

The Power of Fourths

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Sometimes the simplest 3 note chords can add a sound to your playing that is truly amazing. A 3 note chord of stacked 4ths provides a simple way to change sounds by moving the bass note. In ex 1 the stacked 4th with C in the bass produces a Cs2 (C suspended 2nd). By moving the bass note to G it becomes a Gs4 (G suspended 4th). In these examples the right hand stays in the same position and by changing the bass note we get four different chords. Simple, but a great sound.

Ex. 1

Cs2 Gs4 Cs2 Gs4

Ex. 2 By inverting the chord it takes on a different sound but can be used in the same way. Any of the inversions can be resolved to the corresponding major chord. Ex. 3

5 Ex. 3

Cs2 C Cs2 C Cs2 C Gs4 G Gs4 G

Ex 4. By adding F to the bass the same right hand chord becomes a G7s4. Practice using the inversions for a different sound.

Ex. 5 A great sound to use when playing the 3rd of the chord in the bass. The right hand position remains the same as in the other examples but this time the bass is E, the 3rd tone in the C scale.

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Gs4 G G7s4 Cs2/E

Ex. 4 Ex. 5