

Soloing Over Dominant Sus Chords

Concert Key

Chord: Ab7sus

Approach #1: Major sound; think Gb/Ab

Scale: Gb Lydian (major w/ #4)

Gb - Ab - Bb - C - Db - Eb - Fb - Gb

Approach #2: Minor sound; think Ebmin7/Ab

Scale: Eb minor (Dorian)

Eb - F - Gb - Ab - Bb - C - Db - Eb

Approach #3: Dominant sound; think Ab7

Scale: Ab dominant

Ab - Bb - C - Db - Eb - F - Gb - Ab

Chord: Ab7sus (b9)

Approach #1: Dominant sound; think Cb7/Ab

Scale: Cb dominant

Cb - Db - Eb - Fb - Gb - Ab - Bbb (A) - Cb

Approach #2: Implying the minor 3rd

Scale: Ab phrygian

Ab - Bbb (A) - Cb - Db - Eb - Fb - Gb - Ab

Approach #3: Implying the major 3rd

Scale: Db harmonic minor

Db - Eb - Fb - Gb - Ab - Bbb (A) - C - Db

Written examples are in random keys.

Voicing examples for sus7 chord:



Approach #1: Major sound



Approach #2: Minor sound



Approach #3: Dominant sound



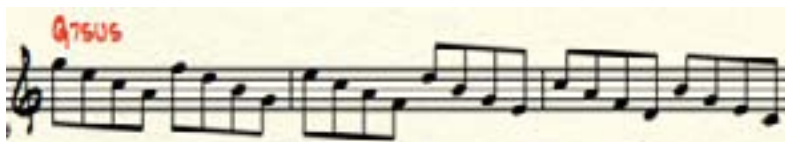
Notice that all three of these approaches have the same sound.

The difference is only in the naming of each chord and how you approach it mentally.

There is much freedom in a sus chord since you can choose to either play the 3rd or not play the 3rd. When you choose to omit the 3rd, you create a much more open sound where one can imply either the major or minor 3rd if they wish.

Solo concepts over Dominant-Sus chords

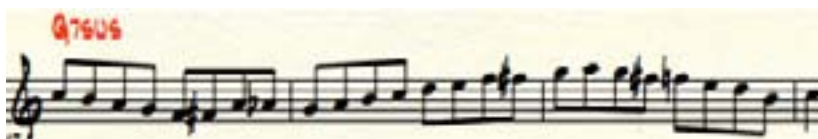
Major scale, diatonic: Treating the dominant-sus chord like it is a regular dominant-V chord allows you to play the major scale off its tonic; the same as playing the regular dominant scale (i.e. C maj or G7).



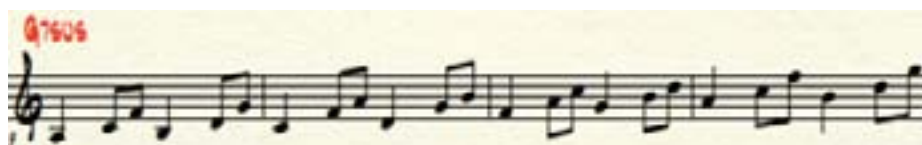
Major scale with a flat 6th: Add chromaticism to your lines by including the b6 in the tonic major scale (i.e. C maj w/ Ab).



Bebop scale: Use either the C major bebop scale or the G dominant bebop scale to add chromaticism and/or imply a V7-I resolution.



Triad pairs: Pick two triads out of the dominant-sus chord that do not share any common notes (i.e. F maj triad, G maj triad).



Implying ii-V's: Whenever you have a dominant chord (in this case, a dominant-sus chord), you can treat that chord as a V7 chord, which will ultimately resolve to I. You can go one step further and imply a ii-V7-I.



Implying major and minor sounds simultaneously: Because a sus chord lacks the 3rd, a soloist can imply both major and minor 3rd sounds (i.e. G7 and Gmin7).

