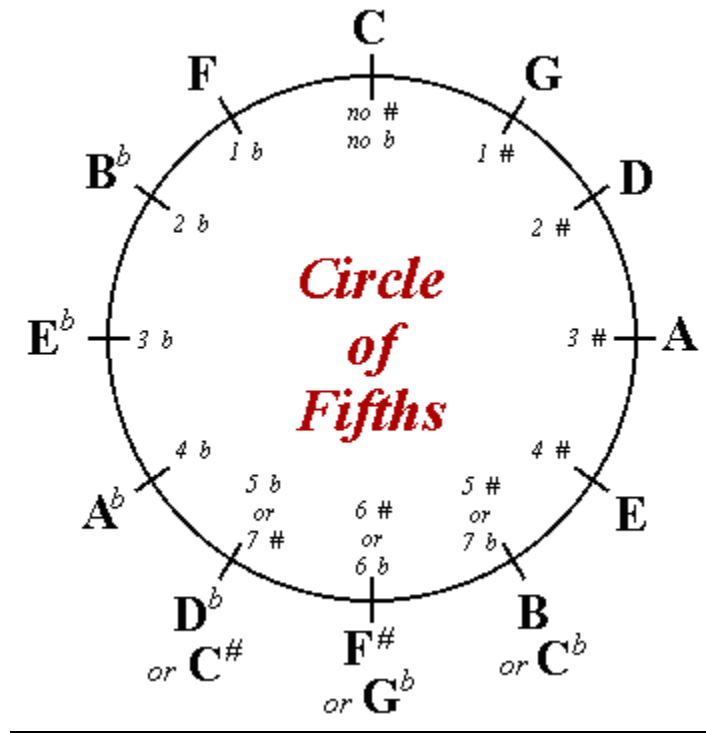


Chord Progressions



Stringalong Gathering
November 3, 2012

Joseph Boxhorn

The Notation

The notation for showing chord progressions uses Roman numerals to indicate chords. The numbers reflect degree of the scale of the root of the chord.

- Major chords are shown by upper case numerals (I, II, III, etc.)
- Minor chords are shown by lower case numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.)
- Diminished chords are shown by lower case numerals with a circle superscript (i^o, ii^o, iii^o, etc.)
- Dominant seventh chords are shown by adding a 7 to upper case numerals (I7, II7, III7, etc.)
- Minor seventh chords are shown by adding a 7 to lower case numerals (i7, ii7, iii7, etc.)
- Major seventh chords are shown by adding a Maj7 to upper case numerals (IMaj7, IIMaj7, IIIMaj7)
- Sharps and flats are added as needed to for chords that are outside the key (bi7, #II, etc.)

Example in the Key of G

| Note | Syllable | Scale Degree | Chord | Symbol | Notation |
|------|----------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| G | Do | 1 | G Major | G | I |
| A | Re | 2 | A minor | Am | ii |
| B | Mi | 3 | B minor | Bm | iii |
| C | Fa | 4 | C Major | C | IV |
| D | Sol | 5 | D Major or D7 | D or D7 | V or V7 |
| E | La | 6 | E minor | Em | vi |
| F# | Ti | 7 | F# diminished | F# ^o | vii ^o |

Principal Chords of the Twelve Keys

| Key | | I | ii | iii | IV | V | vi | vii ^o |
|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----|------------|------------------|-----|------------------|
| Ab | 4 b | Ab | Bbm | Cm | Db | Eb or Eb7 | Fm | G ^o |
| A | 3 # | A | Bm | C#m | D | E or E7 | F#m | G# ^o |
| Bb | 2 b | Bb | Cm | Dm | Eb | F or F7 | Gm | A ^o |
| B | 5 # | B | C#m | D#m | E | F# or F#7 | G#m | A# ^o |
| C | - - | C | Dm | Em | F | G or G7 | Am | B ^o |
| Db | 5 b | Db | Ebm | Fm | Gbm | Ab or Ab7 | Bbm | C ^o |
| D | 2 # | D | Em | F#m | G | A or A7 | Bm | C# ^o |
| Eb | 3 b | Eb | Fm | Gm | Ab | Bb or Bb7 | Cm | D ^o |
| E | 4 # | E | F#m | G#m | A | B or B7 | C#m | D# ^o |
| F | 1 b | F | Gm | Am | Bb | C or C7 | Dm | E ^o |
| F# | 6 # | F# | G#m | A#m | B | C# or C#7 | D#m | E# ^o |
| Gb | 6 b | Gb | Abm | Bbm | Cb | Db or Db7 | Ebm | F ^o |
| G | 1 # | G | Am | Bm | C | D or D7 | Em | F# ^o |

