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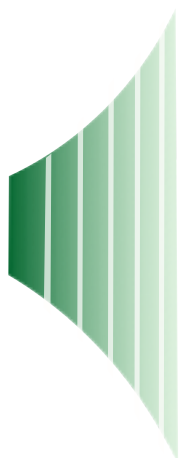
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CHAPTER 14

6th, m6, aug, & dim7 CHORDS and LINE CLICHES

Essential Concepts / Skills covered in chapter 14



- 6th chord, m6, aug triad, and 7#5 chords
- 5, #5, 6 line cliches
- Descending line cliches from a major chord
- Descending line cliches from a minor chord
- Dim7 chords : dominant function, chromatic function, and minor key VII^{dim7}
- Songwriting devices for creating focal points
- Ear training: 6th, m6, aug, 7#5, dim7, line cliches

6th Chord

A sixth chord is created by adding the **6th degree to the major triad**. For example, a C6 consists of the C major triad (C, E, and G) with an added A note (6th degree figured from the root C).

 ex.1

For AUDIO, see “Theory Examples” on top-right sidebar, click on “Show List” button, then click on Ex. 1 in the pop-out menu.

p. 2

C E G A

1 3 5 6 = C6

The formula 1, 3, 5, 6 remains the same for all 6th chords. Therefore, a D6 would be spelled D, F#, A, B - representing 1, 3, 5, 6 figured from the D root, and an E6 would be spelled E, G#, B, C# (1, 3, 5, 6 figured from E), etc.

I6 or IV6

In pop & rock music, sixth chords are often used as “color” variations of the I or the IV chords. Our first song example features both the **I6** and the **IV6** chords, as shown below.

START LISTENING AT **0:48**

"Inside Out" — Spoon — 2014

C major



For AUDIO, see the “Song Examples” playlist in the right sidebar, and click on track 1 song title. To navigate within the audio track, slide the progress bar forward to the desired starting point.

	IVmaj7	IV6	I6		IVmaj7	IV6	V
	Fmaj7	F6	C6		Fmaj7	F6	G
4/4	----- ----- ----- ----- ----- -----						

0:48 VERSE

	IV6	IV	V		IV6	IV	IVmaj7	I6
	F6	F	G		F6	F	Fmaj7	C6
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----							

The following song by The Black Keys is an example of the IV6 chord in a **mixo-lydian key**. The guitar is actually playing a D triad for the I chord. However, it is labeled as D(7) because there is a strong b7 note sung in the vocal melody, providing the mixolydian flavor.

"Sit Around and Miss You" - The Black Keys - 2019

D mixo



I IV6

D(7) G6

4/4

0:08 VERSE

I V bVII I

D(7) A C D

bVII6 in MINOR KEY

The next example by Halsey is in a minor key, featuring the common **stair-step progression** (Im - bVII - bVI) discussed in Chapter Three. You will notice that the bVII is actually a **bVII 6** (G 6) chord, with the sixth degree (E note) as the highest voice. This creates a droning E note when combined with the other two chords in the progression, as shown below. **START LISTENING AT 0:43**

Im - bVII6 - bVI maj7 ex.2

Im bVII6 bVI maj7 bVII6

Am G6 Fmaj7 G6

notes — A, C, E G, B, D, E F, A, C, E G, B, D, E

"Haunting" - Halsey - 2015

A minor



4/4

4

4

Im bVII6 bVI^{maj}7 bVII6

Am G6 F^{maj}7 G6

||: ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— :||

0:43 VERSE & CHORUS

Here's another example based on the stair-step progression with a bVII6 chord. However, in this case, a V7/3 chord (G7/B) is inserted after the Im, creating a compelling **chromatic descent** through the bass notes C, B, and Bb.

"Borderline" - Tame Impala - 2019

C minor



4/4

4/4

Im V7/3 bVII6 bVI^{maj}7

Cm G7/B Bb6 Ab^{maj}7

||: ————— | ————— | ————— | ————— :||

0:05 VERSE

The next example by Capital Cities is also in a minor key. Like the previous song, it has a bVII6, but it also features a brief **bIII6** chord.

