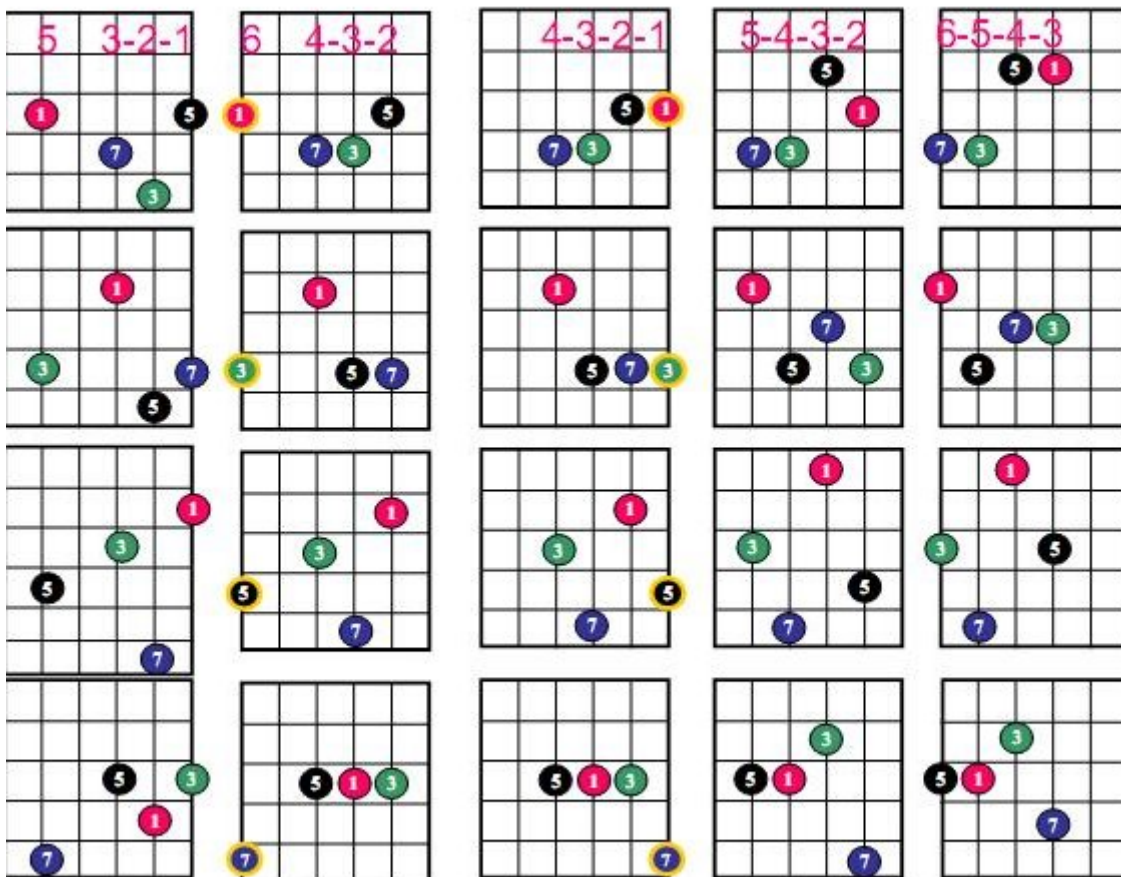


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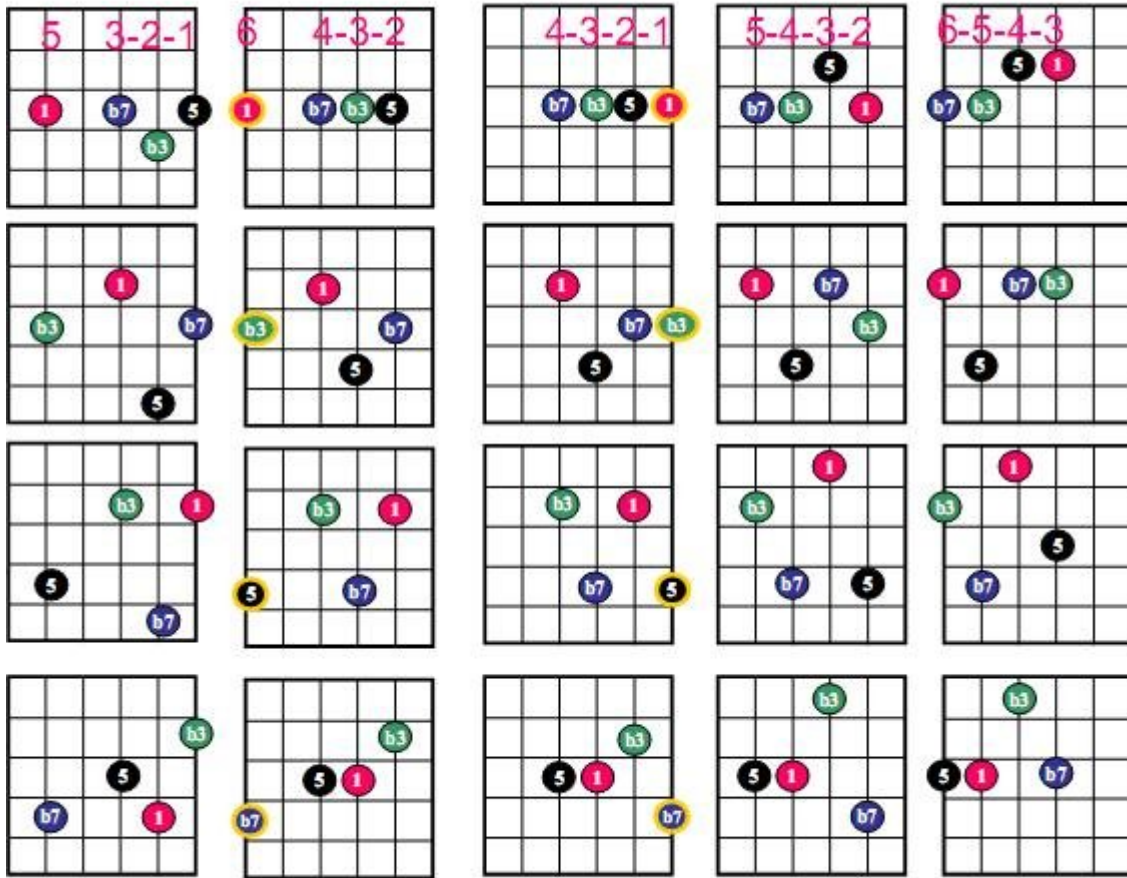
Stuart Johnson Guitar Teacher | St. Louis Mo | Jazz Guitar Chords Progressions

To play jazz standards and popular songs a guitar player needs to have a solid chord vocabulary of basic Major Minor and Dominant Chords. Knowing these chords on all 4 adjacent stings and other combinations will give you the ability to place the melody note on top and create chord melodies. We have included some examples with tabs (WHICH I DO NOT LIKE - TABS SHOW YOU WHERE TO PLACE YOUR FINGERS BUT YOU HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT YOU ARE PLAYING. YOU NEED TO LEARN TO READ MUSIC, STUDY BASIC HARMONIC THEORY AND CHORD SPELLING TO BE A PROFESSIONAL PLAYER).

