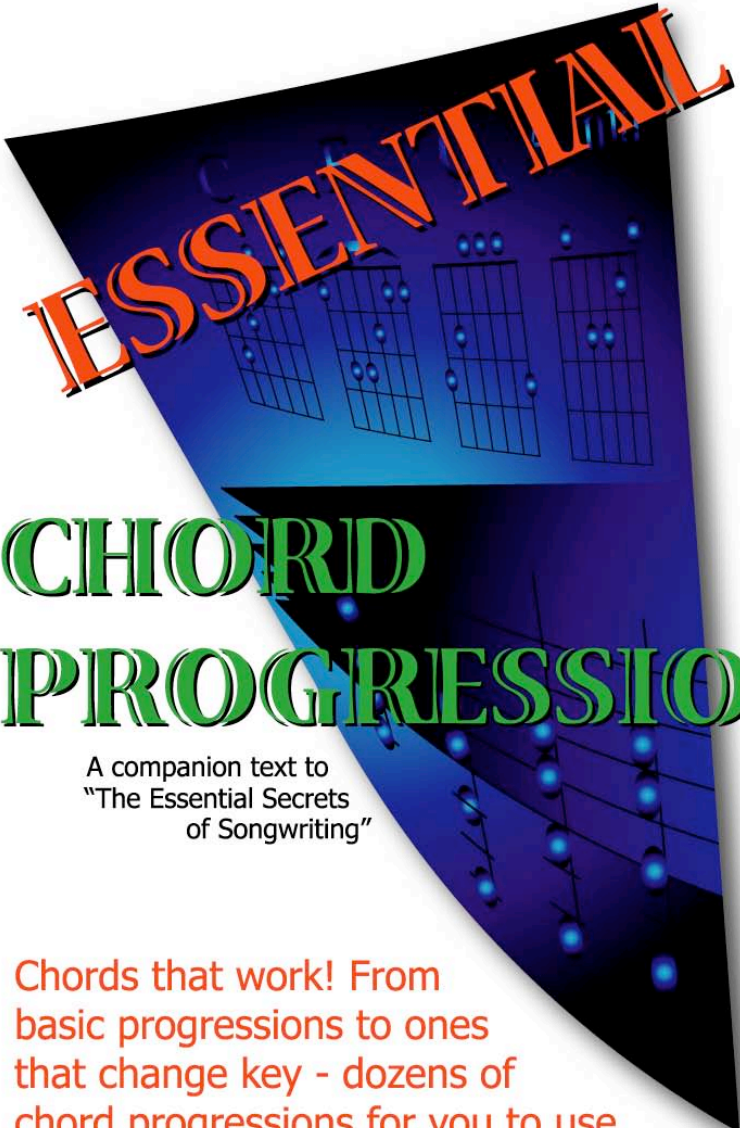


\$9.95 US



ESSENTIAL CHORD PROGRESSIONS

A companion text to
"The Essential Secrets
of Songwriting"

Chords that work! From
basic progressions to ones
that change key - dozens of
chord progressions for you to use
in your songwriting!

Gary Ewer, B. Mus

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ELIMINATING CHORD MUDDLE	5
About the chords in this booklet	6
So why am I suggesting these chords?	7
A Companion Text	8
Some Terminology	9
PRINTING SUGGESTION – SAVING INK AND PAPER	11
PART 1- MAJOR KEY PROGRESSIONS	12
Key: C MAJOR	13
Simple progressions.	13
Simple Progressions with Added 7ths.	13
Ending on a Different Chord	14
Diminished 7 th Chords.	15
Longer Simple Progressions.	16
Inverted Chords	17
Pedal Tones	18
Secondary Dominant Chords	19
Modal Mixtures	20
Key: G major	21
Key: D major	25
Key: F major	29
Key: Bb major	33

PART 2- MINOR KEY PROGRESSIONS	37
A brief description	38
About the Roman Numerals	39
PART 3 – PROGRESSIONS FOR CHANGING KEY	43
PART 4- MISCELLANEOUS PROGRESSIONS	48
This isn't every chord progression...	52
It's in the book...	53
Learn to read music – it's now EASIER THAN EVER!	53
Gary Ewer's Easy Music Theory	53

Eliminating Chord Muddle

Chord progressions are the part of writing songs that has many composers stumped. For those who find it to be a mystery, their chords sound, at best, like chord *successions*, and at worst, chord *muddle*.

What is chord muddle? Have you ever felt that you can't get one chord to *feel* like it needs to go to another? Do you feel that your progressions just meander from one chord to the next, without feeling like it's making sense? That's chord muddle.

You can spend a lot of your precious time learning the theory of how chords progress from one to another (and I believe you should!), but you want to get going with writing songs!

