

'3rds' Major Scale Lesson For Circle of 5ths Lead Pan

Your instrument needs to become an extension of your hands, your mind, and your soul. Becoming a better Pan player ultimately hinges on becoming a better *musician*. This cannot be stressed enough. This is a universal concept for every musician; no matter what instrument they have chosen as their voice. Of course you will need to acquire and master some technique(s) along the way in order to get to the 'next level' of playing. However, the common question seems to always be: "How do I get there?"

Typically you'll get a common response: learn your scales, modes, arpeggios, and learn tunes. Certainly this *is* sage advice and should be taken to heart. However, many times it's what you DO with this information that is important and can determine your future success on the instrument.

"You can't think and play at the same time..."

- Sonny Rollins in a recent [NPR interview](#)

This is one of my favorite quotes from perhaps one of the greatest improvisers in the history of jazz, Sonny Rollins. Playing (*especially improvising*) needs to constantly involve a combination of technique, talent, knowledge of theory, musicality, and of course passion! In other words, learning all your major and minor scales in all keys and corresponding arpeggios is not enough to master your instrument. Don't misunderstand – you should definitely be able to play all of

your scales and arpeggios fluently. That is step one. Ultimately, however, you need to reach a level of proficiency on the instrument where you are able to play what you hear/feel as opposed to *just* trying to remember where “Db” is...

One exercise that I feel helped me to get past this point and push me into new territory was when I began to practice my scales in thirds. By doing this, it opened up my harmonic vocabulary and most importantly helped me to learn my instrument better. I was no longer just playing my scales from root (tonic) to root, but was forced to *really* learn where each scale degree lays on the instrument in relation to the tonic.

So...before you begin these exercises you **MUST** be able to play through and *memorize* all 12 major scales. If you're not familiar with all 12 or need to brush up, I have posted another lesson on my site (www.krusharmusik.com) where I give sticking suggestions to make learning each scale easier. Once you're pretty confident with each scale, then you can move on to the following exercises.

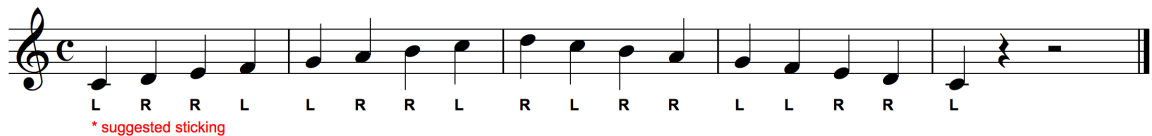
While practicing remember these important reminders:

- Pay attention to your tone (make sure you're not hitting too hard – is the sound pleasing to your ear?)
- Make sure your accuracy is on point as you play (hit the sweet spots)
- Always start slow and play with a metronome!! This will curb your temptation to go too quickly.
- If you don't know all of your scales from memory – make it a point to do so. *Internalize* each scale so that you can get away from the written page.

Application using Double Stops

For now, the following exercises will focus on Major scales. However, these can also apply to minor scales, and even modes if you decide to go further with it. Think of these as a 'map' or guide that you can master, and create your own practice versions – the possibilities are endless.

Let's start with an 'easy' scale: C Major.



Once you feel comfortable and can play through the scale with ease and precision, we will add a third above each note and play as double stops (meaning two notes at the same time). The *end result* will look like this:



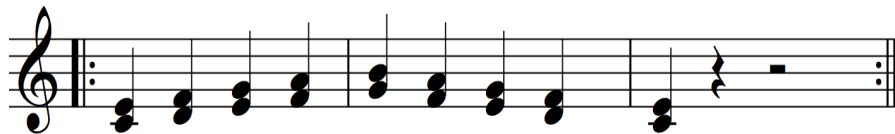
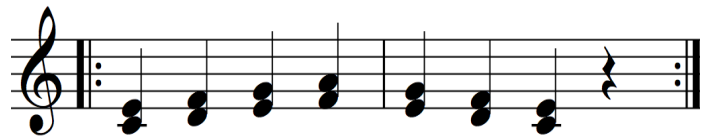
IMPORTANT!

When you begin working on this exercise, resist the urge to play the whole example from start to finish. Rather, it's better in the long run to work in small sections until you feel confident. This way it will not only be easier, but also will internalize the feel and sound in your mind and develop your muscle memory. With time and some hard work, you will be playing it through soon enough!

In order to really get these under your belt, start with small sections. For example - begin by moving up and down just one of the steps until you feel comfortable. Think of it like a ladder – one step at a time. You can't reach the top without going a rung at a time so be sure not to get ahead too quickly. Remember: we're trying to build muscle memory here.



Then move on by adding another step:



...And so on...

Continue adding steps as you go until you ultimately reach the root and can play the entire scale up and down fluently and continuously. Do this for all 12 keys, but only work on one scale at a time. Once you feel comfortable move on to another key and begin the process over.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT SPEED!!

Speed will come with time. Set your metronome on a slow, comfortable setting and don't move the tempo forward until you can play through the scale without mistakes, with good tone, and with confidence.