"Patience Gets Us Nowhere Fast" - Capital Cities - 2014

G# minor



4/4

4/4

Im bIII6 bVII6 V^{m7}

G#m B6 F#6 D#m7

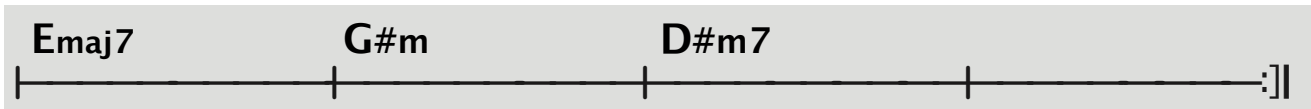
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0:00 INTRO & VERSE

bVI maj7

I m

V m7



Additional songs with PROMINENT 6th CHORD

1957	<i>Wonderful Wonderful</i>	Johnny Mathis	Bb major
1961	<i>Amor</i>	Ben E. King	Bb major
1973	<i>Love Train</i>	O'Jays	C major
1976	<i>Tequila Sunrise</i>	Eagles	G major
1996	<i>That's Right (You're Not from Texas)</i>	Lyle Lovett	Bb major
2003	<i>Doin' Fine</i>	Jewel	D major

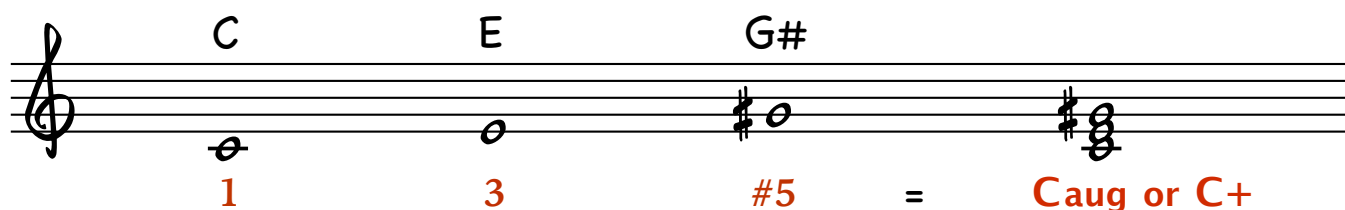
(Pages 6 and 7 omitted from this sample)

Augmented 5th Chords

THE AUGMENTED TRIAD

The major triad can be altered by raising the fifth degree one half step, creating an **augmented triad**. This chord consists of scale degrees 1, 3, and #5, and is written with the word “aug” or the “+” symbol after the letter name. For example, the C_{aug} chord would be spelled with the notes C, E, and G#, as follows.

 ex.4



C E G#

1 3 #5 = C_{aug} or C₊

V_{aug} CHORD

In practice, the augmented triad is sometimes used as a color variation of the **V chord**, as seen on the chorus of the song “Livin’ Thing” by the Electric Light Orchestra. START LISTENING AT **0:53**

“Livin’ Thing” — Electric Light Orchestra — 1977

C major





	I	VI _m	IV	II _m	V _{aug}	I	VI _m	IV	II _m	V _{aug}
4	C	A _m	F	D _m	G _{aug}	C	A _m	F	D _m	G _{aug}
4	----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- -----									

0:53 CHORUS

V7#5 CHORD

The 5th degree is also sometimes raised on the V7 chord. This chord can be written as either **V7+5** or **V7#5**.


 ex.5



C E G# Bb

1 3 #5 b7 = C7+5 or C7#5


Stone Temple Pilots' 1996 song "Daisy" offers a great example of the **V7#5**, placing the regular V7 and V7#5 back to back for easy comparison.

"Daisy" – Stone Temple Pilots – 1996 E minor  7

	I_m7	V7	I_m7	V7	bVI_{maj}7	IV_m6	V7	V7#5
4	Em7	B7	Em7	B7	Cmaj7	Am6	B7	B7#5
4	: ————— ————— ————— ————— ————— ————— ————— :							

0:03 VERSE

Here's another example with the V7#5 preceded by the regular V7. START LISTENING AT **0:53**

"You Belong to Me" – Carly Simon – 1978 ver - C minor, chor - F minor  8

	IV_m7	I_m	IV_m7	V7	V7#5
4	Bbm7	Fm	Bbm7	C7	C7#5
4	————— ————— ————— ————— —————				

0:53 CHORUS

On Norah Jones’ “Sinkin’ Soon,” the distinctive sound of the V7#5 chord on the last bar of the verse highlights the song’s title phrase. START LISTENING AT **0:41**

"Sinkin' Soon" – Norah Jones – 2007

E minor



4 **I_m** **bVII₇** **V_{7#5}**
 4 **Em** **D7** **B7#5**

0:41 VERSE 2

Additional songs with 7#5 CHORD

1955	Mr. Sandman	Chordettes	A major, D major
1960	Carolina Moon	Connie Francis	Eb major, E major

WRITTEN EXERCISE

Use **Exercise 14.1** (see “Textbook Contents”/ “Volume 2”/ “Written Exercises”) to practice spelling some common m6, 6, aug, and 7#5 chords.

