

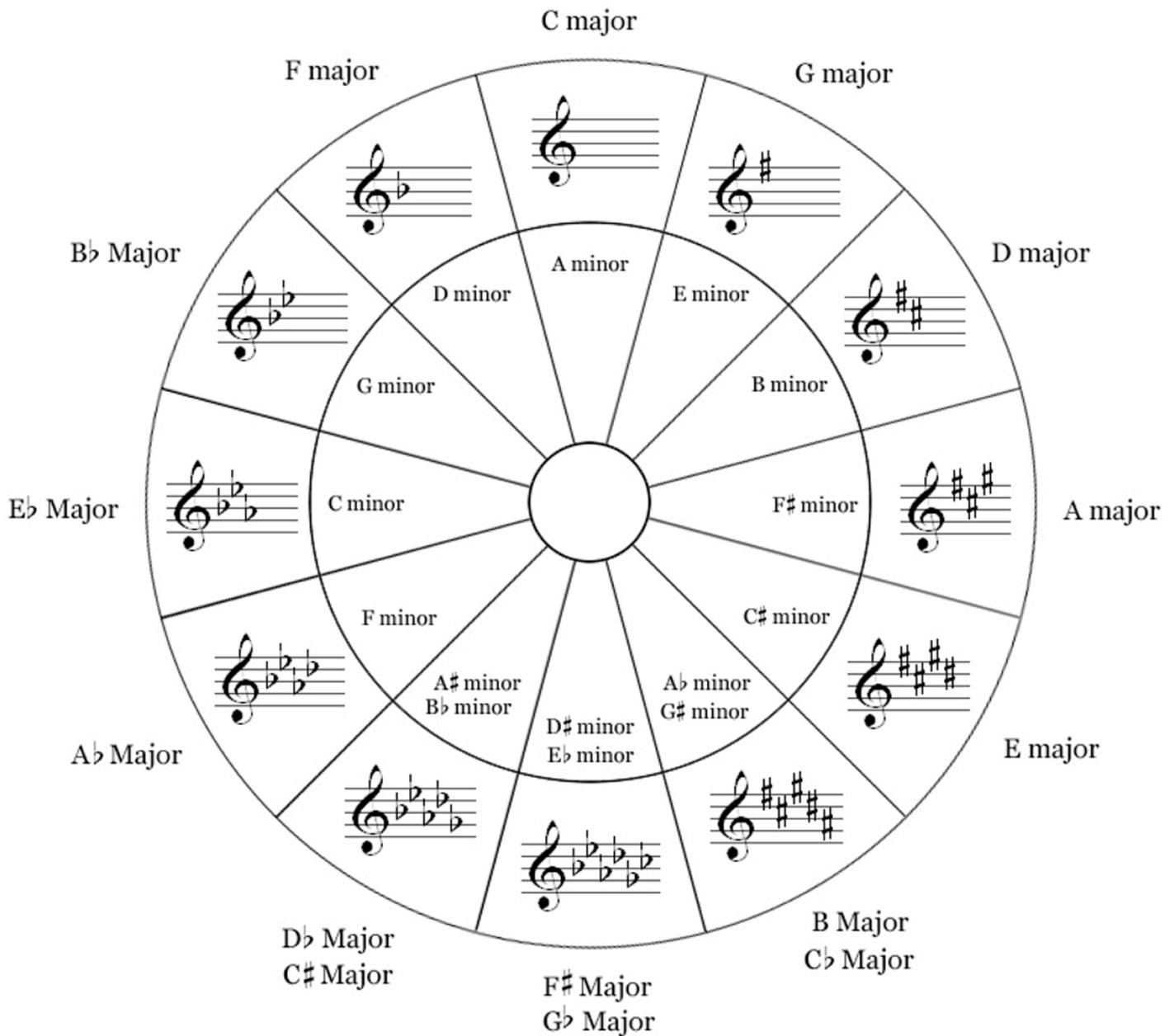
JAM SKILLS - THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Or, "If you're too cool to read this, you need to read this."

