

Why Study Harmony or Theory?

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- A) To gain a knowledge of all the wonderful sounds at your disposal.
- B) To learn about the effects of these materials in different contexts. (Also, to know how to create moods by categorizing the materials.)
- C) To save you time (using your ear only is the hard way, and unless your ear is highly developed you will keep playing pretty much the same things). You may have to spend a lot of time *now* studying harmony, but the time saved *in the long run*, plus the other rewards makes up for it ten-fold.

(Sometime you must “go backwards” in order to eventually jump much farther ahead—kind of like a bow and arrow: first you pull the arrow back in order to make it zoom forward.) Like you might take a day or two making up a certain lick, searching for a sound, that if you had studied you would have grabbed almost instantly or with a very short amount of trial and error.

The knowledge of harmony (and theory) contained in most books on the subject is the result of hundreds of years of trial and error on the part of composers and musicians in general, and it is fortunate for us that each generation wrote down the results of their work so that now we have this great body of knowledge to save us all the time of having to start all over again from scratch.

- D) Expansion of an idea — if a particular sound really grabs you and you know harmony (and theory), there is a great chance that just by using your knowledge you will be able to analyze the sound and find other similar variations.
- E) Benefits of thinking in numbers:
 - 1) Transposition
 - 2) Communication
 - 3) Ease of memorization of songs, pieces, etc.
 - 4) Helps in learning to recognize and pick up sounds faster.

What Can One Do with Harmonic Materials?

- 1) Compose
- 2) Figure out other people’s music quickly. Also, enable you to grasp the logic of a piece of music, see how the other person was thinking to a large extent
- 3) Combine 1) and 2) by “recomposing” or arranging a tune
- 4) Improvise in many moods, styles, feelings

When there is extra time with students, some good things to do are:

- 1) Analyzing
- 2) Ear training
- 3) Improvising.
Play together in modes
Composition
- 4) Discuss goals
- 5) Converting major to minor (or vice versa) in examples
- 6) Quizzes
- 7) Building all extensions from a scale