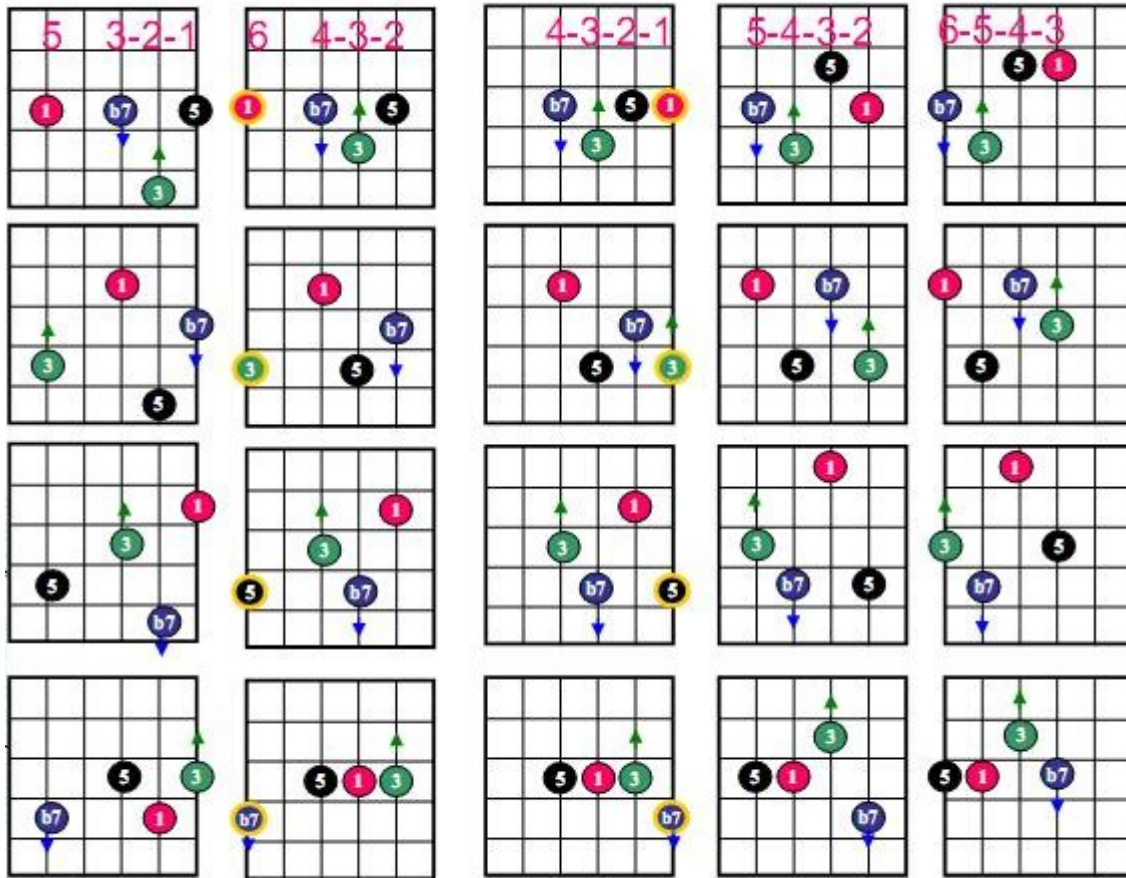
Major 7th Chords



Minor 7th Chords



Dominant 7th Chords



In this article I have laid out ten ways in which to **comp** through both **major** and **minor II-V-I-VI chord progressions**.

These chords are designed to create a sense of tension and release while simultaneously outlining each chord within the progression.

Some of the **techniques** that will be applied:

- Melody and bass line voice leading
- Diatonic and modal substitutions
- Middle voice movement.

Example 1

The first example is built out of three note voicings that highlight an **ascending melody line**: G-Ab-A-Bb.

This progression also contains a **moving line** in both the inner and outer voices:

- The middle voice moves from F down to E over the course of the progression.
- The lower voice moves from C down to B, before finishing on a C#, the third of A7b9.

Also note that the first three voicing's contain the **3rd** and **7th** of each chord, while the A7b9 contains the 3rd, C#, while the 5th, E, has replaced the 7th for the purposes of voice leading.

BTW: to hear how the following examples sound in a band, input the basic chord progression into Band in a Box and turn off all instruments except bass and drums.