1. Prioritize the collective sound. Make musical and personal choices that contribute to making good music together. Pursue personal growth, but with a prioritizing eye toward the whole gang.
2. Share the love. Help make this a great experience for more people by inviting others to participate, to play, to take solos, etc.
3. Let others lead. If you called the last tune, let that job go to others for a while now. Give folks space to call tunes, and encourage it as well.
4. Dynamics are good. Be comfortable playing softly and loudly. Listen to dynamics changes initiated by others, follow those changes, and when appropriate, initiate them yourself.
5. Don't be afraid to suck. Music is hard, and sometimes you gotta learn by doing. Take risks, and support others who are doing so. Ask questions. Caveat: While jams aren't performances, they are not practices either, so save the noodling, drilling, and shedding for a more private situation.
6. Giving feedback: In general, don't tell someone else how to play/sing. They're probably working on it. If they ask for advice, fine, but avoid impromptu unsolicited instruction and critique.
7. Taking feedback: If someone gives you some advice, even if it rankles, give it some consideration. No need to defend your choices now; no one benefits from that. Just file it away.

THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS

- used for seeing which keys relate to each other and how
 - good quick reference for key signatures
- helps to understand how chord progressions tend to work



* Think of it like the periodic table. If you try to just “get it” all at once by staring at it, you’ll be overwhelmed. But keep coming back to it as you learn songs, chord progressions, and melodies, and you’ll slowly realize that it’s a very handy way of organizing some of the most important information!

The Roman Numeral System

(see graphic to the right)

It's a quick way of referring to a chord depending on what key you're in. For instance, if someone says "go to the IV", that would refer to F if you're in the key of C Major, but would refer to Bb if you're in F Major.

Intervals

An interval is the distance (number of pitches) between two notes. The chart below shows you some common ways that intervals are talked about among musicians. For instance, if you're in the key of C, and you accidentally play an Eb instead of an E, someone might say "I think that's supposed to be a major third, not minor third." It's good to know things!

C Major	C - Dm - Em - F - G - Am - Bdim I ii iii IV V vi viio
G Major	G - Am - Bm - C - D - Em - F#dim I ii iii IV V vi viio
D Major	D - Em - F#m - G - A - Bm - C#dim I ii iii IV V vi viio
A Major	A - Bm - C#m - D - E - F#m - G#dim I ii iii IV V vi viio
E Major	E - F#m - G#m - A - B - C#m - D#dim I ii iii IV V vi viio
B Major	B - C#m - D#m - E - F# - G#m - A#dim I ii iii IV V vi viio
F Major	F - Gm - Am - Bb - C - Dm - Edim I ii iii IV V vi viio
Bb Major	Bb - Cm - Dm - Eb - F - Gm - Adim I ii iii IV V vi viio
Eb Major	Eb - Fm - Gm - Ab - Bb - Cm - Ddim I ii iii IV V vi viio
Ab major	Ab - Bbm - Cm - Db - Eb - Fm - Gdim I ii iii IV V vi viio

piano keys	distance in half tones	name written	name spoken	interval referring to C	interval symbol
	0	C	C	tonic	1
	1	C# / Db	C sharp / D flat	minor second	b2
	2	D	D	major second	2
	3	D# / Eb	D sharp / E flat	minor third	b3
	4	E	E	major third	3
	5	F	F	perfect fourth	4
	6	F# / Gb	F sharp / G flat	tritone	#4 / b5
	7	G	G	perfect fifth	5
	8	G# / Ab	G sharp / A flat	minor sixth	b6
	9	A	A	major sixth	6
	10	A# / Bb	A sharp / B flat	minor seventh	b7
	11	B	B	major seventh	7
	12	C	C	octave	8

Jam Lingo. Here are some terms you might hear during the jam.

Bar – Measure. For swing, a bar will have four quarter notes.

Break – A transitional passage in which a soloist plays unaccompanied. Often at the end of a phrase.

Bridge – The contrasting middle section of a tune; often the B section of an AABA tune.

“Call a tune” – Pick the next song to play.

Chart – A musical score.

Chord tones – Notes in a chord. The root, third, fifth, and seventh. For a Bb chord, chord tones are Bb, D, F, and Ab.