In this e-booklet, I have included dozens of useful chord progressions. Feel free to use them in any of your songs: as such, chord progressions are not protected by copyright, so you don't need permission to use any of them.

About the chords in this booklet

The chords in this booklet are completely modifiable, and it's certainly not an exhaustive list. But hopefully they'll be enough to inspire you to get writing, and keep writing.

So I encourage you to take these progressions and modify them any way you like. Don't be afraid to let your ears have the final say. If you like something you see, use it. If you like a progression, but feel you'd like to change it – that's what you're supposed to do!



I have written the chords using guitar fret board notation, but the suggested voicing is exactly that... a suggestion. It's assumed that you will voice these chords on your guitar

or piano or organ in whatever way suits your song. The same directive applies to the musical notation. The notes are meant to only indicate to you the notes found in each chord. Always use your imagination (and good taste!) to decide how to ultimately voice these chords.

More than anything, these pages give you lists of chord progressions that work. It's up to you to decide how and when to use them. Remember, simplicity is more important than complexity. Just because

this book contains dozens of progressions doesn't mean that you are supposed to try to use as many as possible in one song. In fact, most songs will become jumbled and confusing if you try to use more than two or three different progressions. An important goal of songwriting is to create something that listeners will remember, and they won't remember songs that use too many chords, melodies or words.

So why am I suggesting these chords?

I want you to see some samples of progressions that *work*. As I've pointed out earlier, they aren't the only chord progressions there are, but I think that they will get you thinking creatively. Familiarizing yourself with them will train you to create your own progressions and give you a pleasing sense of accomplishment.

Play through them using a guitar, keyboard, or other chording instrument. Try them in different time signatures. Try holding some chords longer and others shorter, to see how that changes their effect. In short – be creative!

A Companion Text

If you really want to know why some chord progressions work while others seem to just flop, you need to get a copy of "**The Essential Secrets of Songwriting**" (www.secretsofsongwriting.com), flip to Chapter 4 (Harmony) and start reading. You'll learn all about the difference between strong progressions and fragile ones, and how we need both in a piece to make them work.

I would also encourage you to try to learn how to read music if you don't already do so. Reading music is the equivalent of a novelist being able to read words. It's not that it will make you a better novelist, as such, but will allow you to communicate your ideas more clearly to others.

My music theory course, "Gary Ewer's Easy Music Theory" is designed for anyone, from complete beginner through to more advanced musician. So if you don't know a thing about music, this course will help you. Visit www.easymusictheory.com

Spring Day Music has produced a note-reading course, called "Note Reading Boot Camp." If you really want to learn to read music with ease, you need this course. Find it at www.notereadingbootcamp.com.

Some Terminology

When describing chord progressions, it is often easier to refer to them by **chord number** than by letter name. The reason for this is that the way chords interact with each other is all relative. If you are thinking in C major, how the chords C major and G major interact will be the same way that B flat major and F major interact in the key of B flat major. Therefore, it is often easier to call the chord based on the first note from a key the I-chord ("one-chord") and the chord based on the fifth note the V-chord ("five-chord".) In Parts 2 – 5 the chords are referred to by Roman numeral.

The progressions you find here are categorized in many different ways. Some are simple, three or four-chord progressions, others are longer and less predictable. Some are primarily major key progressions while others are minor. I would advise you to sit down with your guitar, and just play through progressions, and get a sense of the direction of each one.

I've written them down so that each chord gets, usually, two beats. But of course that's completely arbitrary. You can create a song where each chord is played for two full bars. Or you could change chords on every beat. It's up to you.

Part 1 of this e-booklet contains forty-seven unique major key chord progressions, all written in the key of C major, with descriptions of what they are and how they work. For your convenience, you'll then find these progressions in four other keys: G major, D major, F major and Bb major. They are all numbered so that you can easily find a progression in a different key. For example, progression #11 in C major is progression #11 in the other major keys listed. From these progressions you will, with a bit of imagination, be able to create others that use some of the chords you see there.

Part 2 contains progressions in minor keys. These are listed by chord name (C major), and by Roman numeral, so that you can transpose them into other keys.

Part 3 offers suggestions for changing key.

And the final section of the book, Part 4, contains miscellaneous progressions that you'll find useful: basic jazz progressions, as well as all-purpose extended progressions that you can use in pop, rock, country, or almost any other genre.

I encourage you to go online and check out the many websites that offer chord charts of existing hit songs. Study those progressions, and try to become familiar with them. I think you'll be surprised how simple the progressions are for many of the best songs in the world.

