

## Parallel Dominant Approach to Chord Substitution

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By moving your favorite dominant seventh voicings in parallel motion to the various degrees of the chord you are targeting, you can expand your harmonic palette by exploring a world of fresh new modern sounds.

This can give guitarists more options for using the voicings they already know as well as a vehicle for finding new ones.

Example 1. shows our target chord G7 alt with a closed voicing starting from the root, 3rd, b5th and 7th degrees.

In ex.2 we can see how these sound in the context of a standard II V I progression. Notice how the chord type sometimes changes when we bring the voicing to different degrees.

Ex. 3, 3a and Ex. 4 show other voicings changing key in a descending II V cycle.

Try this concept with some of your favorite voicings over other progressions like the blues, rhythm changes, Giant Steps cycle or any standard tune. Keep in mind you can start these from not only the chord degrees 1,3,5 & 7 but also from non harmonic degrees like #9, b9 and #5, b5 as well.

Not every voicing will work from every degree so be careful. By having the tritone (3rd & 7th degrees of the dominant seventh chord) present in your voicing for the chord you are targeting, your chords will have a stronger sense of restlessness that are characteristic of dominant 7th chords. As you explore further with this approach, you will discover voicings that may not contain both notes of the tritone but can still be desirable as well as functional.

Ex. 1

Ex. 1 shows four G7 voicings in treble clef, C major key. The first is the root position G7. The second is G7 with the 3rd degree (B) as the root. The third is G7 with the b5th degree (D) as the root. The fourth is G7 with the 7th degree (F) as the root.

Ex. 2

Ex. 2 shows a II V I progression in C major: Dm7 - G7(b5) - CM7. The G7(b5) is shown in two different voicings. The second part shows Dm7 - G9(#5) - CM7, where the G9(#5) is also in two voicings.

Ex. 3

Ex. 3 shows a descending II V cycle in C major: Em7 - A13(b9) - Dm7 - G13(b9) - CM7. The A13(b9) and G13(b9) are shown in two voicings each. The second part shows Em11 - A7(#9) - Dm11 - G7(#9) - CM9, with A7(#9) and G7(#9) in two voicings each.

Ex. 3a

Ex. 3a shows a descending II V cycle in C major: Em7 - A7(b9 #9) - Dm7 - G7(b9 #9) - CM7. The A7(b9 #9) and G7(b9 #9) are shown in two voicings each.

Ex. 4

Ex. 4 shows a descending II V cycle in C major: Em7 - A13(b9) - Dm7 - G7(b9 #9) - B/C - CM7. The A13(b9) and G7(b9 #9) are shown in two voicings each.