

## Big Band Rehearsal • Order of Events

(do in the following order for each tune)

1. pass out lead sheets (C, Bb, Eb, and bass clef parts)
2. listen to the definitive recording together in class, identifying the key players and insisting your students memorize their names and respective instruments. Then teach, discuss and have the students memorize the form (e.g., AABA, ABAC, 16-bar tune, 12-bar blues, etc.). Play the definitive recording again, pointing out the sections as they go by and having the students say *out loud* where they are on the first beat of each section (e.g., “top - second A - bridge - last A”) chorus after chorus throughout the entire recording. Point out what is happening during each chorus (e.g., playing the head in unison, piano solo, tenor sax solo, etc.).
3. memorize the root movement – have students play roots along with definitive recording (including drummer on vibes) – see examples 1 & 4.
4. memorize chord qualities – teach/show voicings to pianist and guitarist, teach bass lines to bassist; have horn players (and pianist, bassist, and guitarist if able) play the arpeggios with the definitive recording as follows (see examples 2 & 5):

- 1 3 5 7 9 for chords lasting two bars (have the 9th sustain for the second bar)

- 1 3 5 7 for chords lasting one bar

- 1 3 for chords lasting two beats

- for II V I's in major, play:\*

- for II V I's in minor, play:\*

\* You may also have the final 7th in the penultimate measure resolve to the 6th in the last measure (i.e., practice ending the line on both the 9th and 6th)

5. memorize scales – have students play them in eighth notes along with definitive recording as follows: for chords lasting one bar, just play the scale; for chords lasting two bars, have the 9th sustain for the second bar; for chords lasting two beats, just play 1 2 3 4 (see examples 3 & 6).
6. memorize head – have students play along with definitive recording
7. improvise – have students improvise with play-along recording or band's rhythm section (8 bars apiece or 4 bars apiece if it's a blues, everyone keeping the form)
8. pass out big band chart
9. discuss form; relate big band arrangement to the original form of the tune; discuss arrangement's roadmap (repeats, codas, etc.)
10. sight read tune from beginning to end – have students play the entire arrangement without stopping (unless there's a train wreck)
11. count tricky rhythms – have students count tricky rhythms together out loud
12. rehearse difficult sections, focusing on phrasing, blend, feel, dynamics, intonation, articulation, rhythmic interpretation, etc.
13. have students practice *silently* by themselves, going over any difficult phrases; then play arrangement again in its entirety
14. transcribe phrases from a solo on the definitive recording; show students how you do this
15. improvise – have students improvise again (as in step 7), but this time incorporating phrases transcribed from definitive recording
16. review intros and endings, then play arrangement in its entirety again and enjoy playing **jazz**
17. remind students that perhaps the most important sensibility of being a jazz player is being *hip* (in the know, not ignorant), that is, *knowing* the form, *knowing* the definitive recording, *knowing* the seminal players, and *knowing* the changes

## Ten Most Common Chord Scales

<u>Chord</u>	<u>Scale Name</u>	<u>Formula</u>	<u>Scale Beginning On C</u>
CΔ	Major	major scale	C D E F G A B C
C7	Mixolydian	major scale with a b7	C D E F G A Bb C
C-	Dorian	major scale with a b3 and b7	C D Eb F G A Bb C
C∅	Locrian	notes from major scale ½ step higher	C Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C
Co	Diminished (W/H)	W H W H W H W H	C D Eb F Gb Ab A B C
C-Δ	Melodic Minor	major scale with a b3	C D Eb F G A B C
C7alt	Super Locrian	notes from melodic minor scale ½ step higher	C Db Eb Fb Gb Ab Bb C
C7b9	Diminished (H/W)	H W H W H W H W	C Db Eb E F# G A Bb C
C7#5	Whole Tone	all whole steps	C D E F# G# Bb C
C7 or C-	Blues Scale	1 b3 4 b5 5 b7 1	C Eb F Gb G Bb C

# Song For My Father

(Form: AAB)

## Example 1-Roots

F- Eb7 Db7 G-/C F-

Eb7 F- Eb7 Db7 G-/C F-

## Example 2-Chords

F- Eb7 Db7 G-/C F-

Eb7 F- Eb7 Db7 G-/C F-

## Example 3-Scales

F- Eb7

Db7 G-/C F-

Eb7 F-

Eb7 Db7 G-/C F-

# Blue Bossa

(Form: 16-bar tune)

## Example 4-Roots

C- F- D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C-

E $\flat$ - A $\flat$  $^7$  D $\flat$ maj $^7$  D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C- D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt.

