REHARMONIZATION & BACK-CYCLING for CHORD MELODY PLAYING

Reharmonization is the process of enriching an existing chord progression or song by applying chord substitutions, and re-interpreting the chords given.

Before starting the following exercise, it is assumed that you already understand extension substitution, b5th substitutions, & relative minors & majors, if not, do not undertake this page.

The first song we will use as a model is "Swanee River". Here is the simple chord progression (given in the key of C):

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccccc}
\end{array}
\]

(\text{This symbol will mean end of phrase.})

There are two basic ways to reharmonize any tune: 1) to start with the basic chords as a guideline and work them over; and 2) to chuck them aside and start from scratch. We will use the first method for now. First, you should try extensions; you might get something like the following:

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccccc}
C7 & C6 & | & F7 & | & C9 & | & G7 & | & C7 & | & F7 & | & C7 & G9 & | & C6 & | & F7 & | & C9 & G7 & | & C6 & |
\end{array}
\]

This would still sound pretty ordinary but a little better than before. By the way, you may have noticed that major extensions were used on I & IV chords, while dominant 7th extensions were used on V. This is common procedure but for a more blusey or gospel effect dominant extensions can be used on I and especially on IV IF YOU DESIRE THIS CHANGE OF TONE COLOR (there are no rules other than personal taste so experiment).

Before you try any b5th substitutions, it is wise to try back-cycling. Using back-cycling you might end up with something like this:

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccccc}
C7 & C6 & | & F7 & | & C7 & | & F7 & | & G11 & | & E7#9 & | & Am7 & | & D7 & | & G7 & | & C7 & G7/6 & |
\end{array}
\]

Now you could go back and try b5th substitutions - like Ab7 for D7 etc. You will find that some songs do not lend themselves well to the b5th subst. - Experiment. The only real missing ingredients left in this progression are passing chords. The most common place to put in passing chords that are not covered by back-cycling is when leading to I, especially from IIIm (II + II7 also) or IV. Some of the most common ways found to be pleasing, of going IV to I are:

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccccc}
F & C & | & C & | ; & F & D7 & | & C & | ; & F & Ab7 & | & C & | ; & F & Dm7b5 & | & C & | ; & F & D9 & Dm7b5 & | & C & | ; & F & Fm & | & C & |
\end{array}
\]

In conclusion, every chord substitution that theoretically may be tried is tempered by the melody of the song which still takes precedence over the harmony.
Reharmonization - Back-Cycling for Chord Melody Playing

Reharmonization is the process of enriching and modulating chord progressions by applying chord substitutions and re-interpreting the chords given.

Before starting the following exercise, it is assumed that you already understand extension substitution, 6/5th substitution, relative minor majors, and do not undertake this page.

The first song we will use as a model is "Swanee River".

Here is the simple chord progression (given in the key of C):
C F C E G C F C G C
The symbol will usually mean end of phrase.

There are 2 basic ways to reharmonize anymore: to start with the basic chords as a guideline and work them over and to check them aside and start from scratch. We will use the first method for now. First, you should try extensions; you might get something like the following:
C7 C61 F7 C9 G7 C7 G9 C6 G7 C7
F6 C6 C7 F9 C9 G7 C6 This would still sound pretty ordinary but a little better than before. By the way, you may have noticed that major extensions were used on the I and II chords while dominant extensions were used on V. This is common procedure but for a more bluesy gospel effect dominant extensions can be used on I and especially on IV IF YOU DESIRE THIS CHANGE OF TONE COLOR (there are no rules other than personal taste to experiment).

Before you try any 6/5th substitutions, it is wise to try back-cycling.

Using back-cycling you might end up with something like this:
C7 Gm7 C7 F7 G7 C7 Gm7 C9 F9 G7 Em7 Am7 D7 G7 C6 G7 Dm7 G7 C7 Gm7 C7 F7 G7 C7 Gm7 C9 F7 G7 C7 Gm7 C7 F7 G7 Em7 Am7 D7 G7 C6

Now you could go back and try 6/5th substitutions - like A6/7 for D7 etc.

You will find that some songs don't lend themselves well to the 6/5th substi-

From the real missing ingredients left in this progression are passing

Experiment, and real missing ingredients left in this progression are passing

The most common place to put in passing chords that are not covered

by back-cycling is when leading to I, especially from IV or IV. Some of the most

common waysound to be pleasing of going IV to I are: E C 0 C; E D7/C;

FA67/C; FBm7b5/C; FD9 Am7b5 C; E Em C; The conclusion, every chord

substitution that theoretically may be tried is tempered by the melody of the song

which still takes precedence over the harmony.