

Augmented Scale

Hexatonic – 6 notes, 2 mutually exclusive triads.

Symmetrical - repeating minor 3rd and half-step intervals.

C augmented can be constructed by taking a C+ triad (C, E, G#) and adding:

- 1) augmented triad a half-step below (B aug = B, D#, F## [G]), or
- 2) half-step leading tone into each note, or
- 3) augmented triad a b3rd above (Eb+).

Scale degrees: R, #2 (b3), 3, 5, #5, 7.

The image shows three musical examples on a single staff in treble clef. The first example, labeled 'C AUG TRIAD', shows the notes C, E, and G# on a single line. The second example, labeled 'B AUG TRIAD', shows the notes B, D#, and F## (G) on a single line. The third example, labeled 'C AUGMENTED SCALE', shows the notes C, E, G#, A, B, and C on a single line. Below the notes of the C augmented scale are the scale degrees: R, #2, 3, 5, #5, 7, R.

There are only 4 augmented scales. Repeated pattern of b3rd and b2nd produces three possible tonics (major thirds apart). C augmented scale can also be called E augmented or G# augmented. (In same way that C+ triad can be named E+ or G#+).

Applications

Over diatonic chords from the scale

There are many chords with roots C, E and G# contained within this scale:

- Major, minor, augmented triads
- Maj7, Maj7(with #9), Maj7#5, Min/maj7
- also 3 major triads with an added #9/b3rd: C/Eb, E/G, G#/B.

This means it can be used over any of these chords. Chromatic tones can be viewed as passing tones, or as upper extensions if you alter the chord.

// V I

Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 – use C augmented scale.

Can build an altered dominant 7th chord on leading tone of the scale. So for G7alt, use G# augmented scale (ie C augmented scale).

The image shows a musical score for a 4/4 time signature. The treble clef staff contains three measures of music. The first measure is labeled Dm7 and contains the notes C, E, G, Bb, C. The second measure is labeled G7 and contains the notes G, B, D, F, G. The third measure is labeled Cmaj7 and contains the notes C, E, G, B, C. Below the treble staff is a bass staff with fret numbers: 8, 7, 9, 8, 9, 8, 9, 11, 10, 11.

C augmented scale over chords diatonic to A melodic minor

Since the maj7#5 chord could be used as an upper structure for most, if not all, of the chords diatonic to the melodic minor scale:

Amin/maj7, Bm7(b9), Cmaj7#5, D7(#11), E7(b13), F#m7b5, G#7alt

The image shows a musical score for a 4/4 time signature. The treble clef staff contains one measure of music labeled D7(#11) with the notes D, F#, A, C, D. Below the treble staff is a bass staff with fret numbers: 4, 6, 4, 5, 4, 3, 5.

B augmented scale over Giant Steps

The augmented scale contains 3 major triads major thirds apart. “Giant Steps” has major key centres that are major thirds apart. (So does the bridge to “Have You Met Miss Jones”).

Augmented scale a half-step below the root of a tonic minor seventh chord
 Use C augmented scale over C#m7, Fm7 (E aug scale), or Am7 (G# aug scale).
 Gives you an altered V7 chord.

Play C augmented scale over a C7 blues
 Resolve to chord tones, add in blues scale.

Polychords

Try creating polychords from the 3 major and 3 minor triads (or combine any notes in the scale). Example using Em and Ab (G#) triads from C augmented scale (with inversions):

(Notice the half-steps in the last bar!)