5, #5, 6 Line Cliches


Sometimes the chords in a short sequence will share mostly the same chord tones, and only one voice (usually in either the treble or the bass) will change from chord to chord. These chord sequences are called “**line cliches**.” In this situation, the changing notes tend to stand out, creating a descending, ascending, or “circular” line across the progression. Several types of line cliches will be discussed in this chapter, starting with cliches that use the 5, #5, and 6 degrees of the key.

CIRCULAR MAJOR 5, #5, 6, #5

We just heard an example of the aug triad as a V chord. However, a more common usage of the triad would be as part of a line cliché, such as the progression **I - I aug - IV - IVm**, shown below in Roy Orbison's "Crying" (end of line 2). The treble notes create the line **5, #5, 6, #5**, and with the return back home to the I chord (on line 3), the overall effect could be described as "circular." You will notice in the following score that the final treble voice of the Gm chord is actually spelled enharmonically as a Bb note (b6) instead of A# (#5). This preserves the correct chord spelling for the individual Gm chord (1, 5, 1, b3 figured from the low root G).

Circular Major I - Iaug - IV - IVm ex.6

	I	Iaug	IV	IVm
	D	Daug	G	Gm



scale degree in treble -	5	#5	6	#5 (b6)
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D, F#, A	D, F#, A#	G, D, G, B	G, D, G, Bb
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In Orbison's song, the arresting sound of the cliché helps highlight the song's title, which is sung four times during the sequence — once for each chord in the cliché. **START LISTENING AT 0:33**


"Crying" — Roy Orbison — 1961

D major

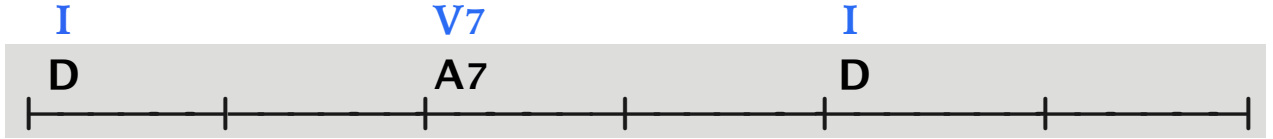
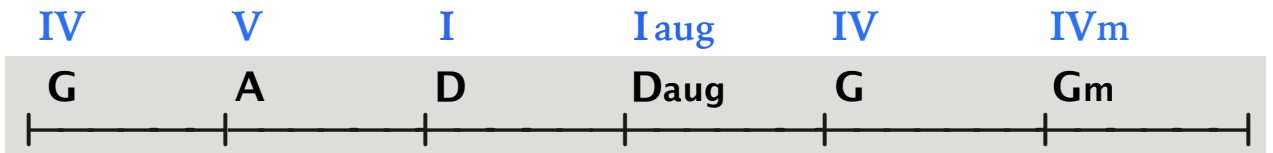


	I	VIIm	I	VIIm	IV	V
	D	F#m	D	F#m	G	A

4/4



0:33 CHORUS



(Pages 13 - 15 omitted from this sample)

Additional Line Cliches from Major Chord

(Pages 16 - 21 omitted from this sample)

MAJOR CHROMATIC DESCENDING

Sometimes an additional half step is added to the descending line 1, b7, 6, b6 by including the **natural 7th degree** between the 1 and the b7 notes. This creates a continuous chromatic descent through degrees **1, 7, b7, 6, and b6** (shown below with descending line in the treble voices).

ex.13

Chord	I	Imaj7	V/IV	IV	IVm
Symbol	C	Cmaj7	C7	F	Fm
Scale Degree	1	7	b7	6	b6
Treble Notes	C, E, G, C	C, E, G, B	C, E, G, Bb	F, C, F, A	F, C, F, Ab

This descending chromatic cliché is clearly heard in the chorus of Alicia Bridges 1978 disco hit "I Love the Nightlife," shown below.

"I Love the Nightlife" — Alicia Bridges — 1978

C, D major



Chord	I	Imaj7	V/IV	IV	IVm
Symbol	C	Cmaj7	C7	F	Fm

0:00 INTRO & CHORUS

Here's the cliché stretched out over eight bars in the key of D major.