Example 1: Chord progression Dm7, G7, Cmaj7, A7b9. Fingerings: Tenor (8, 9, 10, 11), Alto (10, 10, 9, 9), Bass (10, 9, 9, 11).

Example 2

The next example contains the same ascending melody line, G-Ab-A-Bb, though this time the line is harmonized in **four note voicings**.

- The Dm7 chord is built out of a IV (Fadd9) chord, F-A-C-G, which is a common diatonic substitute for a iim7 chord.
- The G7 chord contains a 13, E, as well as b9, Ab, providing an element of tension which resolves to the Imaj7 chord in bar three.
- The VI7 chord also contains a b9 which provides a tension that is resolved when the progression returns to the Dm7 chord in bar one.

Example 2: Chord progression Dm7, G7, Cmaj7, A7b9. Fingerings: Tenor (3, 4, 5, 6), Alto (1, 5, 3, 5), Bass (2, 4, 2, 5).

Example 3

The third example is also built around an **ascending melodic line**, though this time it begins a tone higher: A-Bb-B-C.

- As in the previous example, the Dm7 chord is being substituted by an Fmaj7 chord, F-C-E-A.
- The V7 chord contains two tension notes, the b13 (Eb) and the #9 (Bb).
- Over the Imaj7 chord a Gmaj7 voicing is being used, which has been “borrowed” from the C Lydian mode, where Gmaj7 is the Vmaj7 chord in that mode. This is a common substitution for a

Imaj7 chord as it provides an F#, #11, which is commonly heard on a tonic chord within a jazz context.

- The VI7 chord also contains two tension notes, the b13 (F) and the #9 (C), the same two tensions used on the V7 chord, and these are resolved back to the Dm7 chord in bar one of the progression, as was the case in the previous example.

Example 3 musical notation showing a four-bar progression in 4/4 time. The chords are Dm7, G7, Cmaj7, and A7#9. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a guitar TAB below. The TAB shows fingerings: Dm7 (5, 5, 3), G7 (6, 4, 3), Cmaj7 (7, 7, 5), and A7#9 (8, 6, 6, 5).

Example 4

- The next example starts in a similar fashion to example 3 because the Dm7 chord is being substituted by an Fma7 chord.
- Though in this progression, the V7 chord only contains one tension note, the b9 (Ab), which resolves to the Cmaj7 chord in bar three, which is being voiced in stacked fourth intervals.
- For the VI7 chord, an Edim7 voicing is being used to sound the A7b9 chord. This is a common substitution, a dim7 chord played on the b9, 3, 5 or 7th of a dominant chord, as it provides the 3rd (C#), 5th (E), 7th (G) and b9 (Bb) chord tones. This is especially effective on guitar because all inversions of dim7 chords are fingered the same on the same string sets. So in this example, A7b9, one could play the Edim7, slide up to Gdim7, then to Bbdim7 and finally C#dim7 without changing fingerings.

Example 4 musical notation showing a four-bar progression in 4/4 time. The chords are Dm7, G7, Cmaj7, and A7b9. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a guitar TAB below. The TAB shows fingerings: Dm7 (5, 5, 3), G7 (4, 5, 3), Cmaj7 (3, 3, 2, 2), and A7b9 (3, 2, 3, 2).

Example 5

- The Dm7 chord at the start of this example is built out of voicings made famous by Bill Evans on the Miles Davis recording *Kind of Blue*. The chord is built by stacking fourth intervals, D-G-C-F, which produces a Dm11 sound. Though this voicing uses four notes, Evans would also add a 3rd interval on top of the F, A, during his *So What* voicing's to produce a thicker, larger chord.
- The G7 chord is also built out of the *So What* voicings and is played by simply shifting the Dm7 chord up a minor third to Fm11, F-Bb-Eb-Ab. This produces three tension notes over G7, the #9 (Bb), b13 (Eb) and b9 (Ab), which all resolve down by half step to the Cmaj7 chord in bar three.
- The tonic chord is again built from the *So What* voicings, by playing stacked fourths beginning on the 3rd, E, of the chord, E-A-D-G. This allows us to play **all three chords with only one voicing**,

stacked 4ths, while creating a modern sounding progression that contains both tension and release within itself.

