



Mastering Your Chord-Scale Relationships

Ethan Chilton



MAJOR SOUND WORLD

C Cmaj7 Cmaj9

C MAJOR

INSIDE

C PENTATONIC

INSIDE

G PENTATONIC

INSIDE

Cmaj7(#11)

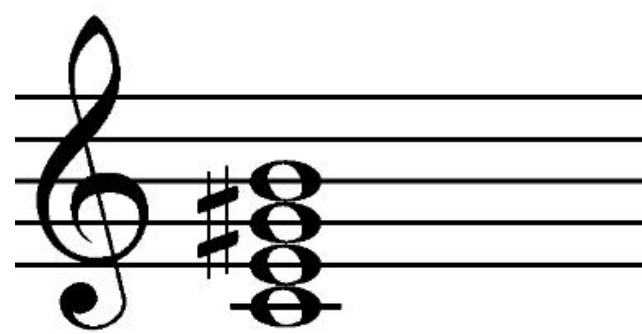
C LYDIAN

MODERATELY INSIDE

C LYDIAN - TRIAD PAIR PATTERNS

MODERATELY INSIDE

Cmaj7(#5)



THIRD MODE OF A HARMONIC MINOR (OR LYDIAN WITH A RAISED FIFTH)

MODERATELY OUTSIDE



OTHER TONALITIES (OVER C MAJOR)

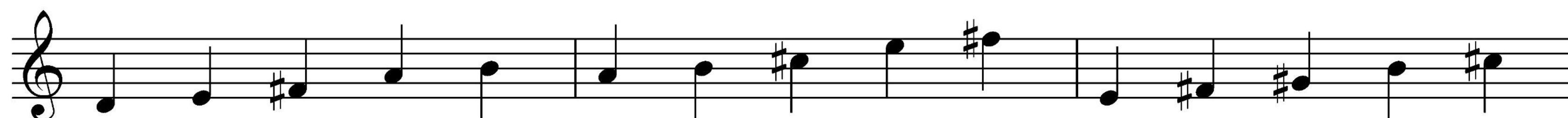
OUTSIDE

Cmaj7

D MAJOR

A MAJOR

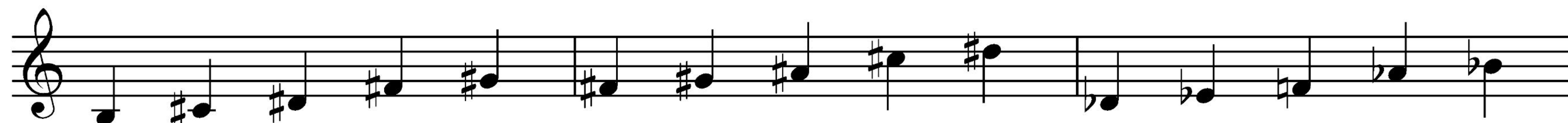
E MAJOR



B MAJOR

F-SHARP MAJOR

D-FLAT MAJOR



NOTES ON PLAYING “OUTSIDE” THE HARMONY

- We play outside to broaden our color palette and expand our language
 - Playing outside (or “out”) is never random
- If the notes you’re playing come from a logical process (such as imposing E major over C major) there will be a musical effect conveyed regardless of whether the notes fit
- Listen to John Coltrane, Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, and Roy Hargrove to get started with this concept
- Practice: In a line or phrase, start inside, gradually get out, and then get back in

DOMINANT SOUND WORLD

C⁷ C⁹ C¹³

C MIXOLYDIAN

INSIDE

C PENTATONIC

C MAJOR BUELES

INSIDE

SEE BRANDON RIDENOUR'S COURSE ON SCALES FOR BEBOP SCALE

C⁷(#11)

C LYDIAN DOMINANT

INSIDE

MODERATELY INSIDE

C⁷(#5)

C⁷(b13)

