



JAZZ STANDARD

STUDY GUIDES

Corcovado

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Jazz Standard Study Guide – Corcovado

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Published By: Guitar for Life LLC
Cover Photo By: Twizzlebird Creative
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Introduction to This Study Guide

Welcome to the Corcovado study guide, great to have you here!

When learning any jazz standard, you need to have an understanding of four main elements:

- Melody
- Form
- Soloing
- Comping

Because of copyright issues, this eBook leaves out the melody and focuses on the other three elements.

By studying the form, soloing techniques, and comping patterns, you give yourself everything you need to jam this tune on the guitar.

From there, you can add the melody by learning it by ear or from a lead sheet such as you find in the Real Book.

Make sure to work each section in this eBook to get the most out of your studies.

It's no use being able to rip a solo over a tune if you can't then comp the chords, or you can comp great chords but get lost in the form.

It's the marriage of these three devices, form-soloing-comping, that provide the skills needed to jam this tune with confidence.

So, grab your guitar, turn up your amp, and learn how to play one of the most popular Brazilian jazz songs in the genre, Corcovado.

Guide Tone Soloing With Chromaticism

To begin soloing over Corcovado, you learn how to play guide tones and chromatic ornaments over the changes.

Guide tones, as you see below, are most often the 3rd and 7th of any chord, and they're used to outline the changes without scales or arps.

You can use guide tones in different ways when soloing, on their own to outline the changes or as target notes within scale or arpeggio shapes.

In this exercise, you use guide tones on their own to outline the changes, spicing them up with chromatic ornaments from there.

Before you look at the guide tones over the tune, here are the four chromatic ornaments that you can use to spice up your solos.

When adding these ornaments to your solos, use one at a time before mixing them together as you develop them further in your studies.

- Approach Notes
- Double Approach Notes
- Enclosures
- 4123 Pattern

Approach Notes

The first chromatic ornament is the approach note, where you play a note one fret below any guide tone before resolving into that guide tone.

You can also use approach notes from above, as you see and hear in this example, but they're tougher to make work when soloing.

Because of this, begin with approach notes below any guide tone, and then work into playing them from above after that's comfortable.

You can play the approach notes on any beat in a bar, up beat or down beat, as long as you then resolve that tension into the guide tone.

Audio Example 1

The image shows a musical score for a guitar line. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first two bars are marked with the chord A_m^7 and the last two bars with $A_b^{\circ 7}$. The notes in the first bar are G4, A4, B4, and B-flat4. The second bar has G4, A4, and B4. The third bar has G4, A4, and B-flat4. The fourth bar has G4, A4, and B4. The bottom staff shows fret numbers: 4-5, 4-5, 9, 8, 7-8, 8-7, 7-6, and 3-4.

Double Approach Notes

The next ornament uses two chromatic notes to approach any guide tone, from below or above that guide tone.

When doing so, you start two frets above or below any guide tone, then play chromatically into that guide tone from there.

Here are examples of that ornament in action over the first four bars to Corcovado.

After you apply this technique using 8th notes, you can mix in other rhythms, such as the triplet in bar 3 of the example.

Audio Example 2

The musical notation for Audio Example 2 consists of a single staff in G major. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The melody is as follows:

Measure 1: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), rest (quarter). Chord: Am7.

Measure 2: G4 (quarter), rest (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter). Chord: Ab°7.

Measure 3: F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), rest (quarter). Chord: Ab°7.

Measure 4: D4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), rest (quarter). Chord: Ab°7.

Measure 5: B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), rest (quarter). Chord: Ab°7.

The fretboard diagram below the staff shows the following fingerings for the notes in each measure:

7	6	5	6	7	8	3	4	5	4	5	6	5	6	7	6	5	4
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Enclosures

In the next ornament, you use two chromatic notes to “enclose” any guide tone, hence the name of this melodic device.

When doing so, you play two chromatic tension notes for every one diatonic resolution note in your playing.

There are a number of enclosures that you can apply to guide tones, but you learn the most common in this eBook, double-chromatic.

This version of the enclosure is built by playing one fret above, then one fret below, before resolving to any guide tone in your lines.

Here are a few examples of that enclosure in action. Make sure to take this ornament to any/all guide tones on the tune in your studies.

From there, you can make musical decisions about where to include this ornament in your improvised solos.

Audio Example 3

Am⁷ Ab⁰⁷

6 4 5 9 7 8 8 6 7 7 5 6

4123 Pattern

This ornament doesn't have a traditional label, so I call it the 4123 pattern, as that's the finger combination used in this ornament.

To apply this ornament to any guide tone, you place your 4th finger a fret higher than that guide tone, then play 4123 fingers from there.

When doing so, you always land on the guide tone with your 3rd finger.

If you don't, go back and check your starting position to make sure you began with your pinky one fret higher than your target guide tone.

Though this pattern is written using only 8th notes, after you can apply it to various guide tones from memory begin to alter the rhythms.

You can expand the rhythms to include quarter notes, or speed it up by using triplets and 16th notes.

Whatever rhythms you use is cool, just make sure that you resolve to the guide tone with this pattern to avoid it sounding off in your solos.

Audio Example 4

The image shows a musical score for a guitar solo. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of four measures. The first measure is labeled *Am7* and contains the notes G4, B-flat4, D5, and E5. The second measure is labeled *Ab7* and contains the notes G4, A-flat4, B-flat4, and C5. The third measure is labeled *Am7* and contains the notes G4, B-flat4, D5, and E5. The fourth measure is labeled *Am7* and contains the notes G4, B-flat4, D5, and E5. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with six lines. The fret numbers are: 6-3-4-5 for the first measure, 9-6-7-8 for the second measure, 5-2-3-4 for the third measure, and 7-4-5-6 for the fourth measure.

Guide Tones

Now that you know how to add chromaticism to the guide tone study, here are those guide tones over the Corcovado progression.

There are a number of guide tones that you can choose from when working a study such as this.

To keep things succinct, here's one way to play guide tones on guitar over Corcovado to add to your repertoire.

Over each chord you find the 3rd and 7th, or in the case of the 6 chord, the 3rd and 6th.

One position has been given for each guide tone, but you can take these notes to other positions and octaves to expand them on the guitar.

Learn the guide tones over the first four bars first, and improvise with them using one or more of the chromatic ornaments.

From there, add one chord at a time until you can play these guide tones with ornaments from memory in your solos.

When you can do that, expand those notes by moving them around the fretboard and jamming them with the backing track in your solos.

Audio Example 5

Am⁷ Ab^{o7}

8 8 6 7

Gm⁷ C⁷ Fmaj⁷ F^b

6 6 5 6 5 5 7 10

Fm⁷ Bb⁷ Em⁷ A7(b13)

9 11 10 9 8 10 9 8

D⁷ Dm⁷ G⁷ G#^{o7}

7 8 7 6 8 7

Am⁷ Ab^{o7}

8 8 6 7

Gm⁷ C⁷ Fmaj⁷ F⁶

6 6 5 6 5 5 7 10

Fm⁷ Bb⁷ Em⁷ Am⁷

9 11 10 9 8 10 8 8

Dm⁷ G⁷ Em⁷ A^{7(b13)}

6 8 7 6 8 10 9 8

Dm⁷ G⁷ G^{#o7}

6 8 7