- The A7b9 chord is built from an Edim7 chord, though with the added maj7, Eb, which comes from the E diminished scale. These voicing's, dimMaj7, can be heard in the music of **Ed Bickert** and especially. Try taking this chord and sliding it up to the next chord tone, G, and back again without lifting your fingers and you'll immediately remind yourself of every Jim Hall chord solo he has recorded.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7b9
T	6	9	8	8
A	5	8	7	8
B	5	8	7	8
B	5	8	7	7

Example 6

Example six is built out of **closed position** and **clustered chord voicings**.

- The Dm7 chord is being substituted by a Imaj7sus4 chord, C-F-G-B, in closed position. This is a common diatonic substitution as it contains the 7th, 3rd, 11th, and 13th (Dorian note) of the Dm7 chord.
- The G7 chord is built by stacking a cluster, F-A \flat -B \flat , over top of the third of the chord, B. This creates both b9 (A \flat) and #9 (B \flat) tension tones that are resolved into the Imaj7 chord in bar three.
- The tonic chord is built by playing a 7th, B, below an Am triad, which contains the R (C), 3rd (E) and 6th (A) of the tonic chord.
- The VI7 chord contains both the b9 (B \flat) and b5 (E \flat) tensions which are resolved when returned to the Dm7 chord in bar one. This voicing may be a bit of a stretch for some of us, if so one can play the A in the bass, fourth string seventh fret, and the B \flat in the melody, first string sixth fret, which eliminates the tricky stretch.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7b9
T	7	6	5	5
A	8	9	5	4
B	10	10	5	6
B	10	9	9	8

Example 7

For the next example we will return to using three note voicings, as was the case in the first example.

- Again, here we are using an F chord, F-A-C, in place of the Dm7 chord.
- The G7 chord contains the tri-tone, F-B, with a b9 (A \flat) stuck in the middle to create tension.

- This tension is then released into an Em triad which is being played in place of the Imaj7 chord. This triad is commonly used in place of a Imaj7 chord as it contains all the tones of the chord minus the root, which would be played by the bass player anyway.
- The A7b9 chord is also built off of an E note, with the C# being the only note different than the previous bar.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7b9
T	1	0	0	2
A	2	1	0	0
B	3	3	2	2

Example 8

The next example is an extension of the previous one, where the chords are very similar with one upper note being added to the three note chords from example 7.

- In the first bar the 9th (E) is being added to form an Fmaj7 chord.
- A b13 (Eb) is added to create more tension over the V7 chord.
- The one chord adds an F#, #11, which provides a Lydian quality to the chord.
- The VI chord adds the b13 (F) to the chord which is resolved down by half-step to the E in bar one.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7b9
T	5	4	7	6
A	5	4	5	6
B	7	6	5	5
	8	8	7	7

Example 9

The next example uses **spread voicings** to outline each chord in the progression. These chords are often referred to as “**Drop 2 and 4**” voicings or by their string sets, **5421 voicings**.

- Again the Dm7 chord is substituted by an Fmaj7 chord.
- The G7 contains a natural 9 (A) and a b13 (Eb) that resolves down to...
- ... the 9th (D) of the Cmaj7 chord in the next bar.
- The A7b9 chord is again built off of an Edim7 chord, though this time fingered in a spread voicing.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7b9
Treble Clef				
12th Fret	12	11	10	9
10th Fret	10	10	10	8
8th Fret	10	9	9	8
7th Fret	8	8	7	7

Example 10

The last major key example is built out of **closed voicings**, where each chord is built with the smallest interval possible being used between chord tones.

