

CHORD VOICINGS

SIMPLE 3 NOTE VOICINGS INCLUDE THE ROOT, 3RD AND 7TH OF ANY CHORD.

ROOTS IN THE LEFT HAND, 3RD AND 7TH, (OR THE INVERSION OF 7TH AND 3RD

IN THE RIGHT HAND,

4/4

CMAJ⁷ C⁷ CMIN⁷ C⁷ CMAJ⁷ C⁷

THIS IS A IIMIN7-V7-IMAJ7 REALIZATION OF THIS VOICING

START WITH EITHER INVERSION AND THEN MOVE THE CHORD THE

CLOSEST WAY. 3RDS AND 7THS GET REVERSED ON EACH MOVEMENT

4/4

DMIN⁷ G⁷ CMAJ⁷ DMIN⁷ G⁷ CMAJ⁷

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ROOTLESS 3 NOTE VOICINGS. THESE ARE EXTREMELY USEFUL WHEN YOU ARE PLAYING WITH

A BASS PLAYER, AS IT KEEPS YOU OUT OF THEIR RANGE, AND ALLOWS YOU TO ADD A COLOR

NOTE TO YOUR VOICINGS. IT ALSO LEAVES YOUR RIGHT HAND FREE TO SOLO OR TO ADD OTHER NOTES

4/4

CMAJ⁷ CMIN⁷ C⁷ CMAJ⁷ CMIN⁷ C⁷

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THIS IS A IIMIN7-V7-IMAJ7 REALIZATION OF THESE VOICINGS. NOTICE THAT THE 3-7 MOVEMENTS

ARE IDENTICAL TO THE LAST VOICINGS. WHEN WE ARE NUMBERING NOTES OF THE SCALES, WE USE

UPPER EXTENTIONS, SO THAT 2=9, 6=13. REASONS FOR THAT WILL BECOME CLEAR IN TIME

4/4

DMIN⁷ G⁷ CMAJ⁷ DMIN⁷ G⁷ CMAJ⁷

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4 NOTE BLOCK VOICINGS. THIS IS 4 NOTES WITHIN ONE OCTAVE, PLAYED BY THE RIGHT HAND. THE LOWEST NOTE IS THE 3RD OR THE 7TH, STILL USING THE SAME 3-7 MOTION. YOU CAN USE THESE IN YOUR RIGHT HAND TO HAVE A RICH SOUND, OR USE THESE AS 4 NOTE LEFT HAND VOICINGS IF TRANSFERRED TO THE LEFT HAND. I KNOW WE ARE GETTING INTO A LOT OF NUMBERS, SO LEARN VOICINGS BY FEEL. AT THAT POINT YOU WILL NOT BE CONCERNED WITH INDIVIDUAL NOTES, BUT JUST WITH THE WAY THE VOICINGS FEEL TO YOUR HANDS

Musical notation showing six measures of 4-note block voicings in the right hand. The first measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The second measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The third measure is C MIN⁷ (notes: C4, E♭4, G4, B♭4). The fourth measure is C MIN⁷ (notes: C4, E♭4, G4, B♭4). The fifth measure is C⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B♭4). The sixth measure is C⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B♭4). The bass line is empty in all measures.

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IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ REALIZATION OF THE BLOCK VOICING

Musical notation showing six measures of a IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ realization of the block voicing. The first measure is D MIN⁷ (notes: D4, F4, A4, C5) and G⁷ (notes: G4, B4, D5, F5). The second measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The third measure is D MIN⁷ (notes: D4, F4, A4, C5) and G⁷ (notes: G4, B4, D5, F5). The fourth measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The bass line is empty in all measures.

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A COMMON ALTERATION IS TO TURN THE DOMINANT V CHORD (IN THIS CASE A G⁷) INTO A 7FLAT⁹ CHORD. YOU DO THIS BY LOWERING THE 9 ON THE V CHORD 1/2 STEP. TRY THIS, AND YOU WILL HEAR HOW COOL AN ALTERATION THIS IS. YOU CAN DO THIS WITH ANY KIND OF VOICING. JUST TURN THE 9TH INTO A FLAT⁹TH,

Musical notation showing six measures of a 7(b9) alteration of the block voicing. The first measure is D MIN⁷ (notes: D4, F4, A4, C5) and G^{7(b9)} (notes: G4, B4, D5, F♯5). The second measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The third measure is D MIN⁷ (notes: D4, F4, A4, C5) and G^{7(b9)} (notes: G4, B4, D5, F♯5). The fourth measure is C MAJ⁷ (notes: C4, E4, G4, B4). The bass line is empty in all measures.

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DROP 2 VOICINGS: JUST WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE, TAKE THE SECOND VOICE FROM THE TOP, DROP IT AN OCTAVE AND PLAY IT WITH YOUR LEFT HAND. IT SPREADS THE CHORD OVER MORE THAN AN OCTAVE AND SOUNDS EXCEPTIONALLY COOL,

Diagram showing the Drop 2 voicing for C major 7, C minor 7, and C7 chords. The chords are written in treble and bass clefs, with the second voice from the top dropped an octave into the left hand.

Chords shown: C MAJ⁷, C MIN⁷, C⁷.

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THIS IS A IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ REALIZATION OF THE DROP 2 VOICING

Diagram showing a realization of a IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ progression using Drop 2 voicings. The chords are written in treble and bass clefs, with the second voice from the top dropped an octave into the left hand.

Chords shown: D MIN⁷, G⁷, C MAJ⁷, D MIN⁷, G⁷, C MAJ⁷.