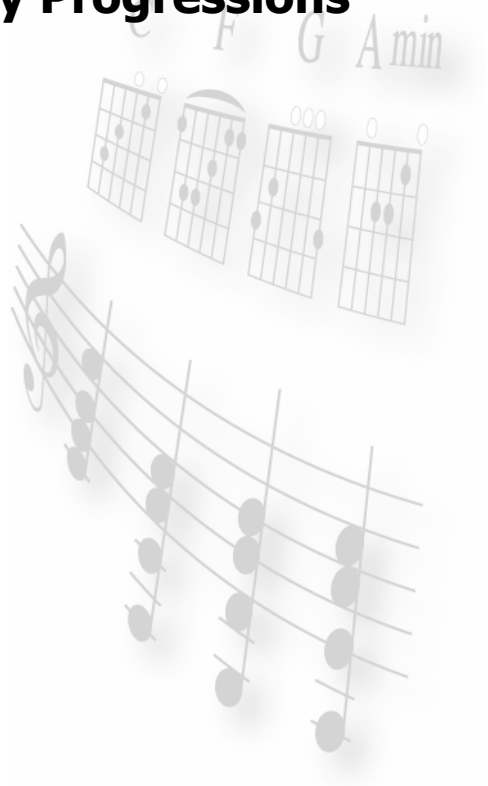
Remember, in the music world, simplicity wins out over complexity almost all the time.

PRINTING SUGGESTION – SAVING INK AND PAPER

Most printers today will allow you to print two or more pages of a document onto one 8.5"X11" sheet of paper. However, this makes the document considerably smaller, and as many of the chord diagrams are already reduced in size, it may not be a good option. But it may be worth experimentation: select "Print" from the menu bar, and then find the printing option that is probably called "Layout" in the dialog box.

A better alternative for saving paper is printing back-to-back. Under the printer option "Paper Handling", or some other similarly worded heading, you should be able to accomplish this by first having your printer print out the odd-numbered pages. Then, take the resulting printouts and reinsert them in the printer upside down and request the even-numbered pages be printed. (This may take a bit of experimenting, since different printers handle paper in different ways.)

Part 1- Major Key Progressions



Key: C MAJOR

1

C F G C

2

C A min G C

3

C D min G C

4

C FMaj7 G C

5

C A min7 G C

6

C D min7 G C

Simple progressions.

The first six progressions all begin and end on the I-chord. They represent the simplest of the possible progressions, and will quite likely be the ones you'll use the most. The benefit to choosing from these first couple of pages is that they are solid, and predictable in the best sense of the word.

Simple Progressions with Added 7ths.

Numbers 4 – 6 add 7ths to some of the chords. In general, you can add a 7th to any chord. Some will work well, while others might seem strange. Let your ears be your guide.

7

C A min D min G

8

C D min G A min

9

C F A min G

10

C D min F G

11

C E min D min G

12

C E min F G

Ending on a Different Chord

Many of the progressions beginning with number 7 end on a chord other than the I-chord, and they are meant to be able to start right back at the beginning of the progression again.

13

C E min A min G

14

C A min E min G

15

C C[°]7 D min G

3fr.

16

C A min B[°]7 G

17

C F F[°]7 G

18

C D min B[°]7 G

Diminished 7th Chords.

Starting with chord progression number 15, diminished 7th chords are included. Structurally, a diminished 7th chord consists of four notes each a minor third apart. The small circle after the chord's letter name is the symbol for "diminished."

Ex: F[°] = F# diminished.

Diminished chords usually work best with one of the notes rising by a semitone when moving to the next chord.

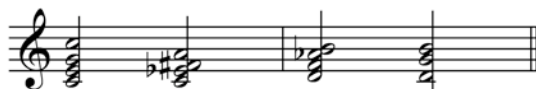
19

C E^o7 F G



20

C C^o7 D^o7 G



21

C A min E min F G C



22

C A min D min F G C



23

C E min A min D min G C



24

C F E min F G C



Longer Simple Progressions.

Starting with number 21, the chord progressions get a bit longer, combining certain chords from shorter progressions.

25

C C/E F G C

26

C G/B A min G C

27

C G/B F/A G C

28

C F/A E min D min/F G C

29

C G/B A min F G G/B C

30

C G/D C/E F G G/B C

Inverted Chords

Normally, the bassist plays the note represented by the letter name of a chord. For example, if the chord is 'C' a bassist will play a C. An *inverted chord* is one in which the bass note comes from one of the other notes within the chord. It's notated by writing the name of the chord first, then a slash, then the name of the bass note. For example, C/E means that the chord is C major, but the bassist should play an E.

There are two main reasons that you would want to consider using an inverted chord. The first is to create a variety of sound, which is especially useful if a certain chord lasts for a long time. The second reason is to smooth out a jumpy bass line.