Note that F# and Gb are the same key. They are just notated differently.

Some Tips

Chord progressions are more about where you're going than where you start.

Often they are about resolving—ending on the I chord.

In much harmony, the V chord and the V7 are interchangeable. Use the V7 chord to create more tension and a stronger sense of resolution going to the I chord.

V7-I Progression
(*Perfect Cadence*)

Example 1: Hush Little Baby (in D major)

| | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| I | V7 | I |
| <i>D</i> | <i>A7</i> | <i>D</i> |

Hush, little baby, don't say a word; Papa's gonna buy you a mocking bird,

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| V7 | I |
| <i>A7</i> | <i>D</i> |

And if that mocking bird don't sing, Papa's gonna buy you a diamond ring.

Example 2: London Bridge (in C major)

| | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| I | V7 | I |
| <i>C</i> | <i>G7</i> | <i>C</i> |

London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down,

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| V7 | I |
| <i>G7</i> | <i>C</i> |

London Bridge is falling down, my fair Lady.

Example 3: Jambalaya (in Eb major)

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| I | V7 | I |
| <i>Eb</i> | <i>Bb7</i> | <i>Eb</i> |

Good bye Joe, me gotta go, me oh, my oh. Me gotta go pole the pirogue down the bayou.

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| V7 | I |
| <i>Bb7</i> | <i>Eb</i> |

My Yvonne, the sweetest one, me oh, my oh. Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the bayou.

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| V7 | I |
| <i>Bb7</i> | <i>Eb</i> |

Jambalaya, crawfish pie and file gumbo, 'cause tonight I'm gonna see ma cher-a-mio.

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| V7 | I |
| <i>Bb7</i> | <i>Eb</i> |

Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be gay-o. Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the bayou.

Songs that Use the V7-I Progression

| | |
|--|--|
| Allouette | He's Got the Whole World in His Hand |
| Angels We Have Heard on High (<i>verse</i>) | I Had a Rooster |
| Banana Boat Song | Jambalaya |
| Billy Boy | La Cucaracha |
| Buffalo Gals | London Bridge |
| Camptown Races (<i>verse</i>) | Looby Loo |
| Cielito Lindo (<i>verse</i>) | My Home's Across the Smoky Mountains |
| Clementine | Oh Susannah (<i>verse</i>) |
| Cripple Creek (<i>chorus</i>) | Pay Me My Money Down |
| Down by the Riverside (<i>verse</i>) | Polly Wolly Doodle |
| Down in the Valley | Rocka My Soul |
| Gypsy Davy | Shoofly |
| Itsy Bitsy Spider | South Australia |
| El Rancho Grande | Tom Dooley |
| Everybody Loves Saturday Night | <u>Many other use it with a substitution or two</u> |

The V7-I progression is embedded in many other progressions, often at the end of a long phrase or verse to establish resolution.

Variations on this progression:

- V-I Slightly less tension and slightly weaker resolution than V7-I
- V7-IMaj7 Very common jazz form of this progression

Songs that Use the ii-V-I Progression

Four Strong Winds

Honey

Hey, Mister Spaceman (*verse*)

She's Shorty's Girl

The ii-V-I progression is embedded in many other progressions, often at the end of a long phrase or verse to establish resolution.

It is used a lot in jazz and classical music to establish a key change.

Many jazz pieces cycle through key changes using a series of ii-V7-I progressions to establish new keys.