## Example 5-Chords

C- F- D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C-

E $\flat$ - A $\flat$  $^7$  D $\flat$ maj $^7$  D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C- D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt.

## Example 6-Scales

C- F-

D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C-

E $\flat$ - A $\flat$  $^7$  D $\flat$ maj $^7$

D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C- D $\emptyset$  G $^7$ alt. C-

## Big Band Setup and More Big Band Directing Tips

Set up the band as a bona fide *jazz* ensemble (see jazz band setup diagram), everyone as close to one another as possible. Since most high school band rooms are multipurpose music rooms (used for concert band, orchestra, etc.), assign each student a setup job so they can quickly set up the band immediately before rehearsal and return the room to how it was immediately afterwards. Make sure you have long enough extension cords to put the guitar and bass amps in their respective proper places (as opposed to where the closest electrical outlets happen to be).

Have your soloists take their solos in front of the rhythm section, facing it during rehearsal. This allows soloist and accompanists to have eye contact and better hear and react to one another. It also encourages them to memorize the chord progressions, freeing their minds and spirits to actually make music as opposed to worrying about what the next change is.

Have the piano tuned as least once a month. As this costs about \$150 per tuning (\$1,500 for the school year) and is not in the budget of most high schools, you'll probably have to fundraise for this. Do it; it's worth it. Playing with an out-of-tune piano is mis-educative. Meticulously tune up the band before every session, beginning with tuning by ear and then checking each instrument one after another with an electric tuner. Emphasize the importance of good intonation throughout rehearsal, insisting your students intensely listen to each other and adjust their embouchures as need be.

Regarding improvisation, urge your students to utilize phrases of the masters that they've transcribed on previous tunes when soloing on subsequent tunes, transposing where need be. Also, encourage them to quote from heads they know, increasing their understanding of jazz vocabulary all the while.

