# Table of Contents

**Explanation of Contents** ........................................................................................................... 6

**Melody Interpretation—Part 1** .................................................................................................... 8  
  Altering the Melodic Rhythm ........................................................................................................ 8

**Harmony—Part 1** ..................................................................................................................... 11  
  Chord Expansion, Dominants ...................................................................................................... 11  
  Expanding the Dominant with 6th and flatted 9th .................................................................. 11  
  Expanding the Dominant with #5 and 9th ............................................................................ 12  
  Combining the two Expanded Dominants ............................................................................... 13

**Common Harmonic Progressions—Part 1** ............................................................................ 14  
  Adding Chords .......................................................................................................................... 16

**Fills—Part 1** ............................................................................................................................. 19  
  Major Scale Fills ....................................................................................................................... 19  
  Fills, Major Scale with Chromatics ......................................................................................... 22

**Careless Love** .......................................................................................................................... 24

**Harmony—Part 2** ..................................................................................................................... 30  
  Playing in Thirds—Part 1 .......................................................................................................... 30  
  Playing in Thirds, Major Scale .................................................................................................. 30  
  Shifting Chromatic Thirds ......................................................................................................... 31  
  Passing Tones, Minor (7, #7, 8) ............................................................................................... 33

**American Patrol** .................................................................................................................... 36

**Fills—Part 2** ............................................................................................................................. 42  
  Fills, Six Note Scale .................................................................................................................. 42

**Harmony—Part 3** ..................................................................................................................... 46  
  Chromatic Chord Shifting ......................................................................................................... 46  
  Chromatic Chord Shifting, Major Triad, Right Hand .............................................................. 46  
  Chromatic Chord Shifting, Minor Triad ................................................................................... 48  
  Chromatic Chord Shifting, Dominant Seventh Chord .......................................................... 49  
  Sixths in the Inner Voices ......................................................................................................... 50  
  Chromatic Sixth Shifting in the Inner Voices ......................................................................... 51

**Intros** ....................................................................................................................................... 53

**We Shall Not Be Moved** ......................................................................................................... 56

**Common Harmonic Progressions—Part 2** ............................................................................ 60  
  Passing Chords, Minor ............................................................................................................ 60

**Harmony—Part 4** ..................................................................................................................... 67  
  Diminished Passing Chords, Minor ......................................................................................... 67  
  Diminished Passing Chords, Major ......................................................................................... 68

**Melodie In F** ............................................................................................................................ 70
“Careless Love” is a simple song that requires good interpretation. Looking at the lead sheet, we notice a very simple harmony consisting of the I – IV – V major chords and a rather boring melody rhythm. In the arranged piano version of “Careless Love” (page 27–29) we implement the material we learned in the previous chapters. In order to better understand these techniques, let’s examine and compare some of the measures. Measures 6–8 from the lead sheet are well suited for the harmony technique from page 14:

written in measures 6–8

played, Piano Version, measures 10–12 (and 26–28)
Fills—Part 2

Fills, Six Note Scale

Every cocktail pianist should strive to have a rich repertoire of fills at his disposal. A short improvised melody can consist of just three or four notes, or an entire scale. In the chapter “Fills—Part 1”, we used all the notes of the major scale. As a reminder, here is the C major scale:

C major scale

![C major scale with notes](image)

Now we will learn how we can omit one note to form a six note scale. We will omit the fourth:

C major scale without fourth

![C major scale without fourth with notes](image)

These six notes are well-suited for creating short improvised melodies. All the notes of this scale can be used with the chords of the C major scale. We’ll show you how this sounds by practicing the Examples 14a–15c in three keys:

Example 14a

![Example 14a](image)
Harmony—Part 3

Chromatic Chord Shifting
Creative pianists are always making interesting changes to a song's harmony, even if it is not notated in the written notes. Chromatic chord shifting is an exciting technique. Generally it’s possible to shift any chord down (or up) a half-step and return to the original chord. In this chapter we will deal solely with chord shifting down a half-step. We have two possibilities:

1. We shift only the chord (the notes in the right hand)
2. We shift the entire chord (both hands)

Chromatic Chord Shifting, Major Triad, Right Hand
If you’re playing the right hand melody with chords, chromatic chord shifting is a good possibility, especially when the melody note goes down a half-step and back up. If the melody note is also the third, fifth, or root of the chord, chromatic chord shifting is a good option. To understand this better, let’s look at a short melody example:

Third of C major

The third of the C major chord, the “E”, descends a half-step to “D#” and back up. If we are adding chords to the melody, we can shift back and forth between C major and B major triads:
Passing Chords, Minor

Passing chords are a very important topic for all cocktail pianists. They can be used to great effect when harmonizing the melody. Simply defined, passing chords are additional chords that can be added, but are not necessarily indicated in the written music. It is possible to insert additional chords to the ones already notated. In this chapter we want to explore which additional chords can be added to a minor chord.

1st Variation

We can extend this Dm7 chord by adding an Em7 (or C/E) and an F major chord:

written played
\[ \text{Dm7} \rightarrow \text{Em7 (C/E)} \quad \text{F} \]

If we use the example of a II – V– I cadence in C major, the extension would look like this:

written played
\[ \text{Dm7} \rightarrow \text{Dm7 Em7 (C/E) F G7 C} \]

In Examples 30a–32c we’ll see the 1st Variation used in a typical harmonic setting.
“Melody in F”, a wonderful composition by Anton Rubinstein, is well-suited for cocktail piano. The diminished chords can be used as passing or added chords. In the Piano Version we see the diminished chord used in 20 measures (measures 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29). The chord consists of 2–4 voices. In measure 1 of the Piano Version (page 73), the diminished chord consists of just 2 voices, on beats 2 and 4:

written in measure 1

Conversion, Piano Version, measure 1
Endings

Ending Fills

Many of the common harmonic progressions that we have learned can be readily used for endings. At this point we want to look at some ending fills. An ending fill is a short phrase used at the very end of a song.

Ending Fills, Two Notes

Generally it’s possible to play a fill using the notes of the chord. We can even create an interesting fill using just two notes. If we have a major chord at the end of a song, we can use the root and the third. Adding the root again an octave higher makes it more interesting. Now we have a three note pattern, as we see here:

C

Root Third Root

We can repeat this pattern over several octaves:

C

At the end of the piano version of “Prelúde” (page 79, measure 40) we see this ending fill pattern over a major chord.

If we have a minor chord at the end of a song, we obviously need to play the minor third in our new pattern. Now let’s practice this new ending fill in both major and minor (Examples 41a–c).
Fills—Part 3

Fills, Altered Scale
The altered scale is a wonderful and popular device used by cocktail pianists for fills and improvisation. It’s important to learn more about this new topic. The altered scale is a dominant scale and fits nicely to the dominant seventh chord. In the altered scale, the fifth and the ninth is raised or lowered. Sometimes you will see the abbreviation “alt” after a chord (e.g. C7alt); it’s the pianist’s decision how he/she wants to alter the chord. If you raise and lower both the fifth and ninth, you have four alterations in your scale. The altered scale of the G7 looks like this:

As you can see from this example, there is no perfect fifth in the altered scale, rather a diminished fifth (b5) and an augmented fifth (#5). In addition, we have a minor ninth (b9) and a raised ninth (#9). We are also using the root, third and seventh of the original dominant chord. It’s a good idea to play these three notes in the left hand (omitting the fifth) while playing altered scale fills. Practical Examples 56a–60c will illustrate the sound character of the altered scale.
Melodic Interpretation—Part 2

As we saw in the chapter “Melodic Interpretation—Part 1” (pages 8–10), there are many ways to modify the rhythm of a melody. If you also add changes to the notes of the melody, the possibilities are endless. This chapter will offer some suggestions to get you started.

### Altering the Melody

The first possible melodic variation involves playing a note a half-step lower than the melody tone and returning to the original tone. Using a simple melody with two half notes, it would look like this:

**written**

```
C        F
C     F
```

**played**

```
C     F
C     F
```

Or

```
C     F
C     F
```

Of course the melody tone can also be varied up a whole step:

**written**

```
C        F
C     F
```

**played**

```
C     F
C     F
```

Or

```
C     F
C     F
```

Both melody tones could also be connected using notes form the major scale:

**written**

```
C        F
C     F
```

**played**

```
C     F
C     F
```