Progressions 25 – 32 use various inverted chords.

31

C G/B A min D min/F G F/A G/B C

Exercise 31 shows a sequence of eight guitar chords: C, G/B, A min, D min/F, G, F/A, G/B, and C. Below the diagrams is a musical staff in treble clef with a constant C note in the bass line (pedal point) across all measures.

32

C G/B A min C/G G C

Exercise 32 shows a sequence of six guitar chords: C, G/B, A min, C/G, G, and C. Below the diagrams is a musical staff in treble clef with a constant C note in the bass line (pedal point) across all measures.

33

C D min7/C G/C C

Exercise 33 shows a sequence of four guitar chords: C, D min7/C, G/C, and C. Below the diagrams is a musical staff in treble clef with a constant C note in the bass line (pedal point) across all measures.

34

C/D F/D G/D C/D

Exercise 34 shows a sequence of four guitar chords: C/D, F/D, G/D, and C/D. Below the diagrams is a musical staff in treble clef with a constant C note in the bass line (pedal point) across all measures.

35

C/A F/A G/A C/A

Exercise 35 shows a sequence of four guitar chords: C/A, F/A, G/A, and C/A. Below the diagrams is a musical staff in treble clef with a constant C note in the bass line (pedal point) across all measures.

Pedal Tones

A pedal tone is a constant note, usually in the bass, that may or may not actually be in the chords it is accompanying. It has the effect of strengthening a progression, making it feel more rooted and solid. It adds a wonderful sense of variety to otherwise rather plain progressions. Be careful to test each progression carefully, however. The results are somewhat unpredictable. Numbers 33 to 35 feature pedal tones.

36

C D G C

37

C A min D G C

38

C A D min G C

39

C A D G C

40

C E A min G C

41

C E A D min G C

Secondary Dominant Chords

For our purposes in this booklet, a secondary dominant chord will be any time a chord, which we expect to be **minor**, is written to be **major**. In C major, if we build chords on each note of the C major scale, we will naturally get some major, some minor, and one diminished one: C major, D minor, E minor, F major, G major, A minor, and B diminished.

To create a secondary dominant, usually you can take a minor chord, make it major by raising the 3rd of the chord, and then have it go up by four (or down by 5) to reach the next chord.

Secondary dominants add interesting colour to your progressions. Numbers 36 – 42 feature these chords.

42

C A min B E min F G C

43

C F F min C

44

C F min G C

45

C F G min C

46

C G/B A min F F min C

47

C C/E F min G C

Modal Mixtures

A modal mixture (also called a “borrowed chord”) is a chord that does not naturally occur in the key in which you are writing. For example, in C major, an F major chord naturally occurs if we build a chord on the fourth note. If instead we make that a *minor* chord, we are “borrowing” that chord from the key of C minor.

There are lots of possible borrowed chords, but by far the most common one is the minor IV chord in a major key.

Numbers 43 to 47 involve modal mixtures.

Key: G major

1

G C D G

2

G E min D G

3

G A min D G

4

G CMaj7 D G

5

G E min7 D G

6

G A min7 D G

7

G E min A min D

8

G A min D E min

9

G C E min D

10

G A min C D

11

G B min A min D

12

G B min C D

13 G B min E min D

14 G E min B min D

15 G G[°]7 3fr. A min D

16 G E min F[°]7 D

17 G C C[°]7 3fr. D

18 G A min F[°]7 D

19 G B[°]7 C D

20 G G[°]7 A[°]7 D

21 G E min B min C D G

22 G E min A min C D G

23 G B min E min A min D G

24 G C B min C D G

25 G G/B C D G

26 G D/F# E min D G

27 G D/F# C/E D G

28 G C/E B min A min/CD G

29 G D/F# E min C D D/F# G

30 G D/A G/B C D D/F# G

31 G D/F# E min A min/C D C/E D/F# G

32 G D/F# E min G/D D G

33 G A min7/G D/G G

34 G/A C/A D/A G/A

35 G/E C/E D/E G/E

36 G A D G

37 G E min A D G

38 G E A min D G

39 G E A D G

40 G B E min D G

41 G B E A min D G

42 G E min F# B min C D G

43 G C C min G

44 G C min D G

45 G C D min G

46 G D/F# E min C C min G

47 G G/B C min D G

Key: D major

1 D G A D

2 D B min A D

3 D E min A D

4 D G Maj7 A D

5 D B min7 A D

6 D E min7 A D

7 D B min E min A

8 D E min A B min

9 D G B min A

10 D E min G A

11 D F# min E min A

12 D F# min G A

13 D F#min B min A

14 D B min F#min A

15 D D#°7 E min A

16 D B min C#°7 A 3fr.

17 D G G#°7 A 3fr.

18 D E min C#°7 A 3fr.

19 D F#°7 G A

20 D D°7 E°7 A

21 D B min F#min G A D

22 D B min E min G A D

23 D F#min B min E min A D

24 D G F#min G A D

25 D D/F# G A D

26 D A/C# B min A D

27 D A/C# G/B A D

28 D G/B F# min E min/GA D

29 D A/C# B min G A A/C# D

30 D A/E D/F# G A A/C# D

31 D A/C# B min E min/G A G/B A/C# D

32 D A/C# B min D/A A D

33 D E min7/D A/D D

34 D/E G/E A/E D/E

35 D/B G/B A/B D/B

36 D E A D

37 D B min E A D

38 D B E min A D

39 D B E A D

40 D F# B min A D

41 D F# B E min A D

42 D B min C# F# min G A D

43 D G G min D 3fr.

44 D G min A D 3fr.

45 D G A min D

46 D A/C# B min G G min D 3fr.

47 D D/F# G min A D 3fr.

Key: F major

1 F B \flat C F

2 F D min C F

3 F G min 3fr. C F

4 F B \flat Maj7 C F

5 F D min7 C F

6 F G min7 C F

7 F D min G min C

8 F G min 3fr. C D min

9 F B \flat D min C

10 F G min 3fr. B \flat C

11 F A min G min 3fr. C

12 F A min B \flat C

13 F A min D min C

14 F D min A min C

15 F F[°]7 G min C 3fr.

16 F D min E[°]7 C

17 F B[♭] B[°]7 C

18 F G min E[°]7 C 3fr.

19 F A[°]7 B[♭] C

20 F F[°]7 G[°]7 C

21 F D min A min B[♭] C F

22 F D min G min B[♭] C F 3fr.

23 F A min D min G min C F 3fr.

24 F B[♭] A min B[♭] C F

25 F F/A B \flat C F

26 F C/E D min C F

27 F C/E B \flat /D C F

28 F B \flat /D A min G min/B \flat C F

29 F C/E D min B \flat C C/E F

30 F C/G F/A B \flat C C/E F

31 F C/E D min G min/B \flat C B \flat /D C/E F

32 F C/E D min F/C C F

33 F G min7/F C/F F

34 F/G B \flat /G C/G F/G

35 F/D B \flat /D C/D F/D

36 F G C F

37 F D min G C F

38 F D G min C F

39 F D G C F

40 F A D min C F

41 F A D G min C F

42 F D min E A min B^b C F

43 F B^b B^b min F

44 F B^b min C F

45 F B^b C min F

46 F C/E D min B^b B^b min F

47 F F/A B^b min C F

Key: Bb major

1 B \flat E \flat F B \flat

2 B \flat G min 3fr. F B \flat

3 B \flat C min 3fr. F B \flat

4 B \flat E \flat Maj7 F B \flat

5 B \flat G min7 F B \flat

6 B \flat C min7 3fr. F B \flat

7 B \flat G min 3fr. C min 3fr. F

8 B \flat C min 3fr. F G min 3fr.

9 B \flat E \flat G min 3fr. F

10 B \flat C min 3fr. E \flat F

11 B \flat D min C min 3fr. F

12 B \flat D min E \flat F

13 B \flat D min G min F 3fr.

14 B \flat G min D min F 3fr.

15 B \flat B \circ 7 C min F 3fr.

16 B \flat G min A \circ 7 F 3fr.

17 B \flat E \flat E \circ 7 F

18 B \flat C min A \circ 7 F 3fr.

19 B \flat D \circ 7 E \flat F

20 B \flat B \circ 7 C \circ 7 F

21 B \flat G min D min E \flat F B \flat 3fr.

22 B \flat G min C min E \flat F B \flat 3fr. 3fr.

23 B \flat D min G min C min F B \flat 3fr.

24 B \flat E \flat D min E \flat F B \flat

25 B^b B^b/D E^b F B^b

26 B^b F/A $G \text{ min}$ F B^b

27 B^b F/A E^b/G F B^b