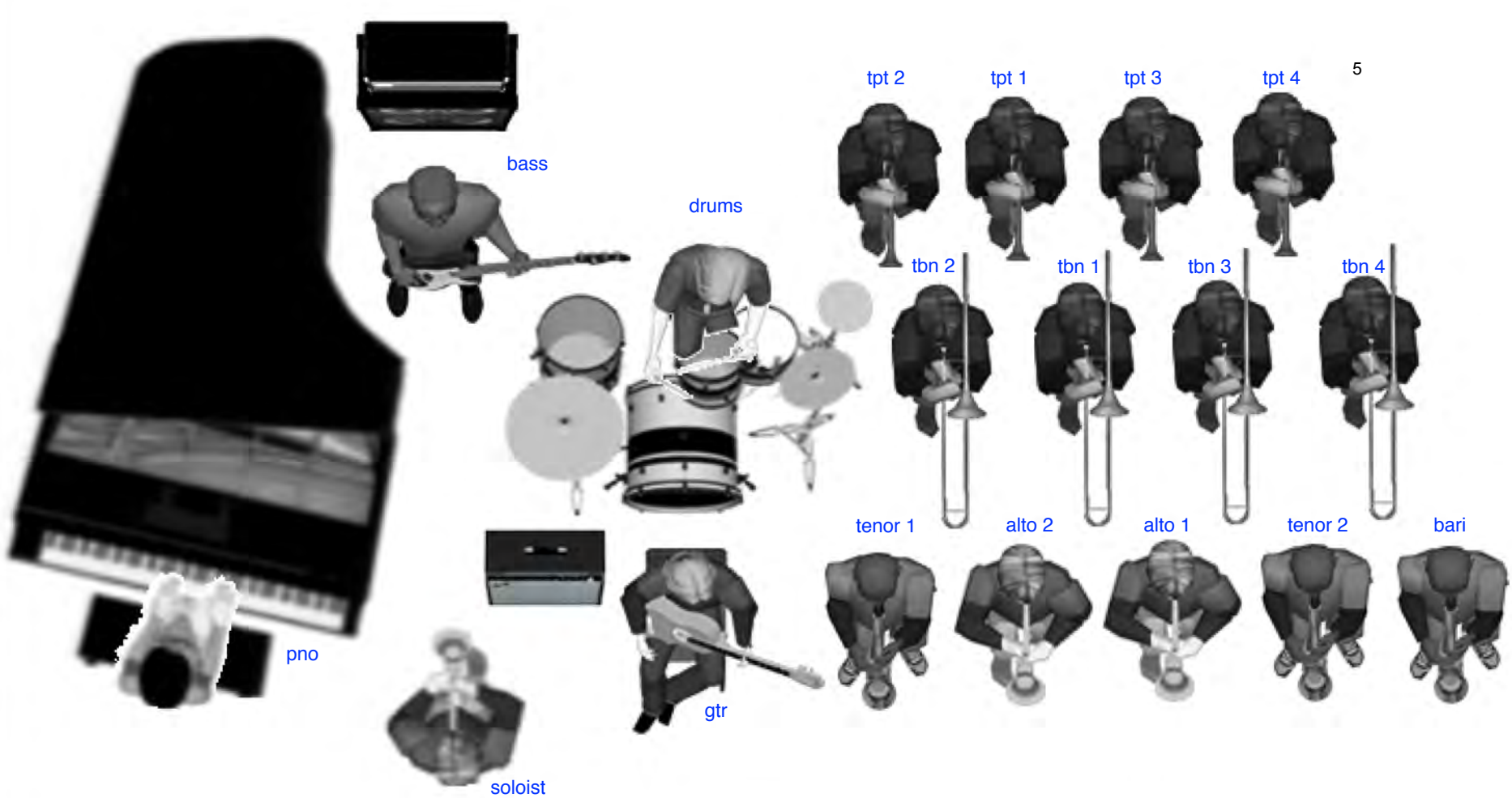
Start a combo comprising your big band's rhythm section and best two or three horn players, even if it means meeting before and/or after school a couple of days per week. Work on the same tunes that you're doing in the big band, giving the students further instruction and experience soloing on this repertoire. Bring in increasingly difficult tunes as well as diverse tune types as the combo improves. As the small group gets better, so will the big band as inevitable peer-to-peer inspiring, teaching and learning kick in. A rising tide lifts all boats.

Encourage your drummer to clearly delineate the form of each tune by playing small fills between sections, big fills between choruses and bigger fills between soloists. He or she can further delineate by changing cymbals for each new soloist, playing the bridge differently (e.g., dropping in a cross stick on the snare drum rim on beat four of each bar), using brushes for the piano solo, etc.

On swing tunes, encourage your bassist to construct their own walking bass lines based on the chord symbols, rather than (or in addition to) just playing the written quarter note lines that appear on bass parts of big band arrangements.

Suggest to your lead trumpet, trombone, and alto players that they, on their own, schedule a weekly sectional with their respective sections. Here they can work on solidifying their parts, blending, articulation and intonation, as well as rehearse any difficult solis they might have in the big band. This could occur before school, after school, or during lunch one day per week. Not only will this give your lead players leadership experience and each section a sense of ownership, resulting in tighter and more musical playing, it will allow you more time to teach *jazz* during your regular rehearsals.

Before teaching a contrafact, that is, a jazz tune utilizing the same chord progression as an extant tune, teach the "source" tune first so your students learn from whence the contrafact came. This would include such jazz standards as *Oleo* (from *I Got Rhythm*), *Donna Lee* (from *Back Home Again in Indiana*), and *Groovin' High* (from *Whispering*). Encourage your students to quote from the source tunes when soloing on their contrafacts and vice versa.