Chorus – The main section of the song that repeats, including the played/sung melody and solos, but not including any intros, verse, or extended endings.

Counting off – Giving the tempo and meter by snapping fingers and counting out loud.

Double time feel – A time feel twice as fast, so that written eighth notes now sound like quarter notes, while the chords continue at the same speed as before.

“Four on the floor” – A way of playing in the rhythm section that emphasizes all beats in a measure rather than only the second and fourth beat. Aka “four to the bar,” “four to the floor.”

Half time feel – A time feel half as fast, while the chords go by in the same amount of time.

Head – The melody.

“Lead a tune” – Take on the role of band leader. This can include counting off, calling solos (determining who takes a solo and when), and deciding how to end the tune.

Lead sheet – A sheet with the melody (head) and accompanying chords.

Tempo – The speed of the tune (think Beats Per Minute or BPM).

Top – The beginning point of each chorus, the first beat of the first measure.

Rhythm Changes – The chords to 'I Got Rhythm' (Gershwin), somewhat modified and simplified. Many Jazz tunes use these changes and every player must know them. There are several variations.

Riff – A relatively simple, usually bluesy and catchy repeated phrase. May be played behind a soloist or as part of a head.

Shout chorus – A special chorus played near the end of a tune, usually in place of the melody. For this jam, a shout chorus could be comprised of the horn players using a riff.

Stop time – A rhythm where certain beats aren't played, e.g. 1 2 3 (rest) 1 2 3 (rest).

Trading 4s (or 8s, 2s) – An arranging technique in which musicians consistently alternate brief solos of pre-set length (for trading fours, four bars; musicians may also trade twos, eights, and so forth).

Verse – A special part of a tune often played at the beginning to introduce the chorus.

See also:

<https://www.apassion4jazz.net/glossary.html>

<https://berkleecitymusicnetwork.com/2014/04/01/do-you-speak-jazz-jazz-slang-glossary/>

Common Forms

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A	F	/	G ⁻⁷	C ₇
	F	D ₇	G ₇ C ₇	F G ⁻⁷ C ₇
B	A ⁻	/	E ₇	/
	E ₇	/	A ⁻⁷ D ₇	G ₇ C ₇
A	F	/	G ⁻⁷	C ₇
	F	D ₇	G ₇ C ₇	F G ⁻⁷ C ₇ /

AABA. 32 bars. Each section has 8 bars. The B section, or “bridge” offers contrast.

(Gypsy Jazz) **C Jam Blues (LFXVI)** Duke Ellington, 1942

A	C ₇	/	/	/
	F ₇	/	C ₇	/
	G ₇	/	C ₇	/
B	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
	C ₇	/	/	/
	F ₇	/	C ₇	/
	G ₇	/	C ₇	/

12 bar blues. Four bars on the root (I) chord, 2 bars on IV, back to I; two bars on the V. back to I.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Bill Bailey (LFXVI)** Huey Cannon, 1902

A	F	/	/	/
	F	/	C ₇	/
	C ₇	/	/	/
	C ₇	/	F	/
B	F	/	/	/
	F	F ₇	B ^b	/
	B ^b	B ₀	F	D ₇
	G ₇	C ₇	F	G ⁻⁷ /

AB. 32 bars. Each section has 16 bars.

Common song intros



(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ |

F | / |

B

A⁻ | / | E₇ | / |

E₇ | / | A⁻⁷ D₇ | G₇ C₇ |

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ | / |

“From the top.” Begin from the very top. Often a horn player will play the head.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ |

F | / |

B

A⁻ | / | E₇ | / |

E₇ | / | A⁻⁷ D₇ | G₇ C₇ |

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ | / |

x2

“Last 8.” Play the last 8 bars before the head.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ |

F | / |

B

A⁻ | / | E₇ | / |

E₇ | / | A⁻⁷ D₇ | G₇ C₇ |

A

F | / | G⁻⁷ | C₇ |

F D₇ | G₇ C₇ | F | G⁻⁷ C₇ | / |

x2

“Last 4.” Play the last 4 bars before the head.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Mean to Me (LFXVI)** Turk, Ahlert, 1929

