use the Eb and D lydian modes. Eb lydian has the same notes as Bb major, and D lydian the same notes as A major. You may have to get used to the sound of the raised 4th degree in that scale, but when you do I think you'll find it's a very pretty note.

Since all the notes in D dorian sound good over Dm7 we're using the chord triads from the C major/D dorian scale to harmonize the melody. The solo that follows is pretty involved, but you don't have to learn it all right away to get some cool things happening. Try taking one lick and messing with it. Another thing that's fun to do with modal tunes are patterns and sequences, things like scales in 3rds.
Well, we've come to the end of this course. If you have even half as much fun with it as I had making it I'll consider it a success. Keep practicing and swinging!