C WHOLE-TONE

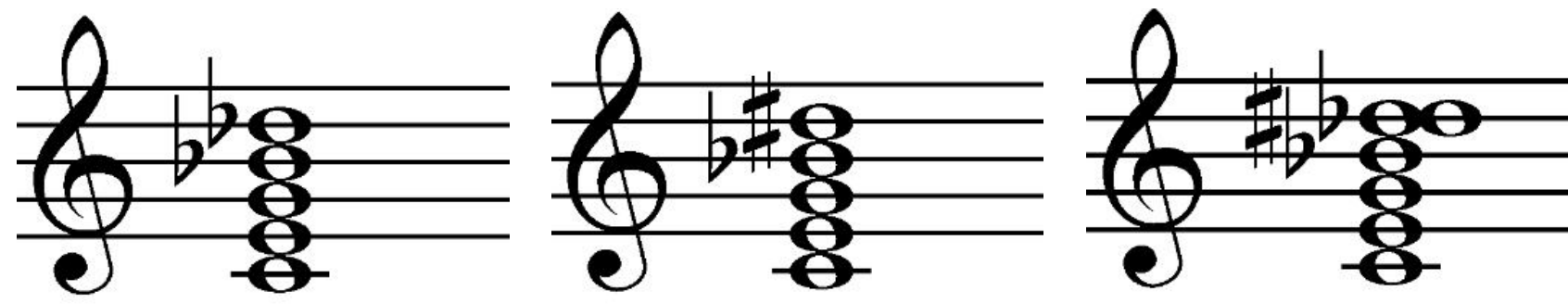
INSIDE

MODERATELY OUTSIDE

C7(b9)

C7(#9)

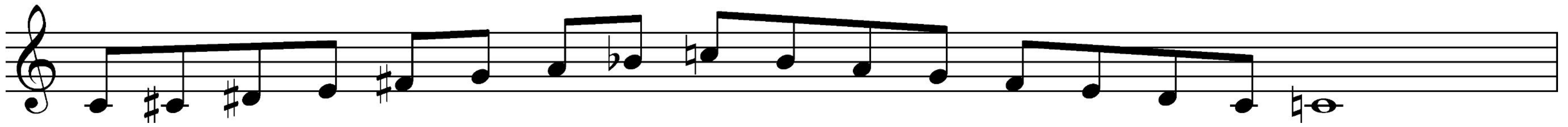
C7(#9/b9)



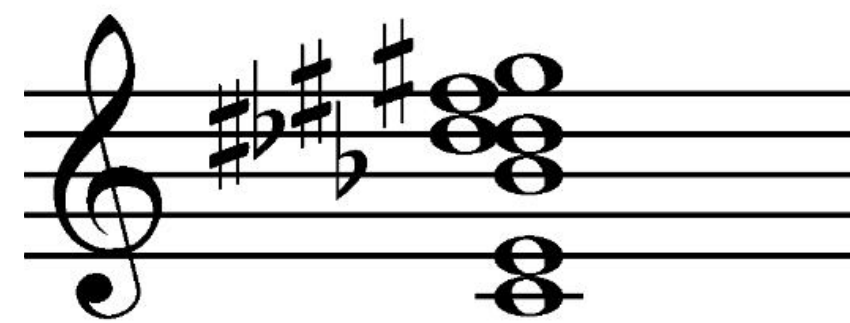
C HALF-WHOLE DIMINISHED

INSIDE

MODERATELY OUTSIDE



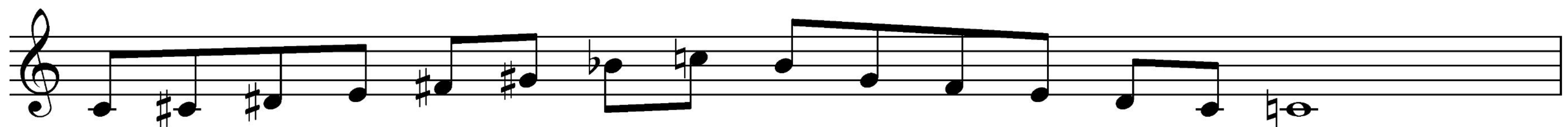
C7alt.



