



## The Melodic Minor Scale

The melodic minor scale is a diatonic scale which is used extensively in jazz. The scale has 7 modes which are discussed in more detail elsewhere on the Hiss & Hum website. The melodic minor scale in the key of C consists of the following notes -

**C** D **E<sup>b</sup>** F **G** A **B**

In classical traditions, the scale descends differently to how it ascends (descending as a natural minor scale). In jazz, the scale ascends and descends as notated above. If we take the root, 3rd, 5th and 7th of the melodic minor scale (highlighted in bold), we get a minor/major 7 chord. This means that we can use the melodic minor scale to improvise over a minor/major 7 chord.

The minor/major 7 chord is used regularly in jazz harmony. Miles Davis's composition 'Solar' opens with a C minor/major 7 chord. The chord type is also used extensively in Horace Silver's composition 'Nica's Dream'.

Spend time improvising over a minor/major 7 chord with the melodic minor scale. It is a vital ingredient in playing jazz standards. Melodic minor harmony is also used extensively in other jazz styles. One notable example is the music of Kenny Wheeler.