

Harmonic Vocabulary - Major Key

Part 4 - Diatonic Major

Ted Greene 1984-07-14

A lot can be said about the I IV & V chords. Whole forms of music, entire cultures, depend mainly on them for their very existence! Remove these chords from the planet and you have just removed Bach, Mozart, rock & roll, and the blues just to name a few. There are no more important chords in all of music.

One satisfying fact concerning these 3 *Primary Triads*, as they are often called, is that collectively, they contain *all* the notes of the major scale. Therefore, any melody that one can conceive from notes of this scale can be harmonized using these three chords exclusively. This feature will concern us for some time now.

Examples of I IV V progression:

3/4 time

Notice that this melody uses all notes of the scale except for the 4th.

Please try contrapuntal isolation here now.



Now try this variation:

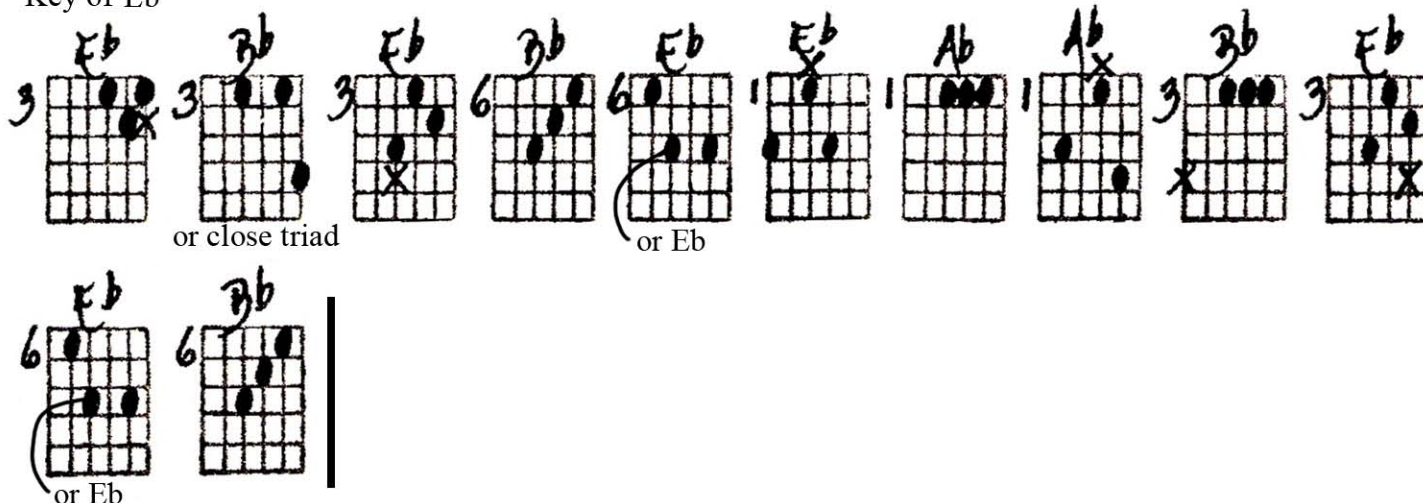
Now play the 1st one again and compare.

And then we can add some decoration:

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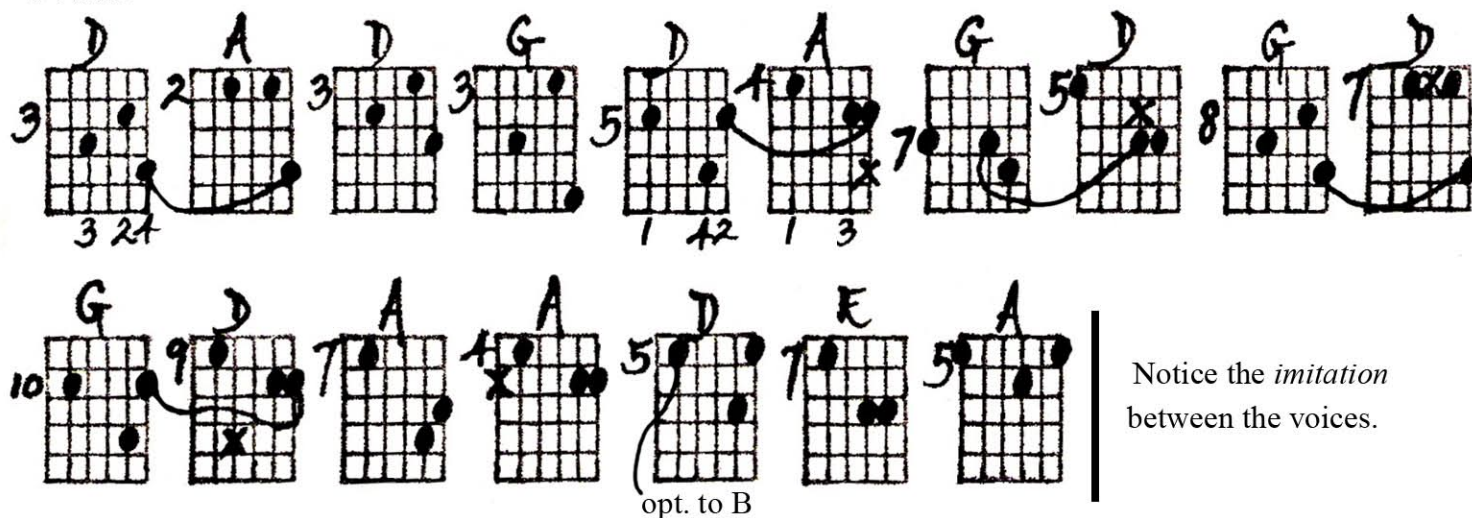
Key of Eb