C ALTERED DOMINANT

INSIDE

OUTSIDE



C ALTERED DOMINANT - TRIAD PAIR PATTERNS

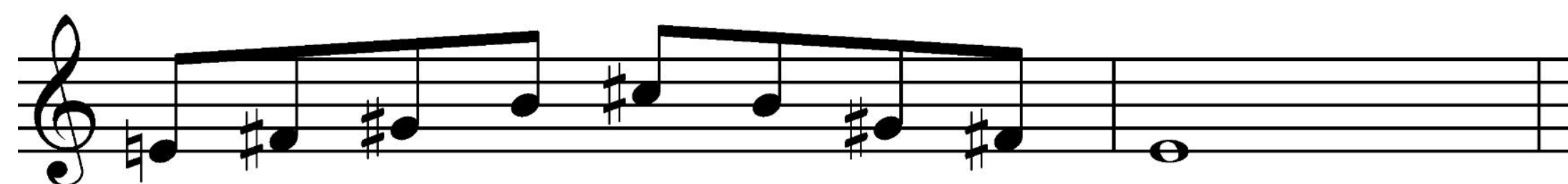
OUTSIDE



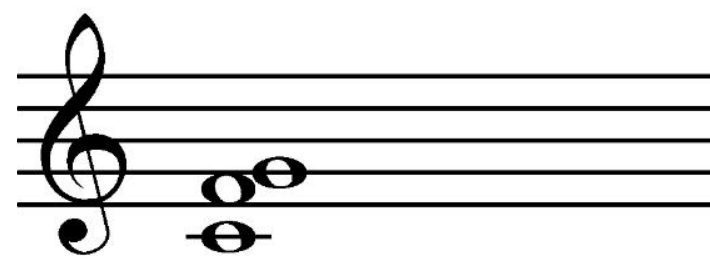
E MAJOR OVER C DOMINANT

WAY OUTSIDE

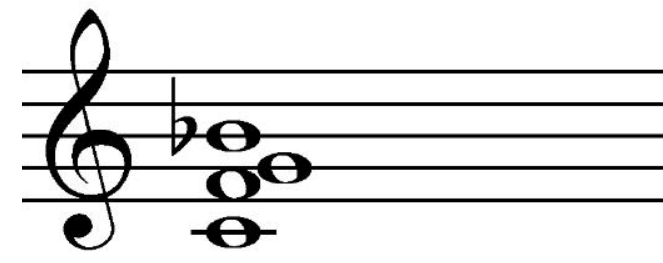
C7



C(sus4)

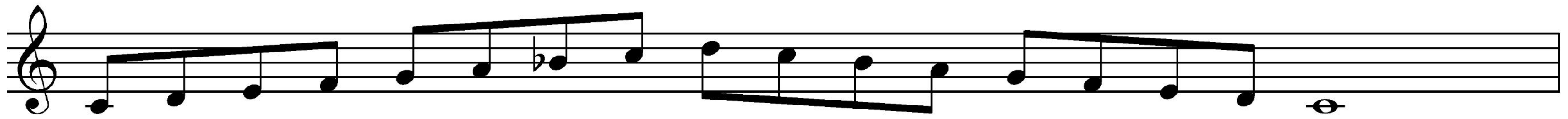


C7(sus4)



