

3 Note Major 251s

The 251 is the most common progression in jazz music. The following 3 note voicings are the most basic way to voice a major 251 progression and allow you to see and understand the voice leading (7ths dropping to become 3rds of the next chord).

Type A

251 in C

Dm⁷ G⁷ Cmaj⁷

251 in F

Gm⁷ C⁷ Fmaj⁷

251 in Bb

Cm⁷ F⁷ Bbmaj⁷

251 in Eb

Fm⁷ Bb⁷ Ebmaj⁷

251 in Ab

Bbm⁷ Eb⁷ Abmaj⁷

251 in Db

Ebm⁷ Ab⁷ Dbmaj⁷

Type B

Dm⁷ G⁷ Cmaj⁷

Gm⁷ C⁷ Fmaj⁷

Cm⁷ F⁷ Bbmaj⁷

Fm⁷ Bb⁷ Ebmaj⁷

Bbm⁷ Eb⁷ Abmaj⁷

Ebm⁷ Ab⁷ Dbmaj⁷

251 in Gb

Abm⁷ D^{b7} Gbmaj⁷

Abm⁷ D^{b7} Gbmaj⁷

251 in B

C#m⁷ F^{#7} Bmaj⁷

C#m⁷ F^{#7} Bmaj⁷

251 in E

F#m⁷ B⁷ Emaj⁷

F#m⁷ B⁷ Emaj⁷

251 in A

Bm⁷ E⁷ Amaj⁷

Bm⁷ E⁷ Amaj⁷

251 in D

Em⁷ A⁷ Dmaj⁷

Em⁷ A⁷ Dmaj⁷

251 in G

Am⁷ D⁷ Gmaj⁷

Am⁷ D⁷ Gmaj⁷

Practise Tips

Make sure you practice both Type A and Type B voicings. As you play, say the name of the chord outloud to develop an association between the name of the chord and how it looks, feels and sounds. Once you have memorised the notes, practice without the music and slowly build up the speed with a metronome.