Variations on this progression:

ii-V7-I

ii7-V7-I

ii7-V7-IMaj7

I-IV-V Progression
(Three Chord Song Progression)

Example: Git Along Little Dogies (in D major)

I IV V7 I IV V7 I
D G A7 D G A7 D
As I was a walkin' one morning for pleasure I spied a cowpuncher a strollin' along,

IV V7 I
G A7 D
His hat was throwed back and his spurs were a janglin' and

IV V7 I
G A7 D
as he approached he was singing this song.

I-vi-IV-V Progression
(Doo-Wop Progression, 50s Progression)

Example: Stand By Me (in G major)

I vi IV V I
G Em C D G
When the night has come and the land is dark and the moon is the only light we'll see,

vi IV V I
Em C D G
No I won't be afraid, oh I won't be afraid just as long as you stand by me.

vi IV V I
Em C D G
So darling, darling stand by me, oh stand by me, oh stand, stand by me, stand by me.

Songs that Use the I-IV-V Progression

The Battle of New Orleans

Cindy (*chorus*)

The Eighth of January

Get Off of My Cloud (*refrain*)

Git Along Little Dogies (*verse*)

Guantanamo

Hobo's Lullaby

Jamaica Farewell

La Bamba

Like a Rolling Stone (*refrain*)

Twist and Shout

Wabash Cannonball

Variations on this progression:

I-IV-V7

Songs that Use the I-vi-IV-V Progression (or its I-vi-ii-V7 variation)

All I Have to Do is Dream

Big Girls Don't Cry

Blue Moon (*verse*)

Carolina On My Mind

Crocodile Rock

Duke of Earl

Earth Angel

Every Breath You Take

Girl (*refrain*)

Golden Vanity

Heart and Soul

House At Pooh Corner

Monster Mash

More than a Feeling

Please Mr. Postman

She Drives Me Crazy

Stand by Me

The Way You Look Tonight

Where Have All the Flowers Gone?

Why Do Fools Fall In Love?

Y.M.C.A.

You Make Me Feel Like Dancing

Variations on this progression:

I-vi-IV-V7

I-vi-ii-V7 (*Rhythm Changes Progression*)

I-IV-I-V Progression

Example: Away in a Manger (in G major)

| | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|--|---|
| I | IV | I | V7 | | I |
| G | C | G | D7 | | G |

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head;

| | | | | | |
|------|----|---|--|----|------|
| (I7) | IV | I | | IV | V7 I |
| (G7) | C | G | | C | D G |

The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

Notice that some arrangements add a chord substitution of I7 for I to increase the sense of movement through the progression.

i-VII-VI-V7 Progression (Andalucian Cadance)

Example: The Cat Came Back (in E minor)

| | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|
| i | VII | VI | V7 |
| Em | D | C | B7 |

Old Mister Johnson had troubles of his own.

| | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|
| i | VII | VI | V7 |
| Em | D | C | B7 |

He had a yellow cat who wouldn't leave its home.

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| i | VII | VI | V7 | i | VII | VI | V7 |
| Em | D | C | B7 | Em | D | C | B7 |

He tried and he tried to give the cat away. He gave it to a man who was going far away.

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| i | VII | VI | V7 | i | VII | VI | V7 |
| Em | D | C | B7 | Em | D | C | B7 |

But the cat came back the very next day, the cat came back they thought he was a goner

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| i | VII | VI | V7 | i | VII | VI | V7 |
| Em | D | C | B7 | Em | D | C | B7 |

But the cat came back it just wouldn't stay away.

Songs that Use the I-IV-I-V Progression

Amazing Grace

Away in a Manger

Brown's Ferry Blues

Cripple Creek (verse)

Don't This Road Look Rough and Rocky

Down by the Riverside (chorus)

Green Grow the Lilacs

Hard and It's Hard

Jesse James

Midnight Special

Nine Pound Hammer

Oh Susannah (chorus)

Old MacDonald

On Top of Old Smoky

Ship Titanic

Swing Low Sweet Chariot

This Land is Your Land

Up on the Roof Top

Will the Circle Be Unbroken

Wimoweh (The Lion Sleeps Tonight)

Worried Man Blues

Note that a 12-Bar Blues progression is basically a I-IV-I-V progression with the changes tied to specific measures.