- The Dm7 is built from a Dm triad being stacked on top of the 9th (E) of the chord.
- The G7 is being substituted by an Ebmaj7#5 chord, which comes from the C melodic minor scale, where G7b13 is the fifth mode.
- The C chord contains both the sixth and the ninth.
- The VI chord is built by playing the #9 (C) on top of a C# diminished triad.

	Dm7	G7	Cmaj7	A7#9
Treble Clef				
10th Fret	10	10	8	8
12th Fret	10	12	10	8
9th Fret	10	12	9	9
14th Fret	14	13	12	11

Minor II V I VI Chord Progressions

Example 11

We will now take a look at ten minor ii-V chord progressions by starting with a technique that is similar to that seen in example five.

- The Dm7b5 voicing in bar one is then played a minor third higher in bar two as an Fm7b5 chord, which contains the chord tones 7-3-b13-b9 over the G7 chord.
- This same fingering is then played a major third high on A, which produces the chord tones 6-b3-5-R, over the tonic chord in bar three.
- For the last bar an Eb7 chord, bII of Dm7b5, is being used to turn the progression back around to the iim7b5 chord in bar one. This voicing is built by playing a GdimMaj7 which produces an Eb7#9 sound.

	Dm7b5	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
T	6	9	13	11
A	5	8	12	11
B	6	9	13	11
	5	8	12	10

Example 12

The next example begins with the same two chords heard in the last progression, though instead of continuing upwards...

- ...it resolves down to the tonic chord, being substituted by an Ebmaj7#5 chord, in bar three. The tonic chord contains both the major 7th and 9th chord tones, and the augmented fifth interval between the Eb and B gives this voicing a dark quality that helps define the tonic minor sound.
- The Eb7 chord in this progression is built off of a dimMaj7 chord as in the previous example, except it is now built off of the b9, E, note which produces an Eb7b9 sound.

	Dm7b5	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
T	6	9	8	8
A	5	8	7	8
B	6	9	9	8
	5	8	6	7

Example 13

Here we have the same technique, moving up by minor then major thirds...

- ...but the voicing has changed to contain the 11th, G, of Dm7b5.
- G7 contains the #9 (Bb).
- Cm7 contains the 9 (D).
- This D then moves down by a tone to the C, 3rd, of the Am7b5 chord in bar four, which provides a nice sense of voice leading between these two chords. The Am7b5 (vim7b5) chord is commonly used in the fourth bar of a minor ii-V-i-vi progression as it resolves by fourth to the Dm7b5 chord in bar one, and comes from the tonic, C, minor key center.

	Dm7b5	G7alt	Cm7	Am7b5
T	8	11	15	13
A	5	8	12	12
B	6	9	13	13
	5	8	12	12

Example 14

With the next example we will move away from the parallel movement found in the previous three progressions.

- The first chord is a simple Drop 2 Dm7b5 voicing with the root on top.
- The G7 chord is being substituted by a Db7 Drop 2 voicing, which is of G.
- The Cm7 chord contains both the 11th, F, and the major 7th, B, intervals which resolve...
- ... downwards to the root, A, and fifth, Eb, chord tones on the Am11b5 chord in bar four.

Example 14 musical notation showing four chords: Dm7b5, G7alt, Cm7, and Am7b5. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar fretboard diagram below. The fretboard diagram shows fingerings for strings T, A, B, and D.

Chord	T	A	B	D
Dm7b5	10	9	10	10
G7alt	9	9	10	9
Cm7	8	8	10	9
Am7b5	10	8	8	7

Example 15

- The next progression begins with the same **drop 2 voicing** being used for the Dm7b5 chord in bar one.
- Though instead of a Db7 chord in bar two, the G7 chord is now substituted by a Db9 chord, where the 9th (Eb) of Db becomes the b13 over the G7 chord.
- The Cm7 chord still contains the F and B from the previous example, though it is now in a different voicing, one that is built out of an Eb#5add9 chord shape.
- The Am7b5 chord is second inversion Drop 2 voicing with no added notes.