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DROP 2 AND 4 VOICINGS. DROP THE 2ND AND 4TH NOTES FROM THE TOP DOWN AN OCTAVE, CREATING A WIDER SPREAD BETWEEN VOICES. NOTICE THAT THE 3RDS AND 7THS ARE, ONCE AGAIN, IN THE LEFT HAND

Diagram showing the Drop 2 and 4 voicings for C major 7, C minor 7, and C7 chords. The chords are written in treble and bass clefs, with the second and fourth voices from the top dropped an octave into the left hand.

Chords shown: C MAJ⁷ OR, C MIN⁷, C⁷.

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A REALIZATION OF A IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ PROGRESSING VOICED AS DROP 2 AND 4

Diagram showing a realization of a IIMIN⁷-V⁷-IMAJ⁷ progression using Drop 2 and 4 voicings. The chords are written in treble and bass clefs, with the second and fourth voices from the top dropped an octave into the left hand.

Chords shown: D MIN⁷, G⁷, C MAJ⁷, D MIN⁷, G⁷, C MAJ⁷.

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SINCE BY NOW YOU KNOW YOUR CHORD TONES, I'M GOING TO STOP WRITING THE NUMBERS NEXT TO THE CHORDS.

WE WILL GET INTO VOICING CHORDS WITH MANY ALTERATIONS LATER, BUT FOR NOW, HERE ARE A FEW 7TH CHORDS WITH UPPER STRUCTURE VOICINGS. AGAIN (AS PER USUAL), THE 3RD AND 7TH ARE IN YOUR LEFT HAND

57

"SO WHAT" CHORDS. NAMED AFTER THE FAMOUS MILES DAVIS TUNE. THESE ADD THE 11TH AND ARE VOICED MORE IN 4THS THAN IN 3RDS (MORE ON THAT TO COME) USEFUL ON MINOR CHORDS AND ESPECIALLY FOR THE DORIAN MODE. YOU CAN ALTERNATE BETWEEN CHORDS A WHOLE STEP APART. LISTEN TO SO WHAT TO FIND OUT HOW THIS WORKS.

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VOICINGS IN 4THS. THESE ARE COOL OPEN SOUNDING VOICINGS, AND HAVING A MORE MODERN SOUND BECAUSE THEY ARE BASED MORE ON 4THS THAN 3RDS. THEY ARE FUN TO CONSTRUCT. THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF MANY POSSIBILITIES. YOU GENERALLY HAVE TO USE A 3RD SOMEWHERE TO GET THE CHORD NOTES RIGHT.

63

THIS IS AN OLDER METHOD OF VOICING, WITH EITHER 167 OR 163 IN THE LEFT HAND. IT IS A BIT DATED BUT SOMETIMES USEFUL.

C MAJ⁷ C MAJ⁷ D MIN⁷ G⁷ C MAJ⁷

69

ALL FOUR NOTES IN A DIMINISHED CHORD ARE EQUAL.
ANY INVERSION WILL WORK

C DIM⁷

A II-V-I PROGRESSION IN A MINOR KEY USES A MIN⁷FLAT5 CHORD AS A II, AND A 7FLAT9 CHORD AS A V, AND A MIN⁶ OR MIN-MAJ⁷ AS A I CHORD. THERE IS NOT MUCH DIFFERENCE IN VOICING METHODS, BUT I PREFER THE ROOT TO THE 9TH IN SOME OF THE MIN⁷FLAT5 CHORDS)

LEFT HAND VOICINGS

D MIN^{7(b5)} G^{7(b9)} C MIN⁶ D MIN^{7(b5)} G^{7(b9)} C MIN⁶

74

BLOCK VOICINGS

D MIN^{7(b5)} G^{7(b9)} C MIN⁶ D MIN^{7(b5)} G^{7(b9)} C MIN⁶

78

DROP 2 VOICINGS

Musical notation for Drop 2 voicings in B-flat major. The notation is presented in a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The chords are arranged in three measures:

- Measure 1: D_{MIN} 7(b5) and G 7(b9)
- Measure 2: C_{MIN} 6
- Measure 3: D_{MIN} 7(b5) and G 7(b9)
- Measure 4: C_{MIN} 6

The notes are written as follows:

- D_{MIN} 7(b5): Treble clef (F4, Bb4, Eb5), Bass clef (D3, F3)
- G 7(b9): Treble clef (Bb4, D5, F5), Bass clef (G2, Bb2, Eb3)
- C_{MIN} 6: Treble clef (Bb4, D5, F5), Bass clef (Cb3, Eb3)

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DROP 2 & 4 VOICINGS

Musical notation for Drop 2 and Drop 4 voicings in B-flat major. The notation is presented in a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The chords are arranged in three measures:

- Measure 1: D_{MIN} 7(b5) and G 7(b9)
- Measure 2: C_{MIN} 6
- Measure 3: D_{MIN} 7(b5) and G 7(b9)
- Measure 4: C_{MIN} 6

The notes are written as follows:

- D_{MIN} 7(b5): Treble clef (F4, Bb4, Eb5), Bass clef (D3, F3)
- G 7(b9): Treble clef (Bb4, D5, F5), Bass clef (G2, Bb2, Eb3)
- C_{MIN} 6: Treble clef (Bb4, D5, F5), Bass clef (Cb3, Eb3)

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SO THAT'S IT FOR NOW. JUST REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO VOICE CHORDS. EXPERIMENT, AND COME UP WITH YOUR OWN COMBINATIONS. THIS ONLY TOUCHES THE SURFACE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE. YOU DO HAVE TO PRACTICE THESE IN ALL KEYS TO GAIN FLUENCY. IT'S ALSO WISE AS YOU PRACTICE THESE TO PUT THEM INTO THE CONTEXT OF TUNES. IT'S AN EXCITING JIG-SAW PUZZLE TO PUT THIS TOGETHER AND MIX AND MATCH DIFFERENT TYPES OF VOICINGS.