

to cassette tape. Due to the repetitious nature of transcribing, the turntable is not a practical transcribing tool.

- 2) A good quality, comfortable set of headphones. Try to use a set that covers the entire outside ear so that long use will not cause ear pain.
- 3) Manuscript paper, pencils, and erasers.
- 4) A quiet, comfortable place to work.
- 5) Access to your instrument and/or a piano, in order to check your work.
- 6) A fresh mind and ears for the job. You cannot transcribe effectively at the end of the day or after a rehearsal.
- 7) Patience and achievable goals.

Remember that the process in which you are involved is taking melodic and harmonic dictation. You are developing relative pitch and building a harmonic vocabulary. It takes time to develop this ability, but with practice and with each new project, it becomes easier.

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Now we will discuss the specific steps of my approach to transcribing. There are probably as many opinions about this process as there are people doing it, but after transcribing more than 150 solos and songs for publication, this is the method I have developed and used with success.

- 1) Pick a solo that is within your ability. Start with familiar material, like a solo over blues changes. There should not be an abundance of notes. Develop your ability gradually.
- 2) Listen to the solo and sing along with it. You should be able to sing everything, except for any fast passages, note for note. If you cannot sing the solo, pick an easier one.
- 3) Figure out the form on which the solo is being played. How many bars are there in each chorus? Is it an AABA form on 32 bars, or just a 12-bar blues? Do you plan to transcribe all of the choruses? If not, which ones?
- 4) If it is a jazz standard, find a lead sheet for the tune and write down the chord changes.
- 5) Set a realistic goal for each day. If there is a deadline, decide how much you must do each day in order to finish in time.