"Sad Caper" — Hootie & The Blowfish — 1996


D major



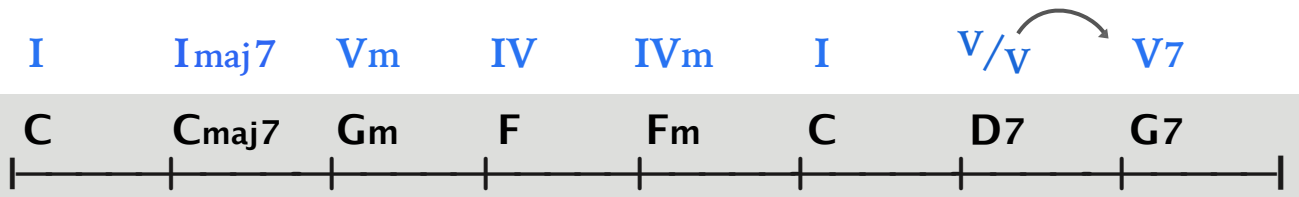
Chord	I	Imaj7	V/IV	IV	IVm	I	Vsus4	V
Symbol	D	Dmaj7	D7	G	Gm	D	Asus4	A

0:00 VERSE

The next example by the Beach Boys features a variation of the major chromatic descending cliché, with a **modal interchange Vm** as the third chord of the progression.


"Kokomo" – Beach Boys – 1988 C major  13

	I	I _{maj7}	V _m	IV	IV _m	I	V/V	V ₇
4 4	C	C _{maj7}	G _m	F	F _m	C	D ₇	G ₇

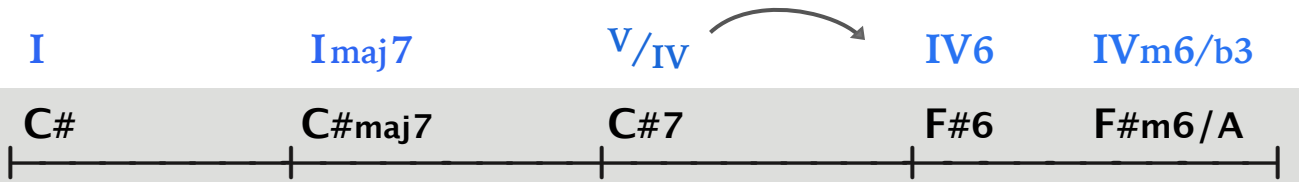


0:18 VERSE

The following Lenny Kravitz song features two versions of the major chromatic cliché. On the intro and chorus, the descending line is in the **treble** voices as shown below.

"It Ain't Over Til It's Over" – Lenny Kravitz – 1991 C# major  14

	I	I _{maj7}	V/IV	IV ₆	IV _{m6/b3}
4 4	C#	C# _{maj7}	C# ₇	F# ₆	F# _{m6/A}



0:01 INTRO & CHORUS

However, during the verse the descending line starts in the **bass** with the chords C#, E#m/B#, C#7/B before jumping to the treble again on the last two chords F#6 and F#m6.

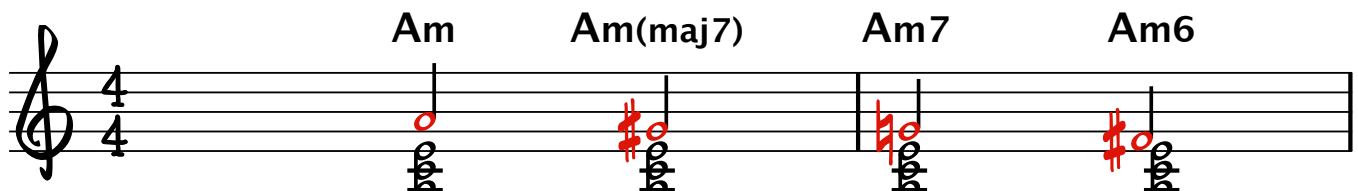
Descending Line Cliches from Minor Chord

MINOR CHROMATIC DESCENDING using **Im(maj7)**

The 1, 7, b7, 6 descending line can also occur in a minor key or from a minor chord. In the key of A minor, the chord progression would look like this if all other chord tones remain stationary and the descending line moves only in the treble voices.