Songs that Use the i-VII-VI-V7 Progression

The Cat Came Back

Epitaph

Feels Like the First Time

Good Vibrations (verse)

Hit the Road Jack

In the Year 2525

Love Child

One More Cup of Coffee

Riders on the Storm

Runaway

Sultans of Swing

Why Don't You Do Right

The i-VII-VI-V7 progression is used a lot in flamenco music and pops up in mariachi band music.

I-V(7)-vi-IV Progression

(Pop-punk Progression, "Four Chord Song" Progression)

Example: Waltzing Matilda (in D major)

I V7 vi IV I V7
D A7 Bm G D7 A7

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong, under the shade of a coolibah tree. And he

I V7 vi IV I V7
D A7 Bm G D A7

Sang as he watched and waited while his billy boiled, "You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with

I
D
me

Notice that this song alternates a I-V7-vi-IV progression with a V7 I progression to create a longer progression of I-V7-vi IV-I-V-I.

I-IV-V-IV Progression

Example: Hang on Sloopy (in E major)

I IV V IV I IV V IV I IV V IV I IV V IV
E A B A E A B A E A B A E A B A

Hang on Sloopy, Sloopy hang on. Hang on Sloopy, Sloopy hang on.

I IV V IV I IV V IV
E A B A E A B A

Sloopy lives in a very bad part of town.

I IV V IV I IV V IV
E A B A E A B A

And everybody, yeah, tries to put my Sloopy down.

I IV V IV I IV V IV
E A B A E A B A

Sloopy, I don't care what your daddy do.

I IV V IV I IV V IV
E A B A E A B A

Don't you know little girl, I'm in love with you.

Songs that Use the I-V-vi-V Progression

Africa

Auld Lang Syne

Beast of Burden

Don't Stop Believin'

Down Under

Let It Be

No One

No Woman No Cry

Not Pretty Enough

One of Us

Pictures of You

Take Me Home, Country Roads (*chorus*)

Waltzing Matilda (*parts of verse and chorus*)

With or Without You

In many songs this progression is alternated with other short progressions to create a longer, more complicated progression. This is done with most other short progressions, too.

Songs that Use the I-IV-V-IV Progression

C'mon Everybody

Dig It

Get Off My Cloud

Good Lovin'

Great Balls of Fire

Hang On, Sloopy

La Bamba

Louie, Louie

Wild Thing

Songs that Use the I-[...III7-VI7]-II7-V7-I Progression

Ain't She Sweet

Alice's Restaurant

The Charleston

Has Anybody Seen My Gal?

Hello! Ma Baby

Hey! Baby

Ja-Da

Keep On Truckin' Mama

Liebestraum (by Franz Liszt)

Mandy Lane

**Nobody Knows You When You're Down
and Out**

Salty Dog Blues

Sweet Georgia Brown

They're Red Hot

Walk Right In

In many cases, the chords in this progression won't always be seventh chords. At times a ii chord, a major triad, or a diminished seventh will be inserted.

Progressions like this can be made by inserting any dominant seventh chord after the I or IV chord and proceeding counterclockwise through the circle of fifths back to the I chord.

Some Blues Progressions

The chord changes in blues progressions tend to be tied more strictly to measures than in the approach we've taken.

Twelve Bar Blues

| I | I | I | I(7) |

| IV | IV | I | I(7) |

| V7 | IV7 | I | V7 |

Quick Change Blues

| I | IV | I | I(7) |

| IV | IV | I | I(7) |

| V7 | IV7 | I | V7 |

There are many variations in the last two measures (the turnaround).

Some Eight Bar Blues Progressions

Worried Life Blues

| I | I | IV | IV |

| I | V | I IV | I V |

Heartbreak Hotel

| I | I | I | I |

| IV | IV | V | I |

Walkin' by Myself

| I7 | I7 | I7 | I7 |

| IV7 | V7 | I7 | V7 |

Sitting on Top of the World

| I | I7 | V | iv |

| I7 | V | I7 IV | I7 V |

There are many variations on eight bar blues progressions.