C MIXOLYDIAN

INSIDE



F PENTATONIC

INSIDE



DOMINANT CHORD-SCALE CHEAT SHEET

No alterations → Mixolydian

Only Raised 11th → Lydian Dominant

Alterations to 9 → Diminished

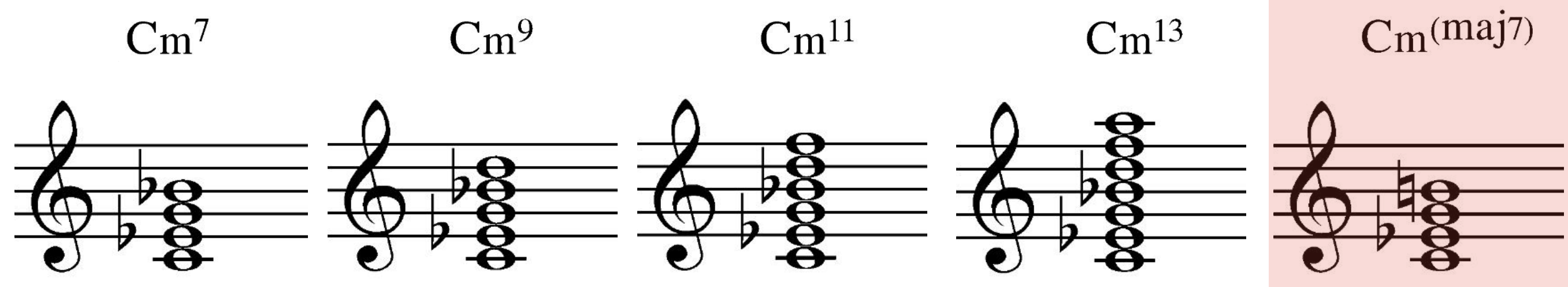
Alterations to 5 or 13 → Whole tone

Alterations to 9 and 13 or "C Alt" → Altered

**If you see #11 in these last three, it doesn't change the scale you use. You'll use it while improvising whether or not it's written.*

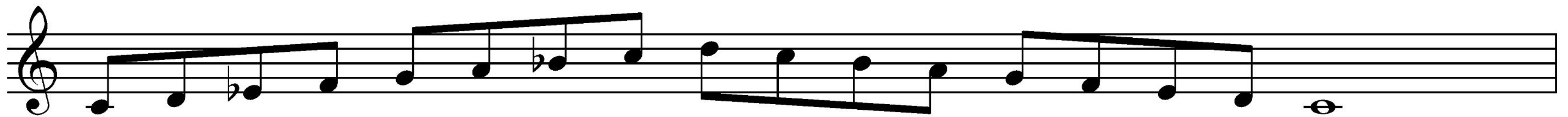
MINOR SOUND WORLD

Cm⁷ Cm⁹ Cm¹¹ Cm¹³ Cm(maj7)