 ex.14

	Im	Im(maj7)	Im7	Im6
	Am	Am(maj7)	Am7	Am6



scale degree		1	7	b7	6
treble notes	—	A	G#	F#	E

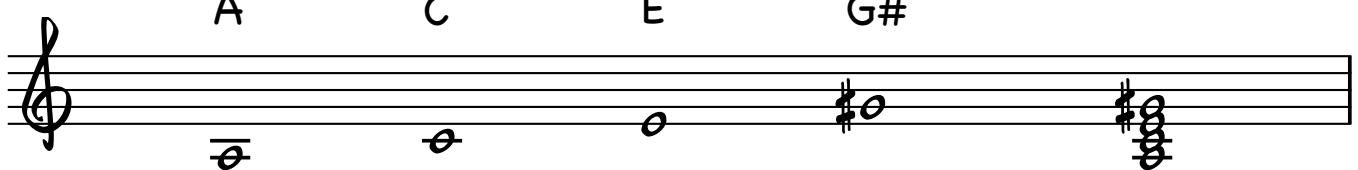
A, C, E, A	A, C, E, G#	A, C, E, G	A, C, E, F#
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THE **m(maj7)** CHORD

You will note that the second chord, **Am(maj7)**, is a new type of chord with the following formula.

 ex.15

	A	C	E	G#	
--	---	---	---	----	--



1	b3	5	7	=	Am(maj7)
---	----	---	---	---	-----------------

This minor descending cliché can be heard on the 1968 hit “Summer Rain” by Johnny Rivers, with one slight variation — the descending 1, 7, b7, 6 notes are in the **bass**. This creates the chord sequence **Im - Im(maj7)/7 - Im7/b7 - Im6/6** as shown below.

START LISTENING AT **0:29**

	I_m	I_m(maj7)/7	I_m7/b7	I_m6/6
4/4	Am	Am(maj7)/G#	Am7/G	Am6/F#

||[:-----|-----:|]

0:29 VERSE

NOTE: In the above progression the Am6/F# (I_m6/6) chord could be written as F#m7b5 (VI_m7b5) if notes are figured from the F#, since these two chords contain the same four notes A, C, E, and F#.

scale degree from root -	1	b3	5	6	
note name -	a	c	e	f#	= Am6

note name -	f#	a	c	e	= F#m7b5
scale degree from root -	1	b3	b5	b7	

However, the first three chords in the progression were figured from the tonic root A, so it probably makes the relationship between all four chords a little clearer to write the chord as Am6/F#.

The minor descending cliché does not always have to start on the tonic I_m chord. For example, the 1978 hit "Y.M.C.A." by the Village People is actually in a major key (F# major), and the cliché is used on the **II_m chord** (G#m) as shown below. Also note that the descending line is in the **treble** voices instead of the bass. START LISTENING AT **0:45**

"Y.M.C.A." — Village People — 1978

F# major

	I	VI_m
4/4	F#	D#m

||[:-----|-----|-----:|]

0:45 CHORUS

II_m	II_m(maj7)	II_m7	II_m6	V7
G#m	G#m(maj7)	G#m7	G#m6	C#7

|-----|-----|-----:|]

Here's a variation of the minor cliché from George Benson with a **IV7** as the fourth chord. Also notice on the second line the **subV/V** chord (Db7) and the **V7#5** (C7#5). START LISTENING AT **0:26**

"This Masquerade" — George Benson — 1976

F minor, Db maj, C maj



	I_m	I_m(maj7)	I_m7	IV7
4	F_m	F_m(maj7)	F_m7	B_b7
4	----- ----- ----- -----			

0:26 VERSE

	I_m	sub V/V	V7	V7#5
	F_m	D_b7	C7	C7#5
	----- ----- ----- -----			

(Note: A dashed arrow points from sub V/V to V7)

This variation of the minor cliché has a **bVII_{sus2}** as the third chord in the progression. Notice that the descending line is back in the **bass**.

"Angel and the Fool" — Broken Bells — 2013

G minor



	I_m	I_m(maj7)/7	bVII_{sus2}	IV/3
4/4	G_m	G_m(maj7)/F#	F_{sus2}	C/E
	[:----- ----- ----- ----- :]			

0:06 INTRO

The following Jim Croce classic, "Time in a Bottle," carries the descending bass line one step further, adding a **IV_{m6/b3}** chord to the sequence. You will note that once again the m6 chord (G_{m6/B_b}) could have been written with the equivalent m7b5 name (E_{m7b5/B_b}), but since the previous chord in the progression was G7/B, the chord was written as G_{m6/B_b} to make the chord movement a little clearer.

