

Learning to Use Altered Dominants on One Degree at a Time

Altered Dominant: 7#9 / Major Key (part 1)

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We're going to work with the 7#9 chord for awhile, seeing how it's inherent color is sometimes softened, sometimes sharpened, and sometimes pretty much left alone, all according to which *degree* of a key it is used on (this will become clear as we go). Let's start with the bluesier sounding ones in the context of a major key:

① Key of Ab: Ab7#9, Eb7#9 (7#9 on V)
 Key of C: C7, G7#9 (lead in another key)
 Key of D: D7, A7#9 (and another)
 Key of G: G7, G9

② Key of D: D7, A7#9 (etc.)

The V7#9 is so bluesy and cool (warm?) If you want to hear this kind of color coming into its own in American musical life, try listening to the "Rhapsody in Blue" by George Gershwin, the composer who is so associated with this sound that all one need do is play a little passage like any of the above in a roomful of musical people and inevitably someone is likely to utter his name.

Similar in effect is the I7#9. Compare the following two examples:

② Key of E: B7, B7sus4, E major 7
 Key of E: B7, B11, E7#9 (I7#9)

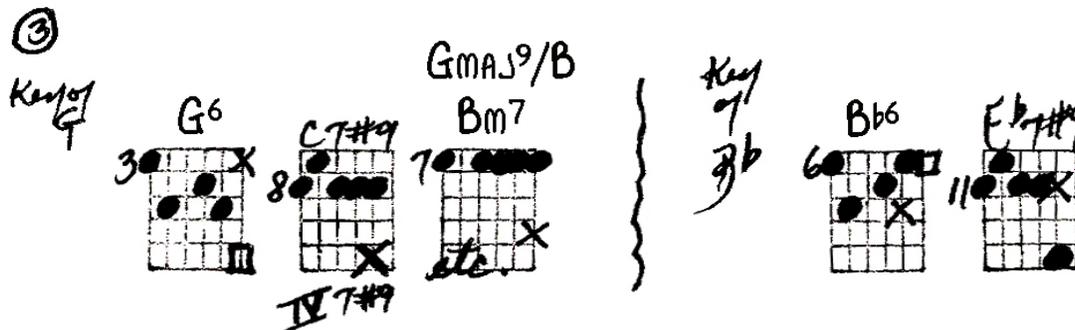
Is there any doubt that if there is any such thing as Blues Harmony, you're in there when you give I7#9 the call?

Let's hear one more comparison:

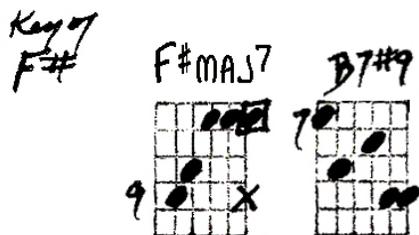
Key of Eb: Bb7, Eb major 7
 Key of Eb: Fm7, Bb9, Eb7#9, Ab7

Using 7#9's on IV can sound kind of weird sometimes. But when this mating of quality (7#9) and degree (IV) does work, the effect, as with I7#9 and V7#9, seems to be in the blues realm of color.

Here are some examples showing how bluesy the IV7#9 can be:



Here's an example of IV7#9 mentioned above, sounding weird or kind of "out of place" at least to my ears:



Suggestion: Be very cautious in using IV7#9 when the #9 tone is in the soprano.

Assignment:

Do your best to store the general and/or specific information presented on this page deep into your musical self.

Make up variation if you feel able.

LEARNING TO USE ALTERED DOMINANTS on ONE DEGREE AT A TIME

We're going to work with the 7#9 chord for awhile, seeing how its inherent color is sometimes softened, sometimes sharpened, and sometimes pretty much left alone, all according to which degree of a key it is used on (this will become clear as we go). Let's start with the bluesier sounding ones in the context of a major key:

① Key of Ab

Ab Eb7#9 C G7#9 D A7#9 D7 G9 G9

Lead in another key Lead another

D D A7#9 2 2 5

The V 7#9 is so bluesy + cool (warm?). If you want to hear this kind of color coming into its own in American musical life, try listening to the 'Rhapsody in Blue' by George Gershwin, the composer who is so associated with this sound that all one need do is play a little passage like any of the above in a roomful of musical people and inevitably someone is likely to utter his name.

Like any of the above in a roomful of musical people and inevitably someone is likely to utter his name.

② Similar in effect is the I 7#9. Compare the following 2 examples:

Key of E

E7 E7 E7 E7#9 A A E7#9 E7#9

Key of Eb

Eb7 Eb7 Eb7 Eb7#9 Bb Bb Eb7#9 Eb7#9

As there any doubt that if there is any such thing as Blues Harmony, you're in there when you give I 7#9 the call (?). Let's hear one more comparison:

③ Using 7#9's on IV can sound kind of weird sometimes. But when this matter of quality (7#9) and degree (IV) does work, the effect as with I 7#9 + IV 7#9 seems to be in the blues realm of color. Here are some examples showing how bluesy the IV 7#9 can be:

Key of G

G7 G7 G7 G7#9 D D G7#9 G7#9

Here's an example of IV 7#9, as mentioned above, sounding weird or "out of place", at least to my ears.

Suggestion: Be very cautious in using IV 7#9 when the #9 tone is in the Sopranos.

ASSIGNMENT: DO YOUR BEST TO STORE THE GENERAL +/OR SPECIFIC INFORMATION PRESENTED ON THIS PAGE DEEP INTO YOUR MUSICAL SELF. Make up variations if you feel able.