28 B^b E^b/G $D \text{ min}$ $C \text{ min}/E^b$ B^b

29 B^b F/A $G \text{ min}$ E^b F F/A B^b

30 B^b F/C B^b/D E^b F F/A B^b

31 B^b F/A $G \text{ min}$ $C \text{ min}/E^b$ F E^b/G F/A B^b

32 B^b F/A $G \text{ min}$ B^b/F F B^b

33 B^b $C \text{ min}/B^b$ F/B^b B^b

34 B^b/C E^b/C F/C B^b/C

35 B^b/G E^b/G F/G B^b/G

36 B \flat C F B \flat

37 B \flat G min C F B \flat 3fr.

38 B \flat G C min F B \flat 3fr.

39 B \flat G C F B \flat

40 B \flat D G min F B \flat 3fr.

41 B \flat D G C min F B \flat 3fr.

42 B \flat G min A D min E \flat F B \flat 3fr.

43 B \flat E \flat E \flat min B \flat

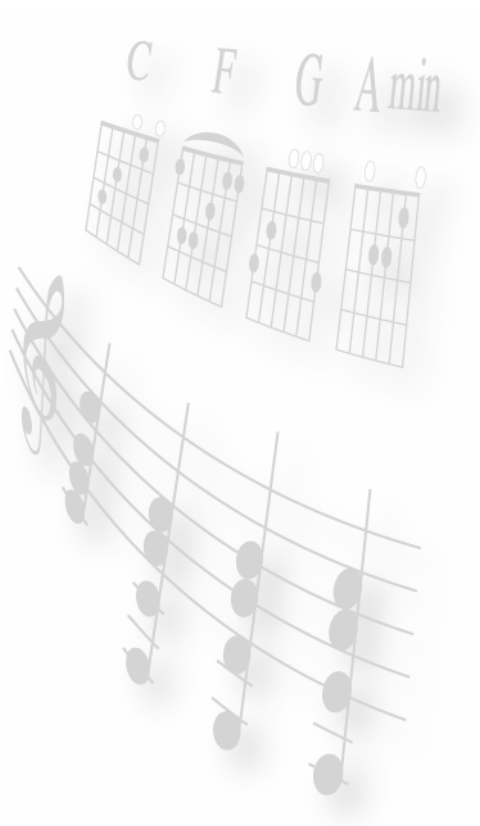
44 B \flat E \flat min F B \flat

45 B \flat E \flat F min B \flat

46 B \flat F/A G min E \flat E \flat min B \flat 3fr.

47 B \flat B \flat /D E \flat min F B \flat

Part 2- Minor Key Progressions



A brief description

When we say that a song is in a minor key, we mean that the chords revolve around a certain minor chord that acts as a **tonic chord**. That term, “tonic,” refers to the chord that is the I-chord, or the key of the piece. Simply put, a song that uses C minor as its tonic chord is in the key of C minor.

In traditional harmony, there are specific rules that describe how music is actually *in* minor, not just using lots of minor chords. For example, the chords D minor, E minor and A minor all exist within the key of C major. So it’s possible to have those three chords occurring often within a chord progression, with the song still technically in C major. What puts a song in minor is the existence of a raised leading tone in a dominant chord. For example, in C minor, a tonic chord uses the notes C – Eb – G. The dominant chord uses G – B – D.

For the purposes of this book, however, a chord progression in a minor key is going to be one that begins and ends on minor. Though this is, by traditional harmony rules, not necessarily always correct, it is common in popular music genres.

About the Roman Numerals

It is traditional to use Roman numerals to describe chords. In general, musicians use upper case Roman numerals for major and augmented chords, and lower case numerals for minor and diminished chords.

The progressions in Part 2 use Roman numerals in this manner, because it helps you when transposing to different keys. Here's an example:

The progressions in this section are given in C minor, and the first one is as follows:

Cm Fm G Cm

Underneath these chords, you'll find these Roman numerals:

i iv V i

In C minor, a chord based on the first note of the scale (i.e., the C minor chord) is given the numeral 'i'. The chord based on the fourth note (the F minor chord) is given the numeral 'iv', and the chord based on the fifth note (The G major chord) is given the numeral V. The 'i' and 'iv' are both lower case Roman numerals because they are both minor chords.

Now, to transpose them to the key of F minor, use the i-chord from F minor (the F minor chord), the iv-chord (Bb minor) and the V-chord (C major).

Here are some other bits of information you'll need:

1. A Roman numeral with a '6' after it means that the third of the chord is in the bass. For example, in the key of C minor, iv^6 means that the chord uses the notes F Ab and C, and the note Ab is in the bass. (To read more about this, you'll find Lesson 21 from "Gary Ewer's Easy Music Theory" to be most beneficial (www.easymusictheory.com)).
2. A little circle after a Roman numeral means "diminished." So the chord ii° means a diminished chord built on the second note of the scale.
3. In the given progressions, some of the chords have an asterisk (*). This means that you can substitute the given major with a minor version of that chord, or vice versa. So with a chord that is listed as V^* you might want to try G B D (major) or G Bb D (minor).

Try the following progressions. Some are simply minor key transpositions of major key progressions from Part I, while others are more commonly found only in minor keys.

