

**Ted Greene Video Lesson with Tony Do Rosario, 1999**  
**(Ted Talks About Some Wes Montgomery Tricks)**  
(Transcript)

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**Ted:** Fm7 for Wes either proceeds the Bb (as you mentioned), which is the common way that other people do it, or in his case, he puts it in between. He'll give you the tonic chord, then its "companion" chord, then the tonic.

Like, he'll play....*[he demonstrates a series of Fm7 – Bb7 – Fm7 – Bb7 sequences.]*  
You know, these are F minors between the Bb's.

He just loved that sound. I don't know if he was aware of it — because he was asked once what his favorite song was, he said, "Portrait of Jenny." "Portrait of Jenny" was a movie that had a theme song. And all the music in there was taken from Claude Debussy – either direct or adapted. So he [Wes] was a big Debussy fan, whether he knew it or not.

Debussy used to do these things *[he demonstrates]* where the chords just kept going and going – these long things. They weren't chord scales. They weren't *[he demonstrates]* It wasn't every note moving up exactly. Sometimes there's common tones. Like here *[he demonstrates]*, this is a common tone....this is a common tone. Both of these.

So, for Wes. You know, he does that *[he demonstrates]*...he cranks sometimes. You've heard him do it. It's ridiculous. But that's his---that's his sound for the "One" (I) chord.

If it's major, it's different. If it's minor, it's different. In those cases, he uses a (Five) V7b9. That's his "companion" chord.

That's right. You're on the right track with that.

**Student:** I understand. It's just taking more time

**Ted:** It's not ii-V. It's just the [Five] v minor of any dominant. No matter what dominant this man is on, he's got a companion chord ready to go.

**Student:** And do you have the same idea with major or minor?

**Ted:** That's what I was just saying. You were---you were with Jersey thoughts of future homecoming. Your instrument playing for all those people.

Yeah, for major and minor, Wes' favorite "insert chord" to be paired off with the chord of the moment is the V7b9 – rootless version, which people mistakenly call "diminished." It's not diminished. It's just the V chord.

You know, like, if he's in Bb major this is his thing. Like *[he demonstrates]*... Let's say he's got to blow over this....you'll hear him sometimes, he'll give you one of these *[he demonstrates]* I'm doing them on other *[string]* set's on purpose for the video, in case you get inspired and say, "I want to work on all of the string sets." These are just those little Wes string sets, his favorites, you know. He did use others, but these are his favorites *[Ted shows string sets, 1, 2, 3 and 2, 3, 4, and 3, 4, 5]*. Especially these two *[string sets 2, 3, 4 and 3, 4, 5]*.

So that's just Bb major-something-or-other. I use a 6th. It comes from another generation where 6th chords were part of the "big deal." They kind of vanished in the '60s. They just left the

planet for a while, except for the revival music. Except The Beatles would sing it, believe it or not. The last chord of “She Loves You Yeah, Yeah, Yeah” is an E. They’re singing E6, and George Martin said, “You can’t sing that chord. It’s too old fashioned.” They said, “We like it.” And he said, “Okay.”

So anyway: Wes might be doing Bb6 – F7b9 [*he demonstrates*] ...just chain it together. Now, say it’s Bb minor.

**Student:** Still using the V7?

**Ted:** V7b9 – rootless ones. Those diminished statements sound like [*he demonstrates Am7 and E7#9*]....

He likes the Two (ii) chord too. .... He’ll give you some of this sometimes [*he demonstrates Am and Bm chains*] instead of [*he demonstrates Am with E7b9 chains*].

Those are pretty much trademarks of his thing. He likes to have one chord to “bang off of,” no matter what chord he’s on. Meaning *besides* the one he’s on. So, he’ll have two. [*That*] covers a lot of situations. And, you know, in their analysis in magazines and books, well-intentioned people will always call them “key changes” or “ii-V of this key” and different wild, crazy stuff. Like, when he plays over “West Coast Blues” and he going... [*he demonstrates....*] Do you know “West Coast Blues”?

**Student:** I don’t know it by heart, but I know it.

**Ted:** But you’re heard it.

**Student:** Yeah.

**Ted:** So, in the blowing part, when it finally gets to the [*Ted plays and sings the melody*].... He’s using these kinds of changes. You can think, “ii-V of ii; ii-V of bii; ii-V of home” It works. Or you can just say, “iii – VI; down a half-step to biii to bVI; to ii - its own V – ii....

When you got a Two (ii) chord and you got a whole bar, then the V7 is next – you know, the super common, most common progression – ii-V — for Wes, a lot of times, it was an opportunity to make “Body and Soul” changes. Which means: play the Two (ii), then half-way through the bar go to its V. Not the key’s V, but its V. So again, those rootless [dominant 7] b9 chords or any of his favorite altered sounds. G stuff...G7 – Cm – G7. This is for blues too, you know, when it comes up.

And then the Cm again (Cm7), and then the F7 finally, the V of the key.