Example 15 musical notation showing four chords: Dm7b5, G7alt, Cm7, and Am7b5. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar fretboard diagram below. The fretboard diagram shows fingerings for strings T, A, B, and D.

Chord	T	A	B	D
Dm7b5	10	9	10	10
G7alt	11	9	10	9
Cm7	13	12	12	13
Am7b5	11	10	12	10

Example 16

- In this example the bVII7 chord, Ab7, is being substituted for the Dm7b5 chord in bar one. This is a common substitution as the Ab7 is a tri-tone away from Dm7b5, and it resolves by half-step down to the G7 in bar two.
- The G7 chord is being substituted by an Fm11b5 chord, which contains the b13 (Eb) and #9 (Bb) tension tones.
- The Cm7 chord uses an Ebmaj7 Drop 3 voicing while the Eb7 chord contains the #11 (A) tension tone.
- Notice how now, with the Ab7 chord in bar one, the Eb7 chord becomes the V/bVI and resolves by fourth back to the first bar.

	Ab7	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
Treble Clef				
6	6	6	6	6
6	4	8	8	8
5	4	7	7	7
4	3	6	6	6

Example 17

- In the next progression the Ab13 chord in bar one moves down by half-step to a G7b9b5 chord in bar two.
- This then moves down to the Ebmaj7 chord being substituted over the Cm7 chord in bar three before that Ebmaj7 chord...
- ...lowers its 7th from D to Db and fifth, Bb-A, to produce the Eb7#11 chord in bar four.

	Ab7	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
Treble Clef				
4	4	3	3	
6	2	3	2	
5	4	3	2	
4	3	1	1	

Example 18

The following example uses closed position voicings to outline each chord in the progression.

- The Ab7 chord contains the 3rd, C, 13th, F, 7th, Gb and 9th, Bb, which is then voice led into...
- ... the G7#9 chord in bar two.
- The Cm7 chord is being substituted by a B7#5 chord, which produces a CmMaj7(6) sound that leads into...
- ... the Eb7#11 chord, with the #11(A) in the bass, in bar four.

	Ab7	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
Treble Clef				
T	6	6	5	6
A	7	8	8	8
B	10	10	8	6
B	10	9	9	7

Example 19

- This progression begins with a Cm11b5 chord being substituted over the Ab7 chord, which produces an Ab13 sound.
- This is then voice led down by half-step to a Bbmaj7#11 chord, which is substituting the G7 chord producing a G7#9b13 sound.
- The tonic chord is being substituted by a Bbmaj7sus4 chord which produces a Cm13 sound.
- The Eb7 chord is being substituted by a Dbmaj7#11 chord which produces an Eb13 sound.

	Ab7	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
Treble Clef				
T	6	4	4	6
A	3	3	2	5
B	4	3	3	5
B	3	2	1	4

Example 20

The last example is built out of the **descending Ab-G line in the lower voice**.

- The Ab7 chord is voiced in a standard 1357 Drop 2 fingering.
- The G7 chord is built from an Abdim7 chord which produces a G7b9 chord with the b9 in the bass.
- The Cm7 chord is built by stacking fourths above the fifth, G, to produce a Cm11 sound.
- The Eb7 chord contains both the 9th, F, and the #11, A, which is in the melody line.

	Ab7	G7alt	Cm7	Eb7
Treble Clef				
T	8	7	6	5
A	7	6	6	6
B	8	7	5	6
B	6	6	5	5

Now that we've explored these examples of II-V progression in major and minor keys, you can try to **build your own voicings** using the techniques explored above. Try taking any II chord, in major and minor keys, and voice lead it up by moving the melody in half-steps, or try the same technique descending. Or try taking different chords from different examples, the IIm7 chord from one, the V7 from another etc, and mixing them together to form new progressions that you can call your own.