Further Study of Chord Types

Up to this point, we have used only three types of chord structures, the M7, the m7, and the 7 chords. Frequently, for the sake of variety or to harmonize melody notes which are not within one of the preceding chord structures, alternate chords are used. As will be pointed up in Chapter 10, there are three main functional categories of chords, and the three we have taken up so far are the most commonly used chords of each of the families.

In place of a M7, for example, a M6 chord may be substituted. The M6 chord is like the M7 in that it uses a major triad for the bottom three notes, but adds the sixth major scale degree instead of the seventh. A CM6, then, would be spelled C, E, G, A.

If the tune used in an improvisation is in a minor key, then it is necessary to learn a type of minor chord, especially to be used as a tonic minor chord, which differs in sound and construction from the m7 chord. There are two basic examples of this tonic minor sound, the m6 chord and a minor chord with a major seventh (interval), which we will call a m7 or a m7 (depending on whether it is necessary to use a sharp sign or a natural sign to show how the seventh has been raised). A Cm6 chord would be spelled C, Eb, G, A, and the Cm7 would be spelled C, Eb, G, Bb (not Bb, as in the Cm7).

Sometimes a m7 chord may be replaced by a half-diminished seventh chord (m7) which differs from the minor seventh chord only in that the fifth is lowered a half step. A Cb7 chord, instead of being spelled C, Eb, G, Bb (Cm7), is spelled C, Eb, Gb, Bb.

A Cb5 or a C+5 may often be used in place of a C7; they are spelled C, E, Gb, Bb, and C, E, G#, Bb respectively, rather than C, E, G, Bb.

All the newly given alternate chords may be used in place of their given and more common chord family member (M7, m7, or 7) quite freely, sometimes depending upon the harmonization of a given melody. A summary of the families is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>'Tonic Minor'</th>
<th>m7</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M7</td>
<td>m6</td>
<td>m7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td>m7 or m7</td>
<td>m7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 shows a summary of the symbol, name, intervallic construction, and an example of each of the chord types included thus far.

Most of the newly added chords, though they belong to families of already learned chords, will require scales different from those given in Chapter 1 for the M7, m7, and 7 chords. It will be remembered that a major scale was used for the M7 chord, a Dorian Mode for m7 chords, and the Mixolydian Mode for the 7 chord, the constructions of which are given in Chapter 1.

The M6 chord will use the same scale as the M7 chord. However, the m6 and m7 (or m7), depicting the minor mode, will differ from either the M7 or m7 in respect to the scale used with it. The ascending form of the melodic minor scale (see p. 49) may be used with either the m6 or the m7 chords, as the scale contains all the notes of those chords. The harmonic minor scale (see p. 40) may accompany the m7 chord only, since the lowered sixth degree would conflict with the sixth of the m6 chord.
### Further Study of Chord Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>INTERVALS CONTAINED</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M7</td>
<td>major seventh chord</td>
<td>major third, perfect fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>major seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td>major sixth chord</td>
<td>major third, perfect fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>major sixth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m6</td>
<td>minor sixth chord</td>
<td>minor third, perfect fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>major sixth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m7</td>
<td>minor seventh chord</td>
<td>minor third, perfect fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>minor seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>half-diminished seventh chord</td>
<td>minor third, diminished fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>minor seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>seventh chord or dominant seventh chord</td>
<td>major third, perfect fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>minor seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 +5</td>
<td>augmented seventh chord</td>
<td>major third, augmented fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>minor seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 b5</td>
<td>seventh chord with a diminished fifth</td>
<td>major third, diminished fifth,</td>
<td>[Chord Diagram]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>minor seventh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 7**

- **C melodic minor scale (ascending)**
- **C harmonic minor scale**

The scale which best fits the g7 chord is one which uses the notes of a major scale of a half step up (called Locrian mode), hence a scale on B would use the notes of a C major scale, but starting on B (B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B). This type of scale contains all the notes of a g7 chord built on the root of the scale.

- **Locrian Mode on C (D♯ major scale, starting on C)**

One appropriate scale fits both the +5 and b5 chords—the whole-tone scale, which, as its title suggests, is constructed by using successive whole steps only.

- **C whole-tone scale**
Further Study of Chord Types

A summary of all the types of chords, their families, and their accompanying scales is given below for quick reference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chord Family</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M7 (Tonic Major)</td>
<td>M7</td>
<td>Major Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td>Major Scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonic Minor</td>
<td>m6</td>
<td>Ascending Melodic Minor Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m7</td>
<td>Ascending Melodic or Harmonic Minor Scales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m7</td>
<td>Dorian Mode*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g7</td>
<td>Locrian Mode</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Dominant)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mixolydian Mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Whole Tone Scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+5</td>
<td>Whole Tone Scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Whole Tone Scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\[
\begin{align*}
& M^? \to Maj.7, 7 \\
& m7 \to 7 \\
& g7 \to m5, 7 \\
& M6 \to 6 \\
& 7 \to 7
\end{align*}
\]

Figure 8 shows a new progression to the blues, this one in the minor mode and using some of the chords introduced in this chapter. This should be transposed for the various instruments.

* Traditional modal terminology is given because it is unnecessary to coin new terms for an old scale system.

Further Study of Chord Types

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