A

B^b B₀₇ | C⁻⁷ F₇ | B^b B₇ | E^b E⁻ |

B^b G₇ | C⁻⁷ F₇ | B^b D₀₇ | C₇ F₇ |

B^b | B₇ |

B

E^b₆ | F₇ B₇ | E^b₆ | A^b₇ G₇ |

C⁻ | A^b₇ G₇ | C₇ | F₇ |

A

B^b B₀₇ | C⁻⁷ F₇ | B^b B₇ | E^b E⁻ |

B^b G₇ | C⁻⁷ F₇ | B^b₆ | C⁻⁷ F₇ | / |

“Two bar vamp.” Repeat the first two bars until the soloist begins the head.

Common song endings

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
		1.	
F	G ₋₇	C ₇	
		2.	
F	∕		

B

A-	∕	E ₇	∕
E ₇	∕	A ₋₇	D ₇
G ₇	C ₇		

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
F		G ₋₇	C ₇
			∕

x2

“From the bridge” or
“second half.” Repeat the
second half.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
		1.	
F	G ₋₇	C ₇	
		2.	
F	∕		

B

A-	∕	E ₇	∕
E ₇	∕	A ₋₇	D ₇
G ₇	C ₇		

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
F		G ₋₇	C ₇
			∕

x2

“Last 8.” Repeat the last 8
bars.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Am I Blue? (LFXVI)** Clarke, Akst, 1929

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
		1.	
F	G ₋₇	C ₇	
		2.	
F	∕		

B

A-	∕	E ₇	∕
E ₇	∕	A ₋₇	D ₇
G ₇	C ₇		

A

F	∕	G ₋₇	C ₇
F	D ₇	G ₇	C ₇
F		G ₋₇	C ₇
			∕

x2

“Last 4.” Repeat the last 4
bars.

(Gypsy Jazz) **Bill Bailey (LFXVI)** Huey Cannon, 1902

A

F	∕	∕	∕
F	∕	C ₇	∕
C ₇	∕	∕	∕
C ₇	∕	F	∕

B

F	∕	∕	∕
F	F ₇	B ^b	∕
B ^b	B ₇	F	D ₇
G ₇	C ₇		C ₇
			∕

x3

“x3.” Repeat the third and
fourth bars from the end three
times

(Bill Bailey won't you please come, Bill Bailey won't you
please come, Bill Bailey won't you please come home)

Ideas for taking initiative. Here are some fun ways to create texture during the jam.

Call new rhythms for the rhythm section (i.e. stop time). For example, the guitar player might call “THREES!” The rhythm section then plays the first three notes in every bar and rests on the fourth note. For ONES, play just the first note of every bar. For CHARLESTON play the first and third note syncopated (i.e. in a Charleston rhythm).

Call a tune. Offer an idea for a tune. Have an idea for how you want to start and end the song. If you are a melody player, know the melody.

Introduce a feeling. “Can we play the first chorus of this tune sneaky?” Or lovely. Or lively. Upbeat. Mellow. When you are soloing, you might play legato (notes are smooth and tied together) or staccato (notes are short and detached). Other players can respond to the ideas offered by the soloist.

Introduce a riff. One horn player might start a riff by playing the root of the chord (e.g. Eb if the chord is Eb) on the ones and threes, for example. The next horn player might join the riff on the third of the chord (e.g. G if the chord is Eb) and another might join on the 7 (e.g. D if the chord is Eb). Riffs are particularly punchy during a bridge. You might call a whole riff chorus.

Trade fours. Trading fours (or 8s) is a great way to feature everyone when the jam is big! Two horn players might trade fours with each other. The saxophone plays four bars, then the trumpet, then the sax, then the trumpet... Or you might get the whole horn line involved and trade fours “down the line.” Or the horns might trade 4s with the rhythm section. For example, a chorus might look like: trumpet, piano, sax, guitar, trumpet, bass, sax, drums. This is a good way to feature the rhythm section without really long drum solos. Trading fours is also a really good way to encourage newer musicians.

Introduce dynamics. If you’re playing a solo, you can use your playing and your body language to suggest the band quiet down, or get louder.