Left Hand/Right Hand

By
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When focusing on a particular kind of music for an extended period of time there is a danger of creating habits. Some habits are good and some are not, and in order to move on to the next level of playing you have to detect and correct the bad habits. There are also natural habits that are formed when you play a certain style of music. For example, in jazz piano playing students often get locked into the left hand comping under the right hand soloing. By doing this you'll will develop a certain technique in your left hand and another in the right hand. By having the hands technically separated, you will limited your ability to become a complete pianist. If you feel you have this problem, start to practice Chopin's etudes and you'll soon realize what you need to practice.

Jazz pianists especially, have less dexterity in the left hand compared to the right. However, with a different mind set and plenty of practice you can easily increase the technique in the left hand. The following points will get you started:

1. Practice all the major and minor scales with both hands to strengthen them. Listen and make sure that the right and left hand sound the same.

2.Why not try to reverse your hands, and your thinking. In other words, solo with your left hand and comp with your right. By the way, this is a great brain exercise.

3. Practice bebop tunes with both hands. Work out the left hand fingering.

4. When soloing in unison using both hands, focus on the left hand. In other words, let the right hand follow the left.

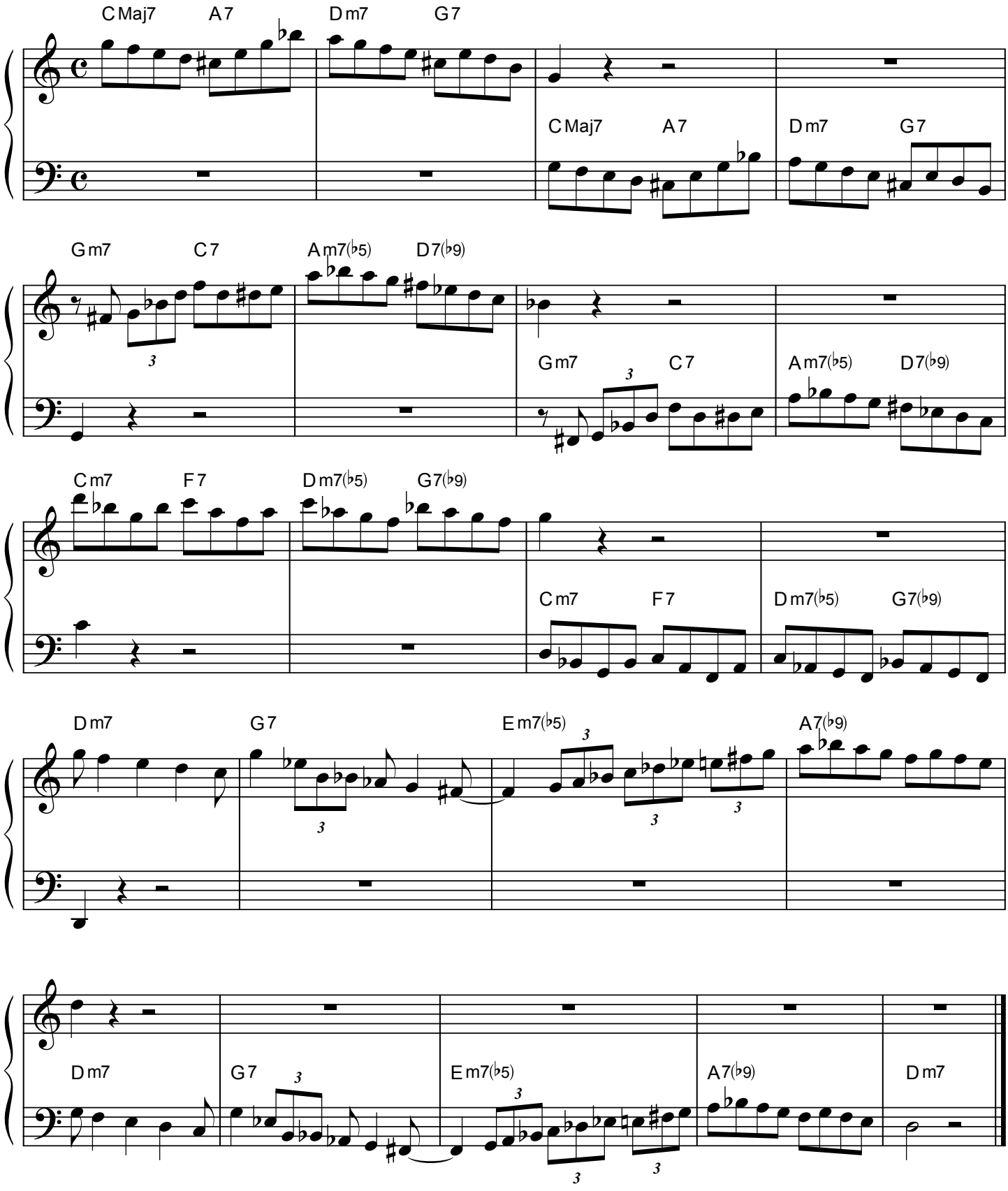
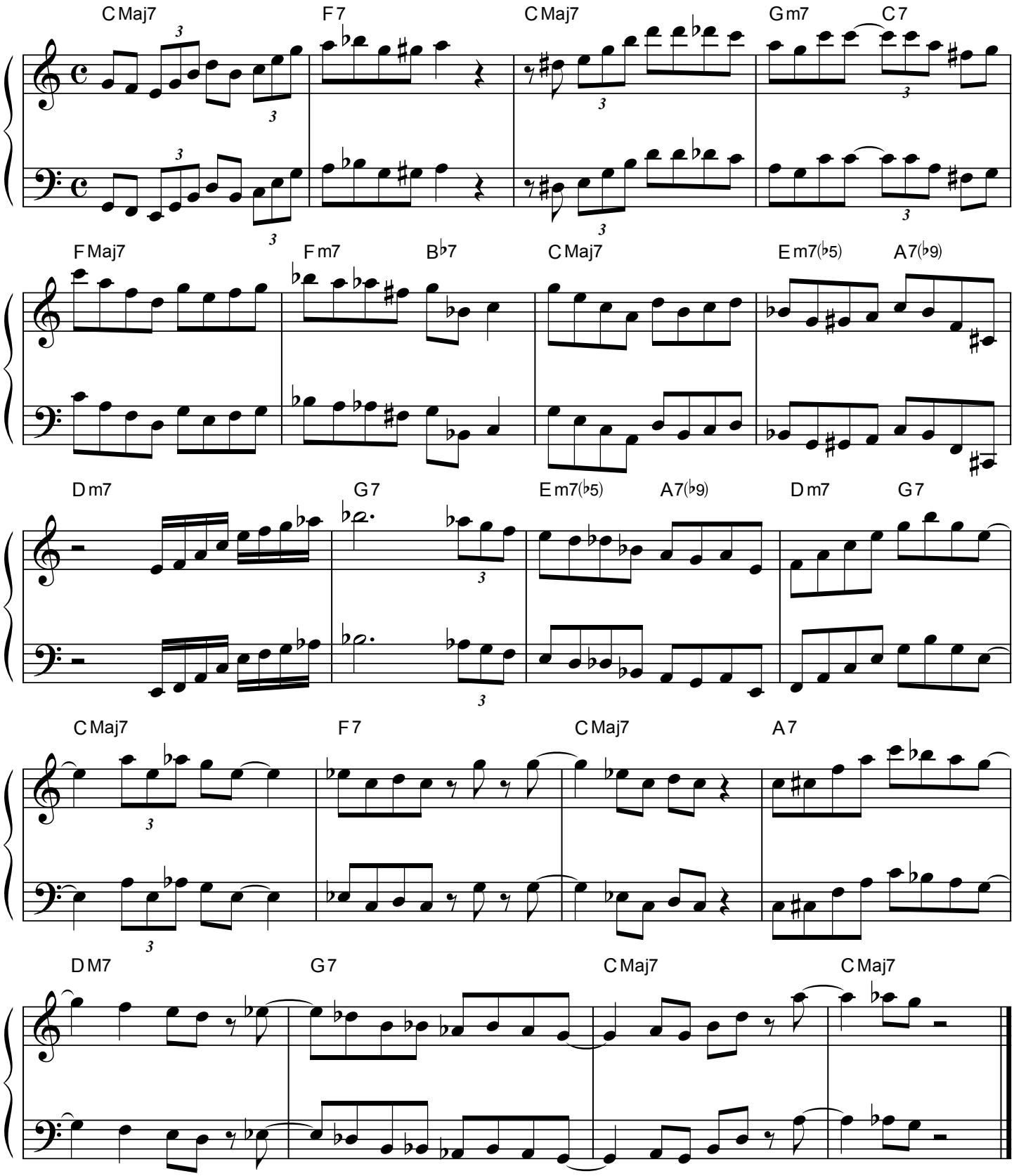
5. Any time you learn a new lick or melody, make sure you can also play it in your left hand with the correct feel and phrasing.

Suggested practice tunes:

Donna Lee	Charlie Parker
Confirmation	Charlie Parker
Scrapple From the Apple	Charlie Parker
Thriving from a Riff	Charlie Parker
Joy Spring	Clifford Brown
Take Five	Paul Desmond
Blue Rondo a la Turk	Dave Brubeck
Wave	Jobim

Bach Inventions
Chopin Etudes
Jazz Transcriptions

Etude 1 Start this etude in a slow tempo. Make sure you work out the fingering so you can play relaxed. Compare the way the hands sound and strive to make the dynamics and phrasing sound the same. Increase the tempo when you are comfortable. Remember to use a metronome.



Etude 2 Practice left hand first.
Write in the fingering.
Work on two bars at the time.
Let the left hand follow the right when you put it together.