What we are going to do in this series of pages is focus on the way that chords have commonly been used in jazz standards and also in popular music, classical music, and maybe some other areas too. The attention will be on the common chord progressions from one chord type at a time. Some or much of this information may be somewhat familiar to you already, but it is hoped that a new perspective may present itself every now and then.

For a variety of reasons, a good place to start is with the “two minor 7” chord in a major key. The common Roman numeral symbol used is ii7. The ii7 loves to go to the “five dominant 7th” (V7), so let’s take a look at this progression first:

Right away you may have noticed that we are adding the 11th to the ii7 chord. This process of Chord Enrichment, that is, the adding of chord extensions as they are commonly called, is all part of the normal modern harmonic language.

When “melodized” as in these examples, the ii7 V7 progression is soft, warm, tender, even romantic, no? But rhythm, being a big part of life as it is, can change the flavor of things. Try the following examples in Jazz Waltz and Bossa Nova (maybe Swing too) rhythms. Because of the lack of “melody” now combined with the potency of the rhythms, the mood is considerably changed:
Successive inversions are an attractive way to bring the ii7 V7 progression to life. Influenced by the master French composer Claude Debussy, the late great Wes Montgomery brought this color to the jazz guitar. An example:

This type of example needs no rhythm or “groove.” The ear’s satisfaction comes from the flow of chords and the “melody” created by the top voice.

One last device for now, once again favored by Debussy and also many film composers, is that of change of key (modulation) by “parallel” means. Try this example and see if you catch my drift:
PART 2

Highly related to the ii7 V7 progression is the ii7 bII7 move. Try the following:

The colors of altered V7’s and unaltered bII7’s are often remarkably similar, even identical except for the bass notes. Also, something kind of like the reverse of the above happens when you use #9’s on the bII7. Try the two examples [below] and compare carefully.

More examples:

Now some “successive inversion” sounds:
Finally, let’s look at combining ii7 V7 and ii7 bII7:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{F13} & \quad \text{Cm711} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{Cm711} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{Cm711} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{Bm7(9)} \\
5 & \quad 10 & \quad 8 & \quad 10 & \quad 12 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 10 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6
\end{align*}
\]

Variation at the end

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{Cm7} & \quad \text{F13} & \quad \text{Cm711} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{B9} & \quad \text{Bm7(9)} \\
6 & \quad 10 & \quad 8 & \quad 10 & \quad 12 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 10 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6 & \quad 10 & \quad 7 & \quad 8 & \quad 8 & \quad 6
\end{align*}
\]

PART 3

Another way that ii7 likes to make its way home to I is via the i97. This diminished 7th chord is seldom found with its root in the bass, but rather, most often with the b3rd instead:

[Chord diagrams for ii7, i97, and I in Key of D]

Also the i97 is sometimes abbreviated by leaving out the bb7, thereby creating just the i7 triad:

[Chord diagrams for Em7, D07, and D9 in Key of D]

Also try adding the open D note to these three chords.
And “melodizing” these progressions is a common thing to do:

The °Δ7 [diminished major 7] chord is a result of the moving soprano line. Sometimes a “diminished extension” such as this will be used as a substitute (for the i°7) even without the moving soprano:

Now for some examples from the “bass string”:

Do this one in the keys of G and low Eb also.
Another diminished extension is the °add 9 chord:

And the °Δ9 [diminished major 9 chord] deserves some of our attention:

Now some decoration again (“in 3”):

Finally, some more examples using the °/9 [diminished add 9]:

_____________________________________________________________________

Harmonic Tendencies and Common Progressions
PART 4

The ii or ii7 chord likes to move to I through the iv. Let’s look at some little triad forms of this first:

Now with larger chords:

And on the next string set:

etc.
And now some iv7 types:

Also try an Am6/9 here

This is a passing chord...the F#m7 is sometimes added too (before the Gm7)

optional:

delay as X

This example connects the ii7 iv7 to I via an intermediate ii7 V7 and a IV iii ii.....make sure the open B and the C# ring at the end!
HARMONIC TENDENCIES + COMMON PROGRESSIONS

What we are going to do in this series of pages is focus on the way that chords have commonly been used in Jazz Standards, and also in popular music, classical music, and other areas too. The attention will be on the common chord progressions, from one chord type to the next. Some or much of this information may be somewhat familiar to you already, but it is hoped that a new perspective may present itself every now and then.

For a variety of reasons, a good place to start is with the "two minor 7" chord in a major key. The common Roman numeral symbol used is ii7, the ii7 moves to go to the "five dominant" (V7) as we latter take a look at this progression first.

Right away you may have noticed that we are adding the II7th to the ii7 chord. This process of CHORD ENRICHMENT, that is, the adding of chord extensions, is an all part of the modern harmonic language. When melodized "as in these examples, the II7 progression is sharper, warmer, more tuneful, and more romantic. But rhythm being a big part of life as it is, can change the flavor of things. Try the following example in JAZZ WALTZ and BOSSA NOVA (maybe SWING too) rhythms. Because of the lack of "melody" now combined with the potency of the rhythms, the mood is considerably changed:

Successive inversions are an attractive way to bring the II7 progression to life. Influenced by the master French composer Claude Debussy, the late great Wes Montgomery brought this color to the jazz guitar. An example:

One last device for now, one that is favored by many and also many film composers, is that of change of key (modulation) as parallelly indicated by the II7, and if you catch my drift:

The end.
HARMONIC TENDENCIES and COMMON PROGRESSIONS

Highly related to the ii7 V7 prog. is the ii7 bII7 more. Try the following:

The colours of ALTERED I7’s and unaltered V7’s are often remarkably similar, even identical except for the bass notes. Also, something kind of like the reversal of the above happens when you use #9’s on the V7.

Try the two examples at the left and compare carefully.

More examples:

Now some “successive inversion” sounds:

Finally, look back at combining ii7 V7 and ii7 bII7.

Variation:

At the end
Another way that I like to make its way home to I is via the 107. This diminished 7th chord is seldom found with its root in the bass, but rather, most often with the 3rd instead:

Also the 107 is sometimes abbreviated by leaving out the B♭7, thereby creating just the 10 triad:

And "melodizing" these progressions is a common thing to do:

The 07 chord is a result of the moving soprano line. Sometimes a "diminished extension" such as these will be used as a substitute (for the 107) even without the moving soprano:

Here some examples from the "best string":

And the 079 leaves some...

Finally some more exp. using the 09:

Key:  Dm7  Eb  Ab  D7  Cm7  B♭9  B♭7  C  D  B♭  C  Ab  B♭  B♭7  B♭7
The ii or ii7 chord likes to move to I through the IV, let's look at some little triad forms of this first:

Now with larger chords:

This is a passing chord .... the Fmaj7 is sometimes added too before the Gm7.

This example connects the ii7, IV7 to I, men an intermediate ii7, IV7 and a ii5, iii7 .... more on this type of thing later. Make sure the open B and the C# ring at the end!