

Common Chord Progressions and Harmonic Principles

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() = optional

1) General Guideline: Any diatonic chord can progress to any other.

Diatonic major scale

Triads: I ii iii IV V vi vii^o

7ths: I^Δ7 ii7 iii7 IV^Δ7 V7 vi7 vii^o7

Diatonic minor triads (including Aeolian, Dorian, Phrygian, Harmonic and Melodic minor harmonies):

Triads: i, bII, ii, (II), ii^o, III, III+, iv, IV, V, v, v^o, VI, (bvi), [♯]vi^o (b)VII, bvii, [♯]vii^o.

7ths: i7, i^Δ7, bII^Δ7, ii^o7, ii7, III^Δ7, (III^Δ7+), III7, iv7, IV7, V7, v7, v^o7,

VI^Δ7, [♯]vi^o7, (b)VII7, (b)VII^Δ7, bvii7, [♯]vii^o7.

Here are some common progressions in a major key (key of A):

1) A D A
I IV I

2) A E A
I V I

3) A D E A
I IV V I

4) A D A/E E A
I IV I V I

5) A E (A) D A
I V I IV I

vi often replaces I:
6) $\begin{matrix} \text{F}\#\text{m} \\ \text{vi} \end{matrix}$ D E A
IV V I

7) A D A E $\begin{matrix} \text{F}\#\text{m} \\ \text{vi} \end{matrix}$
I IV I V

vi often follows I:
8) A $\begin{matrix} \text{F}\#\text{m} \\ \text{vi} \end{matrix}$ D E A
I $\begin{matrix} \text{F}\#\text{m} \\ \text{vi} \end{matrix}$ IV V I

ii often replaces IV:
9) A F#m $\begin{matrix} \text{Bm} \\ \text{ii} \end{matrix}$ E A
I vi $\begin{matrix} \text{Bm} \\ \text{ii} \end{matrix}$ V I

iii can replace I and often can precede vi:

10) $\begin{matrix} \text{C}\#\text{m} \\ \text{iii} \end{matrix}$ F#m Bm E A
iii vi ii V I

iii often precedes IV:

11) A $\begin{matrix} \text{C}\#\text{m} \\ \text{iii} \end{matrix}$ D (E) A
I $\begin{matrix} \text{C}\#\text{m} \\ \text{iii} \end{matrix}$ IV (V) I

IV and ii are sometimes used together:

12) (A) D Bm E A or Bm D E A
(I) IV ii V I ii IV V I

There are some strong progressions of chords whose roots are moving up a 5th:

13) $\begin{matrix} \text{F}\#\text{m} & \text{C}\#\text{m} & \text{D} & \text{A} \\ \text{vi} & \text{iii} & \text{IV} & \text{I} \end{matrix}$

Also:

14) $\begin{matrix} \text{Bm} & \text{F}\#\text{m} & \text{D} & \text{A} \\ \text{ii} & \text{vi} & \text{IV} & \text{I} \end{matrix}$

The circle (cycle) of 4ths (5ths) is often used:

15) A D G#^o C#m F#m Bm E A
I IV vii^o iii vi ii V I

Cycle of 4ths starting from IV:

- 16) D G#° C#m F#m Bm E A
 IV vii° iii vi ii V I

4ths starting from ii:

- 17) Bm E A D G#° C# F#m
 ii V I IV vii° III vi
 Will be discussed later

Cycle of 4ths up stepwise:

- 18) $\begin{matrix} \text{Bm} & \text{E} \\ \text{ii} & \text{V} \end{matrix}$ $\begin{matrix} \text{C\#m} & \text{F\#m} \\ \text{iii} & \text{vi} \end{matrix}$ D E A
 IV V I
 V is often used for vii and vice versa.

Same ideas in Am:

- 1) Am Dm (D) Am 2) Am E(m) Am 3) Am Dm E Am
 4) Am Dm Am/E E Am 5) Am E (Am) Dm Am 6) $\begin{matrix} \text{F} \\ \text{VI} \end{matrix}$ Dm E Am
 7) Am Dm Am E(m) $\begin{matrix} \text{F} \\ \text{VI} \end{matrix}$ 8) Am $\begin{matrix} \text{F} \end{matrix}$ Dm E Am
 9) Am F $\begin{matrix} \text{B}^\circ \text{ or } \text{Bm} \\ \text{ii}^\circ \text{ or } \text{ii} \end{matrix}$ E Am 10) $\begin{matrix} \text{C} \\ \text{III} \end{matrix}$ F B° E Am
 11) Am $\begin{matrix} \text{C} \\ \text{III} \end{matrix}$ Dm E Am 12) (Am) $\begin{matrix} \text{Dm} & \text{Bm} \\ \text{iv} & \text{ii} \end{matrix}$ E Am or $\begin{matrix} \text{Bm} & \text{Dm} \\ \text{ii} & \text{iv} \end{matrix}$ E Am
 13) $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{F}} \text{ C}, \overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{Dm}} \text{ Am}$ 14) $\overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{Bm}} \text{ F}, \overset{\curvearrowright}{\text{Dm}} \text{ Am}$
 15) Am Dm G C F B° E Am 16) Dm G C F B° E Am
 17) Bm E Am Dm G C F 16) Bm E, C F, Dm G or E Am

Triads may be replaced by their diatonically related 7ths:

- 1) A D E A could become: A⁷ D⁷ E⁷ A⁷
 2) Am Dm E Am could become: Am⁷ Dm⁷ E⁷ Am⁷

Try all of the above progressions using 7ths in place of any or all of the triads.