Key: C minor

1 C min F min G C min

i iv V i

2 C min D dim/F G C min

i ii°6 V i

3 C min A♭ E♭ G C min

i VI V i

4 C min A♭ E♭ G C min

i VI III V i

5 C min B♭ E♭ D dim/F G C min

i VII III ii°6 V i

6 C min A♭ F min D m7(b5) G C min

i VI iv ii°5 V i

7 C min B♭ E♭ E♭°7 F min G C min

i VII III iii°7 iv V i

8 C min C7/E F min G C min

i I5 iv V i

9 C min C°7 D dim G C min

i i°7 ii V i

10 C min F C min G C min

i IV i V i

11

C min F B^b G sus4 G C min

i IV VII Vsus V i

12

C min A^bMaj7 F min G min7

i VI7 iv v7

13

C min F min7 B^bsus4 B^b C min

i iv7 VIIsus VII i

14

C min C[#]7 F min F[#]dim G sus4 G C min

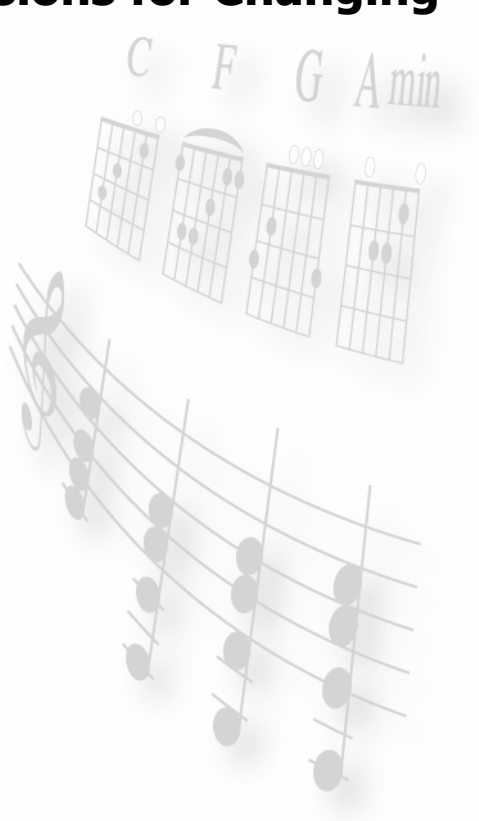
i i[°]7 iv iv[°] Vsus V i

15

C min F min D^bMaj7 C min7 F min B^bm(add2) G/B C min

i iv bII7 I7 IV vii(add2) V6 i

Part 3 – Progressions for Changing Key



Changing key (“modulating”) is a way of adding excitement and variety to music. It should be done sparingly, because changing key too often can sound trite and a little corny. But used carefully, it is very effective. If a song is a duet, modulating to a new key can help two singers who have different basic ranges.

The following examples are just some ways you can get from one key to another. You may feel the need to modify some of them to fit your song, and please feel free to do so. These samples are just intended to demonstrate how one key can relate to another.

Most of the samples show modulations upward, since that is the most common type, but there are many different samples of both upward and downward modulations.

In the Roman numerals for this section, the numeral after a slash represents the note that should be played in the bass if that note is different from the chord name. For example, a chord labeled I/bVII means that the chord is C major, and the bass note is Bb (“flat 7”). This is the combining of classical and popular chord nomenclature, and I believe it will help you transpose progressions quicker than sitting down to learn Roman numeral theory if you don’t already know it.

Up a semitone:

1

C F G C A^b7 D^b

I IV G I bVI7 bII

2

C A min A7 A^b D^b

I vi VI7 bVI bII

3

C C^o7 A^b7 D^b

I i^o7 bVI7 bII

4

C B^b A^b7 D^b

I bVII bVI bII

Up a whole tone:

1

C G/B A min A7 D

I V/VII vi VI7 II

2

C F E min A7 D

I IV iii VI7 II

3

C E min G Maj7 A7 D

I iii Vmaj7 VI7 II

4

C C^o7 D min A7 D

I #I^o7 ii VI7 II

Up a minor third:

1

C G/B B^b7 E^b

I V/VII VII7 bIII

2

C D min D^o7 E^b

I ii ii^o7 bIII

3

C G min7 A^b B^b7 E^b

I v7 bVI bVII7 bIII

4

C A^b7 D^b B^b7 E^b

I bVI7 bII bVII7 bIII

Up a major third:

1

C G/B B7 E

I V/VII VII7 III

2

C F F7 E

I IV IV-7 III

Up a perfect fourth:

1

C C7 F

I I-7 IV

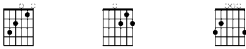

2

C A min G min7 C sus4 C7 F

I vi v7 Isus I-7 IV

Up a perfect fifth:



C D7 G

I II7 V

Down a major second:



C F F7 B^b

I IV IV-7 bVII

Down a minor third:


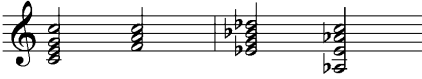
C A min E7 A

I vi III7 VI

Down a major third:



C F E^b7 A^b

I IV bIII-7 bVI

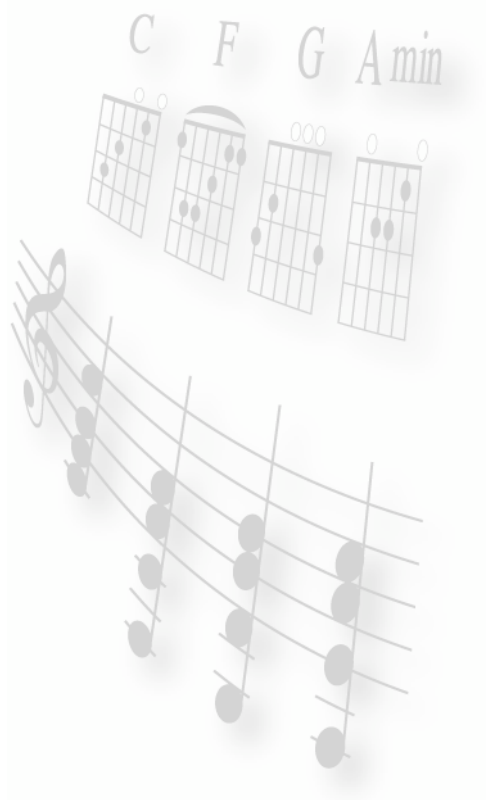
Down a perfect fourth:

C C/E F D D7 G

I I/III IV II II7 V

Part 4- Miscellaneous Progressions



When you use your ears as your guide, it's amazing how many possible combinations of chords you can come up with. Hopefully you've discovered that with the progressions already listed, you can take parts of one and add it to part of another.

This is a section of some miscellaneous chord progressions. They're all given in the key of C major, but as with the minor key section, the Roman numerals are also given to aid in transposing.

A basic jazz progression:

1

D min7 G 7 C Maj7

ii7 V7 I7

A jazz sequence:

2

D min7 G 7 C Maj7 F Maj7 B m7(b5) E 7 A min7

ii7 V7 I7 IV7 vii°7 III vi7

3

C 6(Add2) D m(add2)/F D min7 G 13 C 6(Add9)

I6(add2) ii(add2) ii7 V13 I6(add2)

4

C D M7(b5) D min7 G 7 C

I II(b5) ii7 V7 I

A minor key progression:

5

A min B 7 E 7 A min D 7 G 7 C Maj7 A min7 D min7 G A min

i II7 V7 i IV7 VII7 III7 i7 iv7 VII i

A 12-bar Blues progression:

6

C C7 F7

I I7 IV7

C G F C G7

I V7 IV7 I V7

MISCELLANEOUS

7

C B^bma⁹ G^b/A^b B^bma⁹ C

I bVII^{ma}9 bV/bVI bVII^{ma}9 I

Descending bass line:

8

C G/C C7/B^b F/A F min/A^b C/G G sus4 G

I V/I I7/b7 IV/Vi iv/bVI I/V Vsus V

Ascending bass line:

9

C A/C[#] D min B7/D[#] E min D/F[#] G sus4 G C

I VI/I ii VII/I II/III iii IV/IV Vsus V I

38

This isn't every chord progression...

...because if it were, music would be quite limiting. And just because you haven't seen a progression here doesn't mean it isn't a good one. This book was intended to simply open up your ears, and get you thinking.



I need to make the point again that I have made several times previously: simplicity is often better than complexity. The best songs in the world use very simple progressions. A complex progression can be interesting and exciting, but be very careful when you concoct a complicated set of chords. They can have the negative effect of alienating your audience.

And above all, as with all aspects of songwriting, let your ears be your guide.

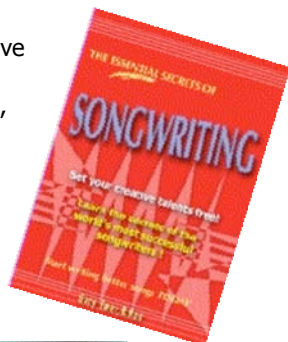
All the best,

Gary Ewer

It's in the book...

This is a book about chord progressions, but doesn't really give you much of the theory behind it. But if you want to know more... about how chords like to move from one to the other, about what makes a *strong* progression and what makes a *fragile* one... and how to use them in your song, you should be reading *The Essential Secrets of Songwriting*. It tells you all about chords, melodies, lyrics and *much more*.

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