


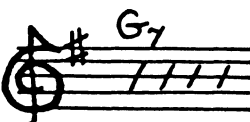
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One of the most perplexing problems for beginning jazz players is reconciling the key signature of a composition to the seeming inconsistencies in the realizations of the chord symbols, i.e., the following examples:

Why is there no Eb in this chord? 

Why is there no F# in this chord? 

In answering these questions observe the following rule: the key signature of a composition has no direct bearing on the spelling of individual chords. The symbols dictate the realization of the chord.

Properly interpreting the chord of the added sixth poses another problem for many people because this chord is often an inverted form of a minor seventh chord. This problem should be handled as follows: if the chord of the added sixth resolves to a dominant seventh chord a major second above or a dominant seventh chord a major third below its root, it should be treated as a minor seventh chord. To locate its root, invert the chord until it is arranged in thirds, i.e., the following:  $C_6$  (C-E-G-A) =  $A_{mi_7}$  and  $E_{bmi_6}$  (Eb-Gb-Bb-C) =  $C\phi_7$ .

**SUMMARY:** Information for determining chord categories

#### CHORD TYPES

Major: 1-3-5-7-9-etc.

Minor: 1-b3-5-b7-9-etc.

Dominant: 1-3-5-b7-9-etc.

Diminished: 1-b3-b5-6

Half diminished: 1-b3-b5-b7

Augmented: 1-3-#5

Alterations and additions are made according to the key of the bottom tone.

#### ABBREVIATIONS (using C as root)

C, C  $\Delta$ , C Major, C Maj<sub>7</sub>, C Ma, C Ma<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>7</sub>, C Maj<sub>7</sub>, C M, C M<sub>7</sub>

C-, C-<sub>7</sub>, C min, C min<sub>7</sub>, Cmi, Cmi<sub>7</sub>, Cm, Cm<sub>7</sub>

C<sub>7</sub>, C<sub>9</sub>, C<sub>11</sub>, C<sub>13</sub>

Co, Co<sub>7</sub>, C dim, C dim<sub>7</sub>

C $\phi$ , Cmi<sub>7</sub><sup>(b5)</sup>, C-<sup>(b5)</sup>

C+, C<sub>7</sub>+, C<sub>7</sub><sup>#5</sup>, C<sub>7</sub> aug, C<sub>7</sub><sup>+5</sup>

#### CHORD CATEGORIES

I: All major type chords (i.e., C, C<sub>6</sub>, all chords with major in the title)

II: All minor type chords (minor in the title) including the  $\phi_7$

V: Any dominant seventh chord (letter plus a number other than 6); anything other than a major or minor type

Special V chord types: (1) Augmented (Aug=dominant 7th of the same name, i.e., C+=C<sub>7</sub>)

(2) Diminished. Diminished chords are usually derived from the dominant 7th a major third below the root of the diminished chord, i.e., Co<sub>7</sub>=Ab<sub>7</sub>.

#### SOME SUGGESTED EXERCISES

1. Name the six chord types and give examples of each.

2. Give an example of an extension to an Ab<sub>7</sub> chord.

3. Build the following chords:

a. Ab<sub>13</sub>

b. G<sub>7</sub><sup>(+11)</sup>

c. Dmi<sub>9</sub>

d. E

e. A $\phi_7$

f. D<sub>9</sub><sup>(b11)</sup>

g. Fo<sub>7</sub>

h. Bbmi<sub>7</sub><sup>(b5)</sup>

i. C<sub>7</sub> (<sup>#9</sup>/<sub>#5</sub>)

j. F\*

## Chapter VI

### FITTING CHORDS TO A GIVEN MELODIC LINE

One of the most difficult tasks facing the jazz arranger-composer is that of ascertaining the harmonization to a given melody line. The arranger-composer might encounter the problem when:

1. He attempts to harmonize an original melody of his own.
2. He attempts to harmonize someone else's melody, i.e., standard, jazz tune, etc.
3. He attempts to check the harmonization in a "fake" book (often wrong) or on a piece of sheet music (often pedestrian).

This chapter will concern itself with some general and specific rules for dealing with these situations.

1. Make sure that you know the melody, that you are able to sing or play it correctly. Very often we have only a vague impression of a melody culled from a record or some other source. It is **absolutely necessary** to be able to reproduce the melody correctly before proceeding to the next steps.
2. Try to ascertain the key.
  - a. Check key signature if possible.
  - b. Play or sing the melody, stopping at phrase ends to check resolving tendencies. From each of these points of rest try to sing or play to the tonic of the key. **(example 1)**
3. Reduce the melody to its essentials; simplify the melodic line, getting rid of embellishing tones, appoggiatura and other decorative material. **(example 2)**
4. Find a bass line that sounds good against the melody **then** fill in the chords.
5. Check to see if the tune is subsumed under another structural and/or harmonic type. (Blues, I Got Rhythm, etc.) Many bebop tunes are based on the changes to standard tunes.
6. Generally, the slower the tempo the faster the harmonic rhythm and conversely the faster the tempo the slower the harmonic rhythm. **(example 3)**
7. Check the possibilities for the use of harmonic formulae. Do sections of the tune lend themselves to certain established formulae such as: II  $V_7$ , or I VI II  $V_7$ , etc.? **(example 4)** Check those sections of the tune where turnarounds of certain types would normally be found. (Last two measures of sections, etc.) **(example 5)**
8. Work backwards from ends of phrases or points of rest, places where the chord is known or at least suspected. For instance, if the last chord is a tonic chord, check to see if it is preceded by a II  $V_7$  progression or one of its substitutions. **(example 6)**
  - a. Check for  $V_7$ 's or II  $V_7$ 's leading to each new key area. **(example 7)**
  - b. Look for logical root movement (refer to the chart of root progressions on page 51).
9. Look for cadence and semi-cadence points with their traditionally-implied chords.
10. Look for resolving tendencies of the melody notes, for instance  $b7$ 's down a half step to the 3rd of another chord. **(example 8)**
11. Test seemingly logical formulae against melody notes for discrepancies or verification. **(example 9)**
12. Look for obvious formulae but don't close your mind to other possibilities.
13. Within the bar, assign as many notes as possible to the same chord, particularly at fast tempos. **(example 10)**
  - a. Look for chord outlines (explicit or implicit); (obvious or disguised). **(example 11)**
  - b. Look for scales, scale fragments that suggest certain chords or tonal areas. **(example 12)**
14. Harmonic changes usually follow the bar line or the normal division of the bar. For example, in a 4/4 measure the harmonic changes would occur on the first or the third beat as opposed to the second and fourth or a fraction of the beat. **(example 13)** Avoid carrying a change across the bar line.
15. With the exception of the dominant 7th chord, avoid having strings of chords of the same quality in succession, i.e., major 7th, minor 7th, etc. **(example 14)** The problem is not so acute in chromatic situations. **(example 15)**
16. Try to recall similar melodies and how they are harmonized.
17. Set up **sure** harmonies and fill in all the "jigsaw" puzzle. **(example 16)**
18. Avoid the Bach chorale approach except for substitution or variation. The Bach chorale approach is simply a chord change for each note. Obviously this kind of harmonization will pose great problems in compositions that will serve as improvisational vehicles. **(example 17)**