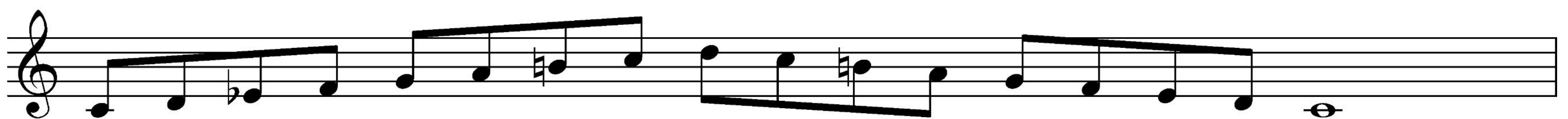
C DORIAN

INSIDE

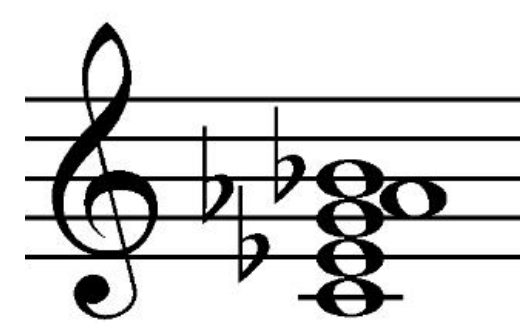


C MELODIC MINOR

INSIDE

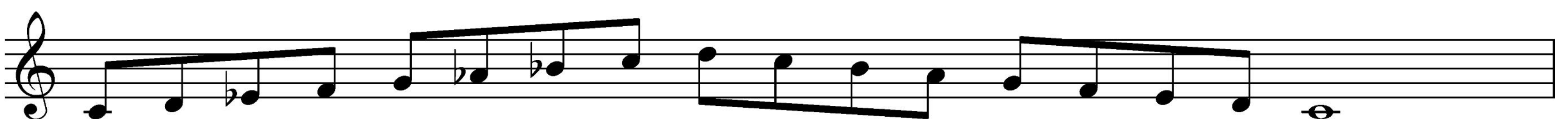


Cm^{7(b6)}



C NATURAL MINOR

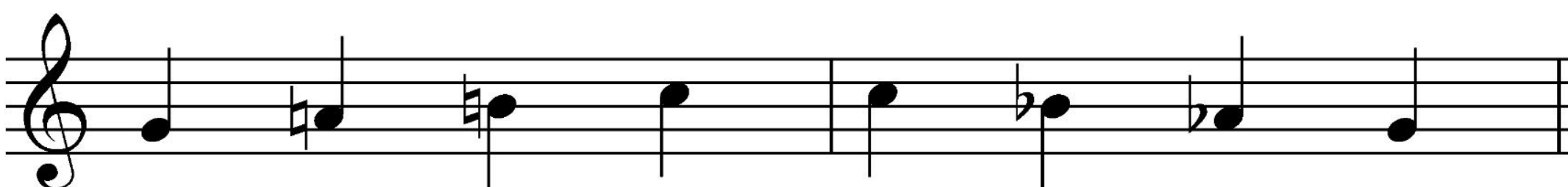
INSIDE



MINOR RULE:

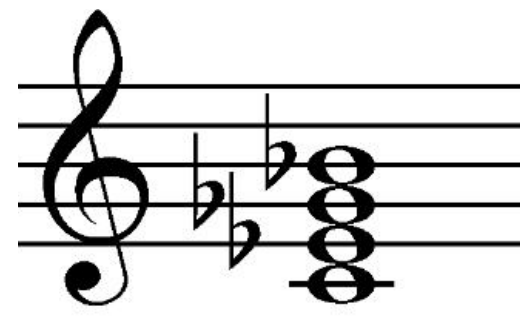
UP FROM THE 5TH:

DOWN TO THE 5TH:

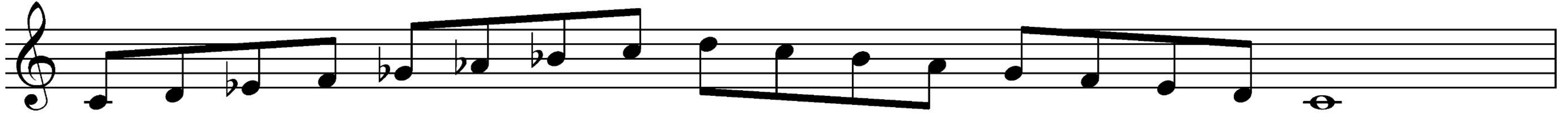


When improvising in a minor key, use the melodic minor scale when ascending up from the fifth, and the natural minor scale when descending down to the fifth.

