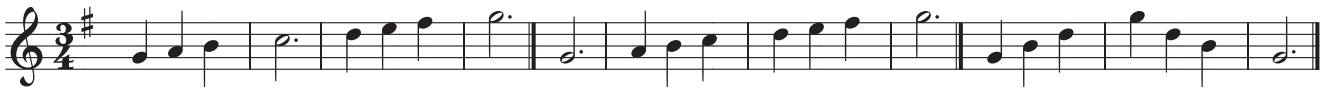
Major Scale Routine

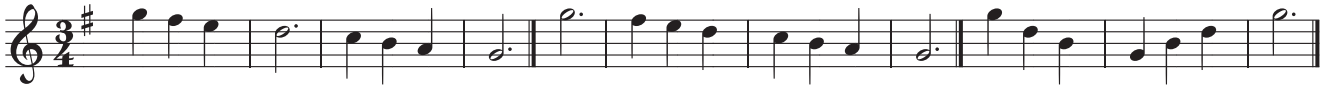
Each line needs to played precisely and with the intended approach. All of these lines should be slurred. This routine needs to be played in all 12 keys by memory. I recommend one key per week.

Line 1 & 2 are to be played slowly. Take a full breath to play the first 2 bars. While you are playing you should be visualizing each note name and it's numeric position in the scale.

Line ①

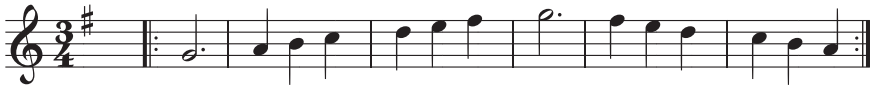


Line ②



Line 3 is to be played as a loop. If two full octaves can be played in the given key both are to be incorporated. The tempo can be increased gradually as you get more comfortable but the rhythm must be maintained.

Line ③

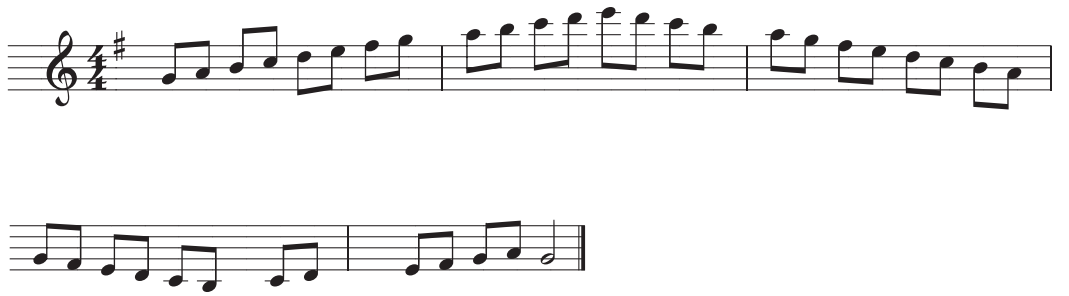


Major Scale Routine

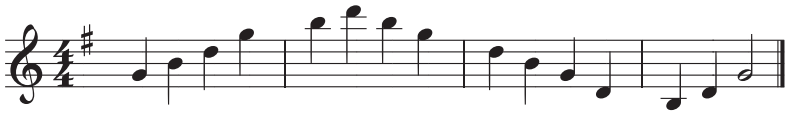
Line 4 extends the scale over the full range of the instrument. The top note can be extended as you gain facility, but the top note you are going to play should be determined before playing the line. For our purposes I'll write the line over the natural range of the saxophone.

Play the scale from the lowest root to the highest note on the instrument (in that key), then to the lowest note on the instrument (in that key), and then back to the root you started on. This line should be slurred and played in time, at between 80 bpm and 100 bpm.

