Chord Tones vs. Arpeggios

One item to explore before diving into these exercises is the difference between chord tones and arpeggios when soloing.

When using arpeggios in your solos, you focus around the notes of the chord as a whole, so you bring out the 1357 or 9-11-13 in your lines.

With chord tone targeting, you focus on one chord tone at a time, such as targeting the 5th of a chord or chords in a progression.

To give you an example of the difference between these two soloing approaches, here's an arpeggio line to learn and hear in action.

Play this line, listen to it, then check out the chord tone targeting line below to hear the similarities and differences in these concepts.

Both bring out the sound of the chord, but arpeggios are a "zoomed out" approach and chord tone targeting is a "zoomed in" approach.

Audio Example 3

Here's an example of a line that targets the 5th, a chord tone of Cmaj7.

Here, you use chromatic notes and diatonic notes to surround and target that chord tone.

When doing so, you bring out the sound of the 5th, as it's the target note, compared to the sound of the whole chord with arpeggios.

Play this line with the arpeggio line above to hear how they both outline the chord, but do so in different ways and with unique sounds.

Audio Example 4

Chord tones and arpeggios both outline chords and progressions, but they do so in different ways.

By zooming in on one target note at a time, you can bring out specific colors in your lines and solos.

As well, target notes allow you to bring out chord tones within larger shapes, such as scales and modes.

Arpeggios can do that as well, but it's more difficult to see a full arpeggio within a scale compared to a single target chord tone.

Because of this, learning arpeggios is important, and it's just as important to zoom in and focus on target notes in your lines.

This is the skill set that you learn in this eBook; starting with targeting chord shapes, then single notes, then guide tones, and finally extensions.

Along the way you learn how to target 1, 2, and 3 notes at a time in your lines and solos.

Have fun as you dig into these target chord tones and expand your soloing chops, neck knowledge, and chord tone visualization all at once.