"Time in a Bottle" — Jim Croce — 1973

ver - D minor
chor - D major



	Im	Im(maj7)/7	Im7/b7	IV7/3
3	Dm	Dm(maj7)/C#	Dm7/C	G7/B
4	----- ----- ----- -----			

0:12 VERSE

	IVm6/b3	V7
	Gm6/Bb	A7
	----- ----- -----	

**Additional songs with
MINOR CHROMATIC DESCENDING CLICHE using Im(maj7)**

1968	<i>Gentle on My Mind</i>	Glen Campbell	Eb major
1972	<i>Guitar Man (release)</i>	Bread	ver - G major release - A minor
1976	<i>You Should Be Dancing</i>	Bee Gees	G dorian, G minor
1977	<i>I'll Write a Song For You (outro)</i>	Earth, Wind, & Fire	A major
2007	<i>Pain</i>	Three Days Grace	E minor

(Pages 30 - 34 omitted from this sample)

WRITTEN EXERCISES

Try **Exercises 14.3, 14.4, and 14.5** (see “Textbook Contents”/ “Volume 2”/ “Written Exercises”) to review some of the previous line cliches in this chapter.

EAR TRAINING EXERCISES

For more practice identifying line cliches by ear, go to **Exercises 14.10e – 14.17e** (see “Textbook Contents”/ “Volume 2”/ “Ear Training Exercises”).

Project for Further Study & Discussion

Pick a song from the list below. The song’s chord progression will be provided by the instructor, and you will write in the roman numeral analysis over each chord symbol.

(Song List omitted from this sample)

Answer the following questions about your song:

- Listening for tension and resolution, describe where the focal point occurs in terms of form (beginning or end of verse, pre- chorus, chorus, etc.). At what point does the tension start to build and when exactly does the resolution occur ? (Note the 0:00 time marks for both.)

— Describe the musical elements that help create the tension and then provide a satisfying resolution. Does this song contain any of the focal point devices discussed in previous chapters (listed below) ? Hint: All of the songs use at least two of these devices:

V to I Tension - Resolution

The I Chord is Avoided

Drum Fill

Stop Time

Main Instrumental Groove Temporarily Suspended

Harmonic Rhythm (chord changes) Slowed or Suspended

Highest Melody Note Starts Chorus

Uplifting Modulation

Other Tension Chords

— Does the focal point highlight the place where the song's title is sung?

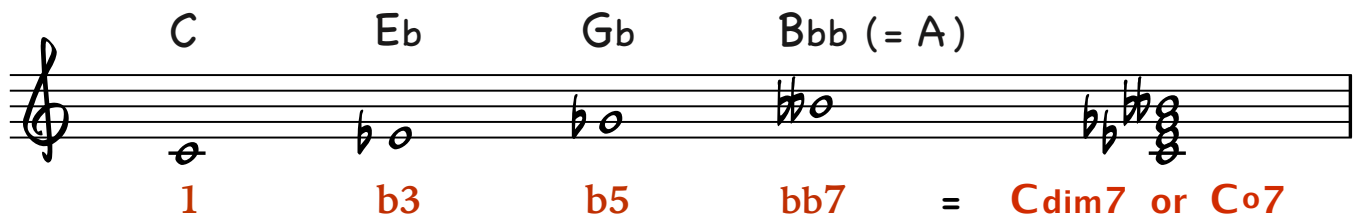
dim7 Chords

THE dim7 CHORD

We were introduced to the dim triad back in Chapter Two, as part of the seven diatonic triads in the major key. The dim triad was also mentioned in Chapter Three as part of the minor key diatonic triads. We noted that these dim triads are very rare in pop and rock music, and indeed we have not encountered them in succeeding chapters.

However, there is a four-note **diminished seventh chord** (written either “**dim7**” or “**o7**”) that is found occasionally in pop, and it is even more prominent in jazz - especially older “standards” from the 1910’s to 1940’s. The formula for the dim7 chord is shown below:

 ex.17



C Eb Gb Bbb (= A)

1 b3 b5 bb7 = Cdim7 or Co7

You will notice that the bb7 degree (Bbb) could be written as an “A,” but naming convention in music theory dictates that “Bbb” is the proper way to spell this note when describing a dim7 chord.

DIMINISHED CHORD PATTERNS

Dim7 chords usually move by **half step** either up or down to the next chord. If the dim7 chord is also preceded by a half step, the movement is called a “**prepared approach**” to the dim7, as shown below.

Prepared Approach — Em7 → Ebdim7 → Dm7

Unprepared Approach — C → Ebdim7 → Dm7

When the dim7 is both preceded and followed by a half step, it is said to be a “**passing**” dim7 chord, much like passing notes in a chromatic melody line.

DOMINANT FUNCTION

Many diminished chords have a **dominant function**, meaning they are substituting for a V chord or a secondary dominant. These dim7 chords resolve up a half step to a diatonic target. The two most common patterns in pop & rock for dominant function diminished chords are **# I dim7 to II m7**, and **# V dim7 to VI m7**.

I dim7 to II m7

Our first example of the # I dim7 chord comes from Alicia Keys and her 2004 hit “If I Ain’t Got You.” Notice that the first line is a basic **I - VIm - II m - V** doowop progression (Gmaj7 - Em - Am - D in the key of G major). On the second line, the Em is replaced by a **G#dim7** chord, which functions like a secondary dominant E7 (V/II m) going to the target Am. Try playing an E7 before the Am on your guitar or keyboard and you will hear the similarity to the G#dim7 (we will explore this idea a bit further in the next chapter). This G#dim7 is said to be a passing diminished chord, chromatically linking the Gmaj7 and Am chords. **START LISTENING AT 0:23**

“If I Ain’t Got You” — Alicia Keys — 2004

G major



	I maj7	V Im	II m	V
3	Gmaj7	Em	Am	D
4	----- ----- ----- ----- -----			

0:23 VERSE

Imaj7	#Idim7	IIm	V
Gmaj7	G#dim7	Am	D

The 2009 song “You Never Know” by Wilco also features a passing # I dim7 with a dominant function. START LISTENING AT **0:52**

“You Never Know” – Wilco – 2009	ver - E major chor - D major	22
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I	V	I	#Idim7	IIm7	V7	IIm7	V7
D	A	D	D#dim7	Em7	A7	Em7	A7

4
4 ||[:—|—|—|—|—|—|—|—|:]||

0:52 CHORUS

Here’s an example of the passing # I dim7 chord from country-pop star Garth Brooks, hitting the charts in 1992:

“Friends in Low Places” – Garth Brooks – 1992	A major	23
--	---------	----

I	#Idim7	IIm7	V7	I
A	A#dim7	Bm7	E7	A

4
4 |—|—|—|—|—|—|—|—|

0:09 VERSE

Additional songs with #Idim7 CHORD

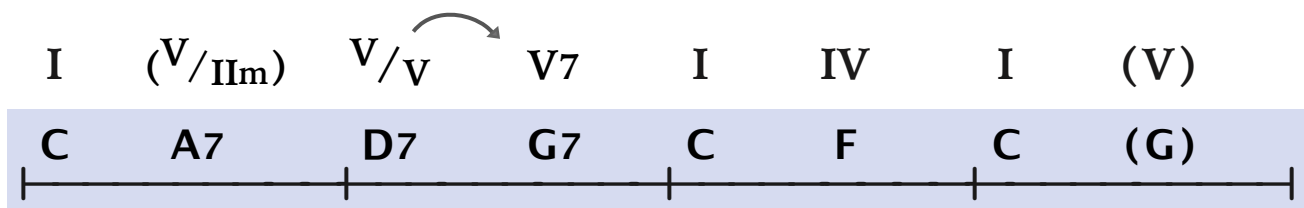
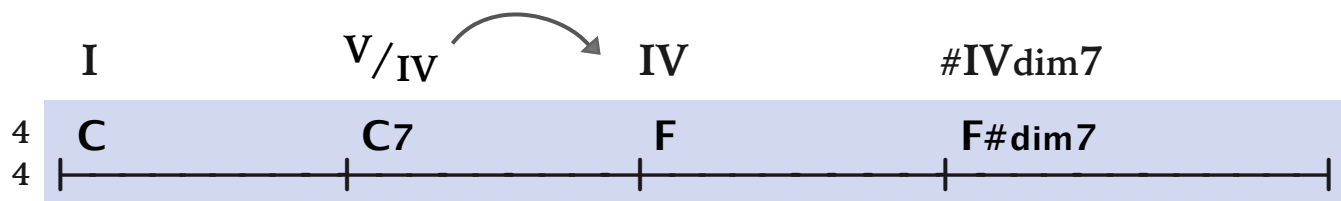
1957	<i>My Special Angel</i>	Bobby Helms	Db major
1960	<i>I'm Sorry</i>	Brenda Lee	Bb major
2012	<i>Be Honest</i>	Jason Mraz feat. Inara George	D major

(Pages 39 - 44 omitted from this sample)

#IVdim7 in 8-BAR BLUES FORM

In previous chapters we have heard dozens of songs based on the standard 12-bar blues form. In this section, we will look at a variation of this form known as the **8-bar blues**. The basic outline of this new form is shown below using key of C as an example.

8-Bar Blues Form



You will notice the use of the #IVdim7 chord, and the presence of the **IV - #IVdim7 - I** sequence in bars 3, 4, and 5. This 8-bar blues form can be heard on the Allman Brothers' 1979 recording "Need Your Love So Bad," shown below. **START LISTENING AT 0:17**

"Need Your Love So Bad" — Allman Brothers — 1979

C major / blues



	I	IV	#IVdim7
4	C	F	F#dim7
4	----- ----- ----- -----		

0:17 VERSE

	I	(V/II _m)	V/v	V7	IV	V	I	V7#5
	C	A7	D7	G7	F	G	C	G7#5
	----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- -----							

Another example of the 8-bar form comes from Ray Charles on his recording of Sonny Thompson's "Drown in My Own Tears." The song features a **passing #IVdim7** chord linking the IV and the I/5 (Gb - Gdim7 - Db/Ab in the key of Db).

"Drown in My Own Tears" — Ray Charles — 1960

Db major / blues



	I	V _{aug}	V/IV	IV	#IVdim7
4	Db	A _{aug}	Db7	Gb	Gdim7
4	----- ----- ----- ----- -----				

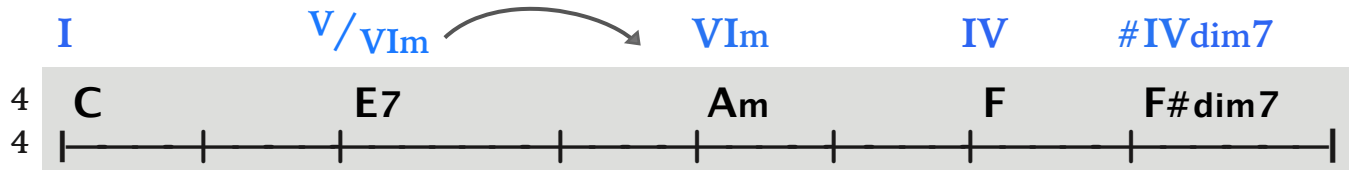
0:04 VERSE

	I/5	V/3/V _{Im}	V _{Im}	V/v	V7
	Db/Ab	F7/A	B _{bm}	Eb7	Ab7
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----				

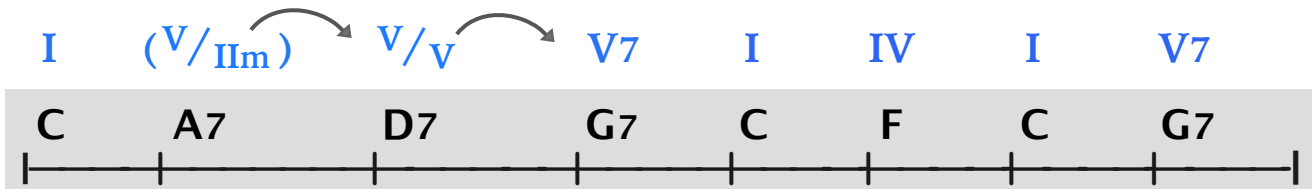
On Marshall Tucker’s “Ramblin,” the form is doubled to **16 bars** and a secondary dominant **V/VIm** (E7 in the key of C) is added after the opening I chord. **START LISTENING AT 0:20**

"Ramblin" — Marshall Tucker Band — 1973

C major / blues



0:20 VERSE



Additional songs with #IVdim7 to I or I/5 CHORD

1959	<i>Smoke Gets in Your Eyes</i>	Platters	Eb major
1960	<i>Georgia on My Mind</i>	Ray Charles	G major / blues
1971	<i>Hallelujah (I Love Her So)</i>	Humble Pie (orig R. Charles '56)	D major / blues
1992	<i>Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out</i>	Eric Clapton (orig. B. Smith '29)	C major / blues
1994	<i>Someday After Awhile</i>	Eric Clapton (orig. F. King '64)	D major / blues

WRITTEN EXERCISES

For practice spelling dim7 chords and identifying diminished chord patterns, try **Exercises 14.6, and 14.7** (see “Textbook Contents”/ “Volume 2”/ “Written Exercises”)

EAR TRAINING EXERCISES

To practice identifying dim7 chords by ear, go to **Exercises 14.18e – 14.22e** (see “Textbook Contents”/ “Volume 2”/ “Ear Training Exercises”).

(Pages 49 and 50 omitted from this sample)

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