Here is an example now with a *modulation* to the key of V. Also notice the *tied* notes.
More on the ties on the next page [part 5]

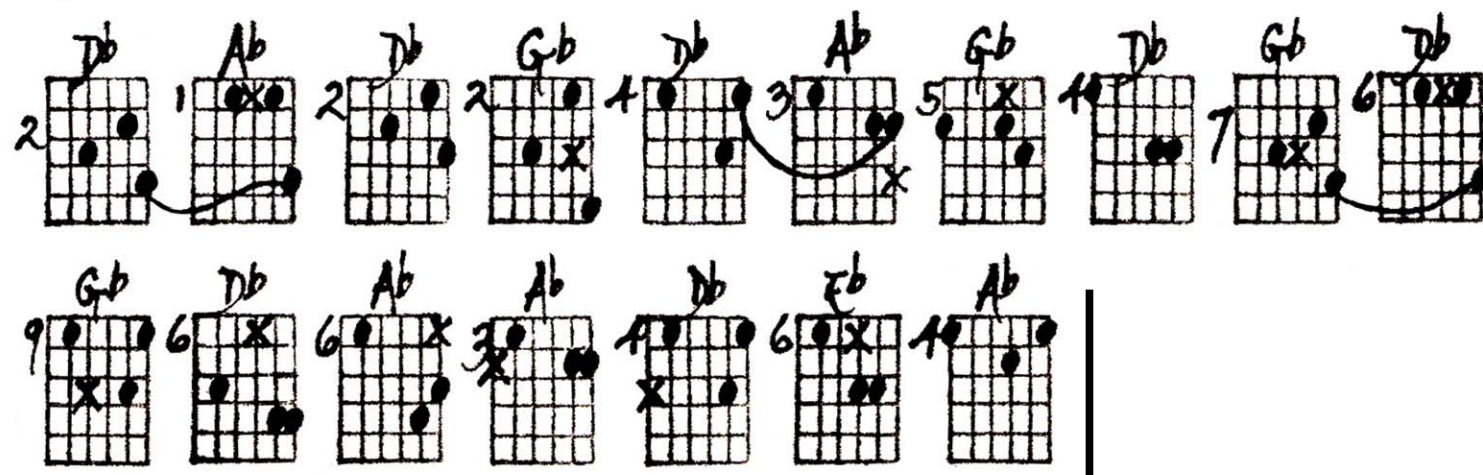
Key of D

4/4 time



Now, a variation with different imitation:

Key of Db



Assignment: As before, study all the progressions very carefully. And write down a few examples now - some with just blocks, some with decorations. Imitation and modulations are optional for now.

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One satisfying fact concerning these 3 PRIMARY TRIADS, as they are often called, is that collectively, they contain all the notes of the major scale. Therefore, any melody that one can conceive ^{from notes of this scale} can be harmonized using these 3 chords exclusively. This feature will concern us for some time now. Examples of I IV V prog.:

3/4 TIME

PLEASE TRY CONTRAPUNTAL ISOLATION HERE NOW.

Now try this variation:

NOW PLAY THE 1ST ONE AGAIN AND COMPARE.

And then we can add some decoration:

and

Here is an example now with a MODULATION to the Key of I. also notice the tied notes*:

4/4 TIME

Now, a variation with different imitation:

NOTICE THE IMITATION BETWEEN THE VOICES Key of Db

ASSIGNMENT: As before, study all the progressions very carefully. And write a few examples now - some with just blocks, some with decorations. Imitation and modulations are optional for now.

* More on the ties on the next page.