Mode Mixing in Major Keys:

The chords of any of the modes may be used *in place of* diatonic triads with the same letter names or *in conjunction* with these diatonic chords. This will be clarified shortly. First of all, here is a listing of the triads of the modes of A:

Ionian:	(A	Bm	C#m	D	E	F#m	G#°)	is the same as the major scale.
Dorian:	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F#°	G	
Phrygian:	Am	Bb	C	Dm	E°	F	Gm	
Lydian:	A	B	C#m	D#°	E	F#m	G#m	
Mixolydian:	A	Bm	C#°	D	Em	F#m	G	
Aeolian:	Am	B°	C	Dm	Em	F	G	
Locrian:	is not used very much, if at all.							

Composite:

A, Am, Bb, Bm, B, B° C, C#m, C#°, D, Dm, D#°, E, Em, E°, F, F#m, F#°, G, Gm, G#°

Some common uses:

1) For A Bm D A → A (B) D A or → A (B) D (Dm) A

2) A D A E (F) used for F#m

3) A (G) D A

4) A C#m (C) D A

5) A D (C) E A

6) (F G C) D A

7) A D (F G) A

Mixture triads may be replaced by their related 7ths just as diatonic triads may:

8) A^Δ7 (B7) D^Δ7 A^Δ7, A (B7 Dm7) A

9) A (F^Δ7 G7) A

() = optional Common Chord Progressions + Harmonic Principles

① General Guideline: Any diatonic chord can progress to any other. DIATONIC MAJOR SCALE TRIADS: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

DIATONIC MINOR TRIADS (including AEGLIAN, DORIAN, PHRYGIAN, HARMONIC + MELODIC MINOR HARMONIES):
i, ^bII, ii, ii°, III, III+, iv, IV, v, v°, VI, ^bvio, ^bVII, ^bvii, ^bvii°

7ths: I7, ii7, iii7, IV7, V7, vi7, vii°7
(II) 7ths: i7, im7, ^bII7, ii°7, iii7, III7(III7+), III7, iv7, IV7, V7, v7, v°7, VI7, ^bvio7, ^bVII7, ^bvii7, ^bvii°7

Here are some common progressions in a major key (Key of A):

- ① ADA ② AEA ③ ADEA ④ ADAEA ⑤ AEA(A)DA ⑥ vi often replaces I:

I IV I I VI I I IV VI I IV I VI I I V I IV I F#m D E A
 VI VI VI VI VI VI

- ⑦ ADAE F#m ⑧ vi often follows I: ⑨ ii often replaces IV: ⑩ iii can replace I and often can precede vi:

I IV I V VI A F#m D E A A F#m Bm E A C#m F#m Bm E A
 VI VI VI VI VI VI VI VI

- ⑪ iii often precedes IV: ⑫ IV + ii are sometimes used together:

A C#m D (E) A (A) D Bm E A or Bm D E A
 I iii IV V I I IV ii VI ii IV V I

⑬ there are some strong progressions of chords whose roots are moving up a 5th: F#m C#m D A

- ⑭ also: ⑮ the circle (cycle) of 4ths (5ths) is often used:

Bm F#m D A A D G#° C#m F#m Bm E A
 ii VI IV I I IV vii° iii vi ii V I

⑯ cycle of 4ths starting from IV: D G#° C#m F#m Bm E A
 II vii° iii vi ii V I

- ⑰ 4ths starting from ii: ⑱ cycle of 4ths up stepwise:

Bm E A D G#° C#m F#m D E A
 ii V I IV vii° III VI

SAME IDEAS IN Am:

- ① Am Dm Em ② Am E(m) Am ③ Am Dm E Am ④ Am Dm Am E Am ⑤ Am E (Am) Dm Am
- ⑥ F Dm E Am ⑦ Am Dm Am E Am ⑧ Am F Dm E Am ⑨ Am F B° or Bm E Am ⑩ C F B° E Am
- ⑪ Am C Dm E Am ⑫ (Am) Dm Bm E Am or Bm Dm E Am ⑬ F C Dm Am ⑭ Bm F Dm Am ⑮ Am Dm G C F B° E Am
- ⑯ Dm G C F B° E Am ⑰ Bm E Am Dm G C F ⑱ Bm E, C F, Dm G or E Am

TRIADS MAY be replaced by their diatonically related 7ths:
 ① A D E A could become A7 D7 E7 A7 ② Am Dm E Am could become Am7 Dm7 E7 Am7

Try all of the above progressions using 7ths in place of any or all of the triads.
MODE MIXING IN MAJOR Keys: the chords of any of the modes may be used in place of diatonic triads with the same letter names or in conjunction with those diatonic chords. This will be clarified shortly. First of all, here is a listing of the triads of the modes of A: IONIAN is the same as the major scale.

- DORIAN: Am Bm C D Em F#° G
- PHRYGIAN: Am B° C Dm E° F Gm
- LYDIAN: A B C#m D#° E F#m G#m
- MIXOLYDIAN: A Bm C#° D Em F#m G
- AEOLIAN: Am B° C Dm Em F G
- LOCRIAN is not used very much, if at all.

COMPOSITE:
 A, Am, Bb, Bm, B, B°, C#m, C#°, D, Dm, D#°, E, Em, E°, F, F#m, F#°, G, Gm, G#°

- ② A D A E F ③ A G D A ④ A C#m C D A ⑤ A D C E A ⑥ F G C D A ⑦ A D F G A
- ⑧ A7 B7 D7 A7, A B7 Dm7 A ⑨ A F7 G7 A

Mixture triads may be replaced by their related 7ths just as diatonic triads may: