



## The Minor-Major 7th Chord

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I've been playing a couple of pieces recently which use the Minor-Major 7<sup>th</sup> (9) chord a lot e.g. Nica's Dream, Never Let Me Go.

It's a very enigmatic sounding chord which you can create from a basic minor chord by dropping the root a semi-tone. I like to add a 9<sup>th</sup>, so as Bbm/maj7(9) you can voice it (rootless) like this:

XX7668

The notes and chord tones, with this voicing, are:

A(maj7), Db(m3), F(5<sup>th</sup>), C(9<sup>th</sup>).

A nice substitute is the maj7#5 chord a minor 3<sup>rd</sup> above its root i.e. Dbmaj7#5 here. Voice it like this:

XX(11)(10)(10)8

The notes and chord tones being are :

Db(R), F(3<sup>rd</sup>), A(#5<sup>th</sup>), C(maj7)

So, same notes as Bbm/maj7, but when played in a different order, the 'colour' of the chord is changed.

The definitive scale associated with these chords is the melodic minor. Playing this against Bbm/maj7(9) I would start on the major 7<sup>th</sup> note i.e. A. The scale then becomes a mode of the melodic minor called the Altered Scale – one of the most important scales to know in modern jazz.

Bb Melodic Minor

9

Bb C Db Eb F G A

The A Altered Scale is this sequence, starting on the 7<sup>th</sup> note, which is A.

A Bb C Db Eb F G A

This is one of the scales you can play over A7+ (A7 with a raised 5<sup>th</sup> and optionally, a flattened 9<sup>th</sup>). So, guess what, A7+ can also be substituted for Bbm/maj7(9).

- **John**