Cm^{7(b5)} C^{ø7}



C HALF-DIMINISHED / SIXTH MODE OF E-FLAT MELODIC MINOR



BONUS SOUND WORLDS

C^{ø7}

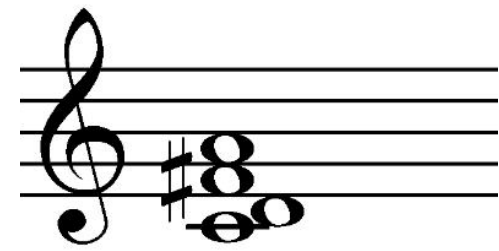
C^ømaj7



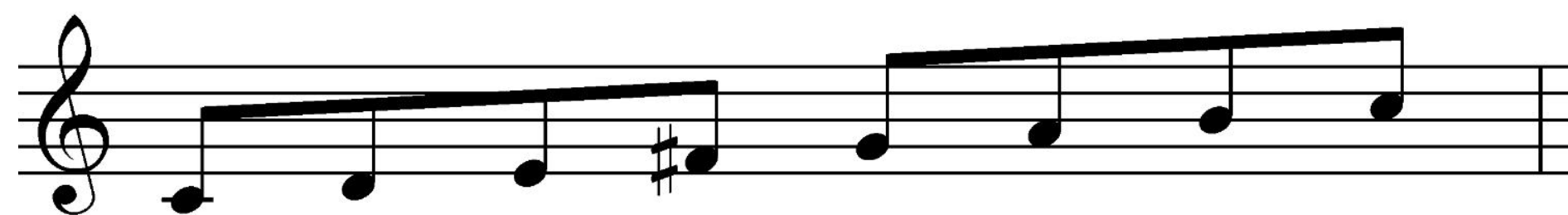
C DIMINISHED SEVENTH / C DIMINISHED MAJOR SEVENTH



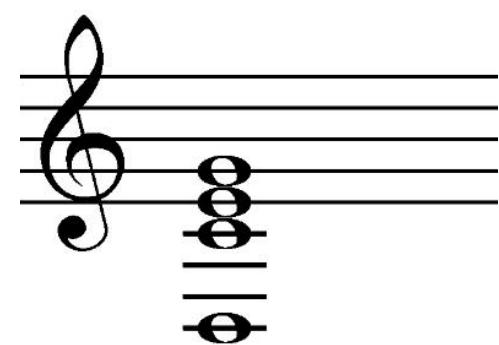
D/C



C LYDIAN



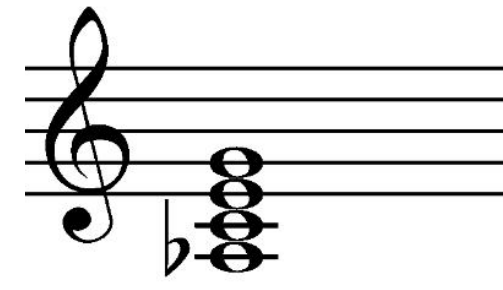
C/D



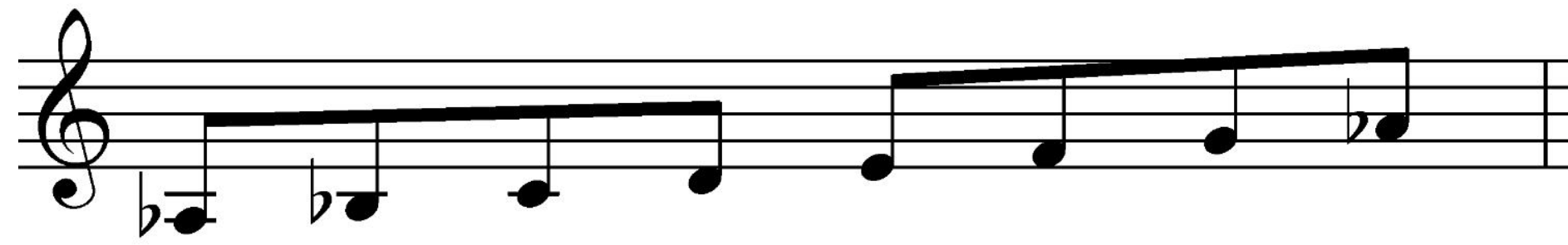
D DORIAN



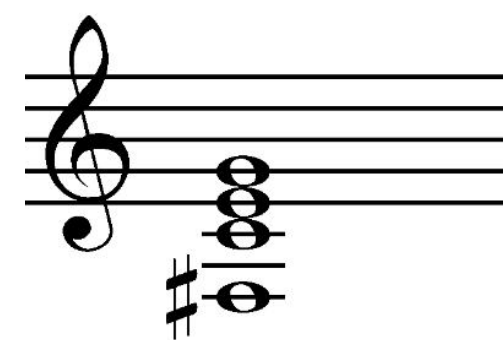
C/A \flat



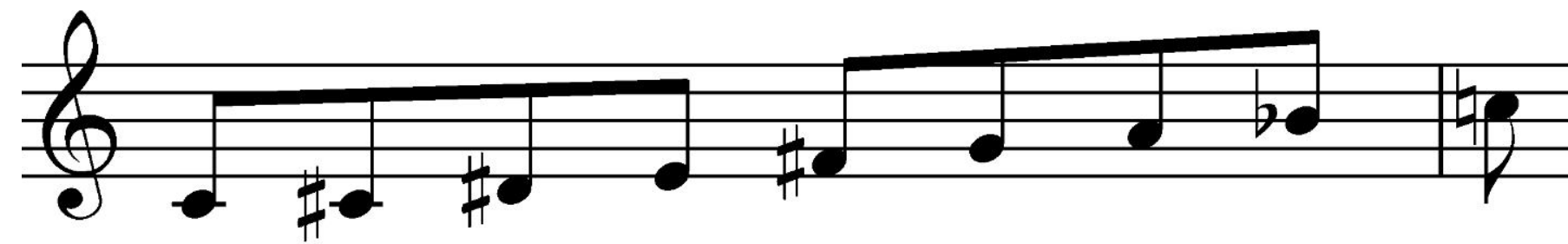
F MELODIC MINOR



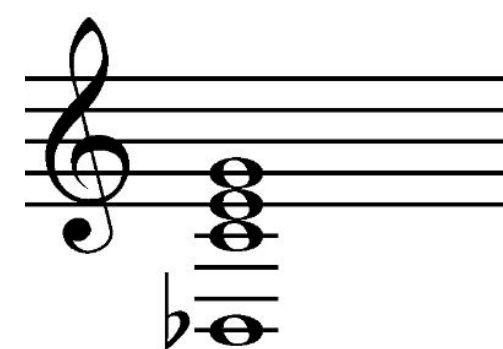
C/F \sharp



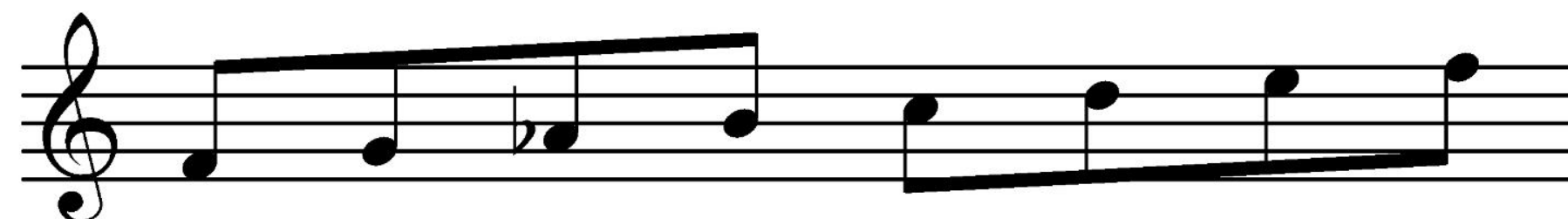
C WHOLE-HALF DIMINISHED



C/D \flat



F HARMONIC MINOR



HOW TO PRACTICE

Start by getting familiar with these 5 scales: **major, dorian, melodic minor, diminished, and altered dominant**. Then, work on **natural minor** and **whole-tone**.

For each scale, start small and then move down the list:

- Play scale in one octave in one key
- Expand the scale to cover your entire range
- Play this expanded scale from memory
- Play the expanded scale in all 12 keys
- Play patterns with this scale: in 3rds, in triads, in 7th chords... I'll do a stream on Patterns in the future if there's more interest
 - Move to the next scale!
- Play through tunes! Put a fermata over each chord and play the scales you choose to use (starting with what's most inside, and as you get more comfortable, using more outside options). Explore patterns.
- Transcribe solos to get more interesting vocabulary to use instead of these simple patterns.

If you're already comfortable with these scales, work on the more outside options, continue playing through tunes, and continue transcribing!