Chord Progressions
Ted Greene, 1974-12-25

Certain chord progressions occur so often in popular songs that they should be committed to memory, and this should help in the following ways:

1) You will be able to memorize songs faster because you will notice many similarities, and
2) You will be able to use these progressions as substitutes for weaker ones (more on this soon).

Common Progressions

Code:
Capital Roman numerals = major chords
Small Roman numerals = minor chords
Capitals with 7 (like V7) = dominant 7
Small Roman numerals with 7 (like ii7) = minor 7th
± or Δ7 = major 7

1) ii7 - V7 - IΔ7 or i7
2) II7 - V7 - IΔ7 or i7
3) iim7b5 - V7 - IΔ7 or i7
4) vi7 - II7 - ii7 - V7 - (IΔ7)
5) IΔ7 - vi7 - ii7 - V7 - (IΔ7)
6) iii7 - vi7 - ii7 - V7 - (IΔ7)
7) iii7 - VI7 - ii7 - V7 - (IΔ7)
8) I - VI7 - II7 - V7 - (I)
9) III7 - VI7 - II7 - V7 - (I)
10) iim7b5 - VI7 - iim7b5 - V7 - (I)

Minor7b5 is sometimes written like so: ø7

11) I - (IV) - viim7(b5) - III7 - vi
12) I - I7 - IV - iv or bVII7
13) I - iii7 - IV - V7

These patterns will often sound very bland without extensions, and most of them will be found in tunes where the melody is dictating that some extension should be played.

Example:
Key of C → Given C - C7 - F - Fm

I   I7   IV   iv

if the melody was: G   A   G# ∣ G   E   Eb   D

chord possibilities: CΔ7  C7/6  C7+  FΔ9  FΔ7  Bb11  Bb9
Certain chord progressions occur so often in popular songs that they should be committed to memory, and this should help in the following ways: 1. You will be able to memorize songs faster because you will notice many similarities and 2. you will be able to use these progressions as substitutes for weaknesses.

Common Progressions

- II7, V7, I7 or I7
- I7, V7, I7 or I7
- iiIM7b5, V7, I7 or I7
- vi7, II7, ii7, V7 (II7)
- I7, vi7, ii7, V7 (II7)
- ii7, vi7, ii7, V7 (II7)
- I7, V7, I7, V7 (I7)
- I7, V7, I7, V7 (I7)
- I7, V7, I7, V7 (I7)

These patterns will often sound very bland without extensions, and most of them will be found in tunes where the melody is dictating that some extension should be played. Example:

Key of C → given: C C7 F Em

If the melody was

→ G A G7 A C7 F7 Bb11 Bb9

Chord possibilities

C7 C7/6 C7 F7 F7 Bb11 Bb9