Line ④



④a Triad Full Range



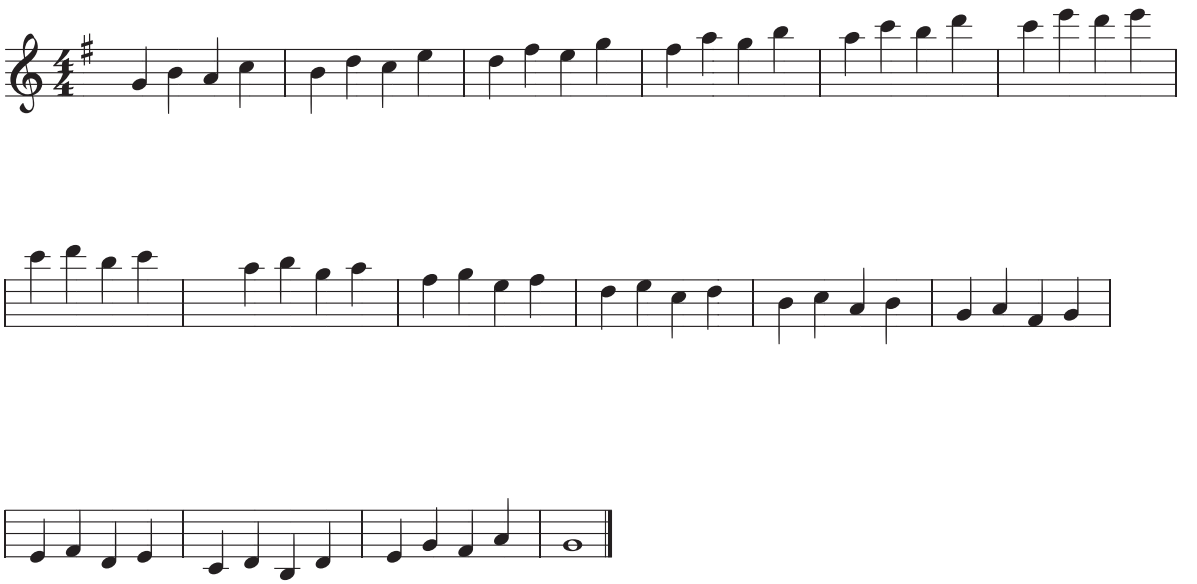
Major Scale Routine

Line 5 is slow (full breath per bar). It's very important to identify and visualize notes before playing them. Do not rely on muscle memory or the familiar sound of the line. Your purpose is to visualize the scale, not to play the line. If you play a note that you didn't intend to you are not visualizing. Don't tolerate a lazy brain!

Note that the descending pattern is different from the ascending pattern. (ascending up 2 down 1) (descending up 1 down 2).

When you reach the (pre-determined) top note you must go down 1 in order to then play the descending pattern. When you reach the bottom note revert back to the ascending pattern and play to the root resolving rhythmically as well as harmonically.

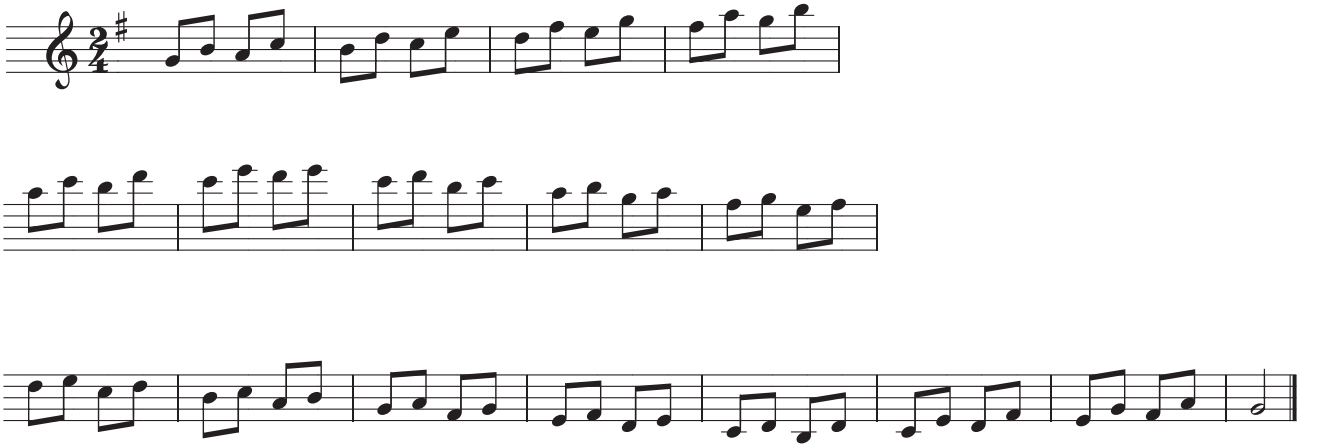
Line ⑤



Major Scale Routine

Line 6 is the same as Line 5 but played as a technical exercise. Notes are slurred and played in time, between 80 bpm and 100 bpm.

Line ⑥



We've demonstrated this routine using an Ionian scale, but the same routine would apply to internalizing any scale.