## Suggested Big Band Arrangements

Following is a list of recommended big band arrangements of “must know” jazz standards. Beginning with easier tunes on which to improvise, they are sequenced in a logical order of chord/scale theory knowledge and improvisation skill acquisition. The list also includes must know staples like blues in Bb and F, minor blues, and rhythm changes.

Rehearsing the charts in this order will provide constant reinforcement of skills/knowledge attained on the previous tune(s) while acquiring new skills/knowledge on each subsequent tune. Most can be found in Jamey Aebersold Play-Along Volumes 54 (*Maiden Voyage*) and 70 (*Killer Joe*), giving your students the opportunity to practice improvising at home on the same tunes they’re playing in the big band at school.

Title	Arranger	Aebersold Play-Along Volume
<i>Watermelon Man</i>	Mike Kamuf	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Song For My Father</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>So What</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage) and 50 (Magic of Miles Davis)
<i>Impressions</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Cantaloupe Island</i>	Mike Kamuf	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Maiden Voyage</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Lady Bird</i>	Mark Taylor	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>Satin Doll</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Blue Bossa</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Summertime</i>	Calvin Custer	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Autumn Leaves</i>	Peter Blair	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Doxy</i>	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>Tenor Madness</i> (Bb blues)	Mark Taylor	8 (Sonny Rollins) and 1 (How to Play Jazz)
<i>Now’s the Time</i> (F blues)	Paul Murtha	54 (Maiden Voyage), 1 (How to Play Jazz) and 6 (All Bird)
<i>Straight No Chaser</i> (F blues)	Mark Taylor	54 (Maiden Voyage) and 1 (How to Play Jazz)
<i>Mr. PC</i> (minor blues)	Terry White	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>Footprints</i>	John Berry	54 (Maiden Voyage)
<i>St. Thomas</i>	Mark Taylor	8 (Sonny Rollins)
<i>Sugar</i>	Mark Taylor	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>Sweet Georgia Brown</i>	Jerry Nowak	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>Girl from Ipanema</i>	Mark Taylor	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>You Stepped Out of a Dream</i>	Jerry Sheppard	70 (Killer Joe)
<i>I Got Rhythm</i> (rhythm changes)	Jimmy Lally	51 (Night and Day) and 47 (Rhythm Changes)
<i>Oleo</i> (rhythm changes)	Mark Taylor	8 (Sonny Rollins) and 47 (Rhythm Changes)

To Listen to Arrangements Free Online: <http://listeninglab.stantons.com>

To Order Arrangements Online: <http://www.ejazzlines.com/JAZZ-BIG-BAND-ARRANGEMENTS-c932.html>

## Recommended Rhythm Section Resources

### Everyone

- Jamey Aebersold Play-Along Volumes 1, 54, and 70 \*
- “Methods for Fighting the Epidemic of Tune Illiteracy” (JB Dyas), *DownBeat*, May, 2010
- “Methods for Fighting the Epidemic of Tune Illiteracy, Part 2” (JB Dyas), *DownBeat*, August, 2010

### Piano

- *Jazz Piano Voicings Mnemonics* (JB Dyas)
- *Jazz Piano Voicings for the Non-Pianist* (Mike Tracy) \*
- *Transcribed Piano Voicings* for Aebersold Play-Along Volumes 1, 54, and 70 \*

### Bass

- “Linear Bass Line Construction” (JB Dyas), *DownBeat*, August, 2006
- “Linear Bass Line Construction, Part 2” (JB Dyas), *DownBeat*, August, 2007
- *Transcribed Bass Lines* for Aebersold Play-Along Volumes 1, 54, and 70 \*

### Drums

- *Drum Styles and Analysis* for Aebersold Play-Along Volumes 54 and 70 (Steve Davis) \*

### Guitar

- *Easy Jazz Guitar - Voicings and Comping* (Michael DiLiddo) \*
- *Maiden Voyage - Guitar Voicings* (Michael DiLiddo) \*

\* Can be ordered online at <https://www.jazzbooks.com>