

The upper and lower scale fragments of Dorian minor can function as their own very valuable and malleable melodic cells. Each tetrachord can become the basis of a great many ideas for an improvising musician. Get to know how each scale fragment sounds, particularly by improvising and creating melodies with each fragment. Use the following examples to help you get started.

EX. 3.10
Upper and lower
scale fragments
(D Dorian minor)

Lower fragment Upper fragment

EX. 3.11
D Dorian minor
scale fragment exercise

Scale fragments can stretch to multiple octaves, extending the melodic line considerably. Choose a phrase from the example above and extend it. For example, using the phrase in mm. 5-6, starting with the lower fragment an octave higher, 4 descending phrases together form a longer line:



Consider upper and lower fragments as being dynamic and ever-changing. A fragment may include any and all notes, in any order.



Dorian Minor Scale Fragments

There is absolutely no need for the soloist to begin playing on beat 1 of the measure. By resting, then playing, the underlying rhythm and pulse may become clear. This is true whether playing solo or with accompaniment. Either way, the beats should be counted during the rests, in particular. If playing with accompaniment, with a rhythm section, resting and counting gives the underlying harmonies and chance to be heard and internalized before the line begins. The interplay between soloist and rhythm section also becomes immediately clear.

EX. 3.12

Rest, then target.

With each phrase below, ask if it belongs to the lower scale fragment, upper scale fragment, or straddles between the two.



target note

target note



Transpose the above exercise to 2 new keys of your choice (all by ear, without writing anything down).



IMPROVISE

Improvise freely using D Dorian minor, then improvise in 2 newly transposed Dorian minor modes of your

Observe in the above exercise:

1. Early arrival at target note.
2. Target approach from both above and below (called an "enclosure").
3. Direct scale ascent/descent.



Dm7

Dorian Minor Improvisation Using Scale Fragments

When improvising using a predetermined target note, start simple. The exercise below involves improvising for one measure, then holding a target note for the next measure. In the improvised measure, there is no need to play on every beat. Start by resting for a couple beats, then improvising using only one or two notes. The goal is to be deliberate and decide which fragment you'd like to start with for each phrase. Then challenge yourself, choosing either to land on each target via step or skip.

Review your Dorian minor fragments!

Take some time to review the lower and upper scale fragments within Dorian minor below. Consider which intervals are used between notes. Also explore altering the shape within each pattern by changing the note order. Fragments need not ascend or descend in scale order. For example, DEFG can be played FGED, or using only EF, a partial fragment.

EX. 3.13
D Dorian minor
scale fragments



IMPROVISE
Dorian minor scale
fragments and targets

Identify whether the target note belongs to an upper or lower fragment (or both).
For example, "F" in measure 2 belongs to the lower fragment DEFG.

