

## Using the Altered Scale

The altered scale, sometimes called the super Locrian, is a scale that is used over what we call altered chords. These are chords that contain a  $b5$  or  $\#5$  or  $b9$  or  $\#9$ . This is primarily used in jazz, but it's been used in jazz fusion and more recently metal jazz fusion.

Here is the scale, in G

The image shows the Altered Scale in G major. The top staff is a treble clef in 4/4 time, starting with a first finger (1) on the G string. The notes are G, A $\flat$ , B $\flat$ , C $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , E $\flat$ , F, G. The dynamic marking is *mf*. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with fret numbers: 10-11-13 on the low E string, 9-11-13 on the A string, 10-12-13 on the D string, 11-12-13 on the G string, and 11-13-15 on the B string.

As we should know the notes in a chord must match the notes in a scale if we are to harmonise and make music sound nice. So the altered scale must contain the notes of the altered chords right? Well you would be right, here's the scale construction.

G A $\flat$  B $\flat$  C $\flat$  D $\flat$  E $\flat$  F G

1 b2 b3 b4 b5 b6 b7 8

So here are notes of the altered tones

b5 = D $\flat$  #5 = E $\flat$

b9 = A $\flat$  #9 = B $\flat$

Because this scale contains the notes, we can use it. This is how we can create tension over altered chords and resolve them to another chord. That's the theory. So its the G chord we are going to alter, in a chord sequence called a II V I.

This means the 2, 5 and 1 chord. In C this means Dm, G and C. In Jazz sevenths are used so that would be Dm7 G7 and Cmaj7.

The following lick is nice and uses, amongst other things the altered scale.

The image shows a musical score for a guitar lick in 4/4 time. The top staff is in treble clef. The first measure is marked with a '1' and contains a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) over a Dm7 chord. The second measure is marked with a '2' and contains a sequence of notes (B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4) over a Galt chord. The third measure is marked with a '3' and contains a sequence of notes (D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4) over a Cmaj7 chord. The fourth measure is marked with a '4' and contains a sequence of notes (G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3) over a Cmaj7 chord. Below the staff is a guitar tablature (TAB) with the following fret numbers: 12 10, 10 12 10, 10 12, 12, 12 10, 13 11, 10, 13 11 9, 10 10, 9 12, 12, 13 13, 12 10, 10 9. The TAB is labeled 'T A B' on the left side.

Watch the video for the practical and off you go

Best of luck.