

Diatonic seventh chords

Note that there are **no accidentals** (chromatic notes) at all except for V^7 and $vii^{\circ 7}$ in **minor mode** (and also the borrowed chord $vii^{\circ 7}$ in major). All inversions are possible; however, not all of these chords are used with equal frequency. Here's a chart which shows the most-used to least-used:

most used V^7 ii^7 $vii^{\circ 7}$ IV^7 vi^7 I^7 iii^7 least used

(the same order is also true in minor mode)

Doubling: use complete seventh chords whenever possible.

Voice leading: the most important thing to remember is that the **7th of the chord resolves down by step** (see examples later in this handout).

All of these diatonic 7th chords are used in the same place that you'd use diatonic triads; progressions such as T S D T (I IV V I) and so on still apply.

ii^7 , and especially ii^6_5 , is **easily** the most-used diatonic 7th (except for V^7). Typically, it resolves to V (or to I^6_4 , then V). Another frequently-used progression: $I \ ii^4_2 \ V^6_5 \ I$.

$vii^{\circ 7}$ (and $vii^{\circ 7}$) generally resolve directly to I (i), though they sometimes resolve like this:

$vii^{\circ 7} \ V^6_5 \ I$.

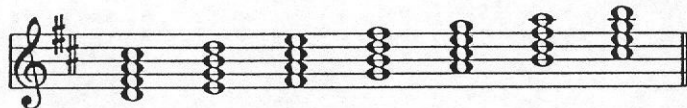
IV^7 generally resolves to V, and often passes through ii^6_5 first:

$IV^7 \ ii^6_5 \ V \ I$.

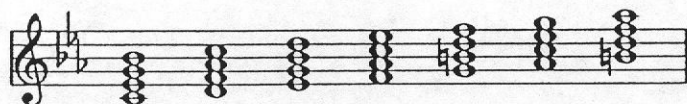
I^4_2 is sometimes used as a passing chord to vi: $I \ I^4_2 \ vi$.

iii^7 is rare; it generally occurs in a circle of 5ths using 7th chords if at all.

Think carefully about how these are **diatonic chords** with no accidentals (except for the raised leading tone in minor).



D: I^7 ii^7 iii^7 IV^7 V^7 vi^7 $vii^{\circ 7}$
 MM mm mm MM Mm mm \emptyset



c: i^7 $ii^{\circ 7}$ III^7 iv^7 V^7 VI^7 $vii^{\circ 7}$
 mm \emptyset MM mm Mm MM \circ

Some brief examples:

D: ii⁷ V I ii₅⁶ V I I vii⁰⁷ I

D: I vii⁰⁷ I I vii⁰⁷ I I vii⁰⁷ I

b: ii⁰⁶₅ V i B^b: ii₅⁶ V⁷ I

(the asterisks below indicate incomplete 7th chords: 2 roots, no fifth)

C: I IV⁷ vii⁰⁷ III⁷ vi⁷ ii⁷ V⁷ I

Jazz/pop chord symbols for diatonic 7th chords

The various types of diatonic seventh chords may be represented in numerous ways by using jazz/pop chord symbols. The following chart shows the common-practice chord type (bold print) and then the most common jazz/pop chord symbols you may encounter (the chart always assumes C as the root).

CMm7: C7 **CMM7**: CMa7 **Cmm7**: Cmi7 [C-7] **C^ø7**: Cmi7(b5) **C^o7**: C^o7 [Cdim7]

Inversions simply have the chord type, a diagonal slash, then the bass note. Thus a Cmm7 chord in first inversion is shown as Cmi7/E \flat . A C^ø7 chord in second inversion is shown as Cmi7(b5)/G \flat , and so on. Here's a longer example, using the jazz standard "Fly Me to the Moon":

The musical score for "Fly Me to the Moon" is presented in 3/4 time, starting with a repeat sign. The notes are written in a single melodic line. Chord symbols are placed above the notes to indicate the harmonic accompaniment. The chords are: Ami7, Dmi7, G7, CMa7 C7, FMa7, Bmi7(b5), E7, Ami A7 Dmi7, G7, CMa7 C6, Dmi7, G7, Fmi6 CMa7 Bmi7 E7, Ami7, Dmi7, G7, CMa7 C7, FMa7, Bmi7(b5), E7, Ami A7 Dmi7, G7, 1. CMa7 A7, Dmi7, G7, C6 Bmi7 E7, 2. CMa7 C7, F6, G7, C6 Ami7 Dmi7 C6, (alt. ending) Emi7 A7 Dmi7 G7, CMa7 Ami7 Dmi7 D \flat Ma7 CMa7. The score ends with a double bar line and a circled 9.