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**Modern Jazz Voicings
Arranging for Small and Medium
Ensembles**

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3-1 Five-Part Soli Voicings

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CHAPTER 3

Basic Voicings

3-1 Five-Part Soli Voicings

One of the simplest ways to create harmonized solis for mixed instrumentation is to “hang” chords below a melody line. Standard four-note voicing techniques include four-way close, drop 2, drop 3, and drop 2 + 4. We can expand the number of parts to five by simply doubling the lead, duplicating the melody either an octave above or below the lead voice. (Throughout this book, we will use “8va” to mean an octave above and “8vb” to mean an octave below.) Note that although we are writing for five instruments, we are still dealing with voicings of only four notes—that is, four different pitch names.

The following examples demonstrate the standard four-note voicings with the addition of a doubled lead an octave below the melody

9

Four-way close, double lead (8vb)

Chords: F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, F6

Instructions: Fine, D.C. al Fine

10

Drop 2, double lead (8vb)

Chords: F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, F6

Instructions: Fine, D.C. al Fine

11

Drop 3, double lead (8vb)

Musical score for exercise 11. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It features a double lead for Trumpet/Guitar, Alto, and Tenor saxophones, and a double lead for Trombone and Baritone saxophones. The harmonic progression consists of F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, and F6. The piece concludes with a 'Fine' and 'D.C. al Fine' marking. The drum part is indicated by a double bar line with a '2' below it, suggesting a two-measure rest.

12

Drop 2 + 4, double lead (8vb)

Musical score for exercise 12. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It features a double lead for Trumpet/Guitar, Alto, and Tenor saxophones, and a double lead for Trombone and Baritone saxophones. The harmonic progression consists of F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, and F6. The piece concludes with a 'Fine' and 'D.C. al Fine' marking. The drum part is indicated by a double bar line with a '2' below it, suggesting a two-measure rest.

When the instrumentation allows, you might consider doubling the lead an octave higher.

13

Drop 2, double lead (8va)

Musical score for exercise 13. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It features a double lead for Flute and Trumpet/Guitar/Alto saxophones, and a double lead for Trombone and Baritone saxophones. The harmonic progression consists of F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, and F6. The piece concludes with a 'Fine' and 'D.C. al Fine' marking. The drum part is indicated by a double bar line with a '2' below it, suggesting a two-measure rest.

14

Drop 2 + 4, double lead (8va)

Musical score for exercise 14. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It features a double lead for Flute and Trumpet/Guitar/Alto saxophones, and a double lead for Trombone and Baritone saxophones. The harmonic progression consists of F7, D7, (ch), C7sus4, Bb7sus4, and F6. The piece concludes with a 'Fine' and 'D.C. al Fine' marking. The drum part is indicated by a double bar line with a '2' below it, suggesting a two-measure rest.

MODERN JAZZ VOICINGS

On drop 2 and drop 2 + 4 voicings, available harmonic tensions may be used in the “new” second voice to improve spacing, add color, or provide better voice leading.

The image shows two musical examples of Bb7sus4 chords. The first example, labeled 'Drop 2', shows a chord voicing in the treble clef with notes Bb, D, F, and Ab. The second example, labeled 'Drop 2 + 4', shows a chord voicing in the treble clef with notes Bb, D, F, and Ab, but with the second voice lowered by two frets and the third voice lowered by four frets. Both examples include the label '13 for 5' above the chords.

Typical Five-Part Instrumental Combinations

trumpet	trumpet	trumpet I	trumpet I	soprano sax	soprano sax
alto sax	alto sax	trumpet II	trumpet II	alto sax	trumpet
tenor sax	tenor sax I	alto sax	alto sax	tenor sax	alto sax
trombone	tenor sax II	tenor sax	tenor sax	trombone	tenor sax
baritone sax	baritone sax	baritone sax	trombone	baritone sax	trombone
soprano sax	trumpet I	trumpet I	trumpet I	trumpet I	alto sax I
alto sax I	trumpet II	trumpet II	trumpet II	trumpet II	alto sax II
alto sax II	trumpet III	F-horn	trumpet III	trumpet III	tenor sax I
tenor sax	trombone	trombone	trombone I	trumpet IV	tenor sax II
baritone sax	bass trombone	tuba	trombone II	trumpet V	baritone sax
trombone I	flute I	clarinet I	guitar I	soprano voice	flute
trombone II	flute II	clarinet II	guitar II	soprano voice	clarinet
trombone III	clarinet I	clarinet III	guitar III	alto voice	F-Horn
trombone IV	clarinet II	trombone (cup)	guitar IV	tenor voice	cello
tuba	bass clarinet	trombone (cup)	guitar V	bass voice	bass clarinet