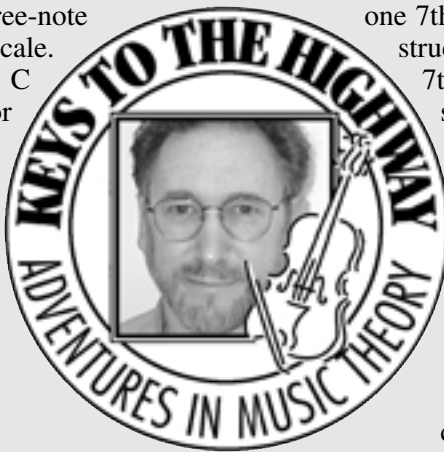


THE MAGNIFICENT 7TH

In the last issue we learned to make triads (three-note chords) by taking every other note from a major scale.

A quick review: we started on the first note of a C major scale and played every other note to get C-E-G or a major triad built on the one note. If we began, instead, on the second note of a C major scale we got D-F-A or a minor triad built on the two note. Why is the two-chord minor? When the 1-3-5 of a D major scale is played, a D major triad or the notes, D-F#-A, are created. Compare this to the D-F-A you get by starting on the two note of a C major scale. We have an F instead of an F#, which means we have a flatted 3rd and, as you now know, a flatted third or 1-3b-5 is our definition of a minor triad or chord.

This every-other-note technique can be used to build a triad on every degree of the scale. In so doing you will "auto-magically" get the proper chord structures for the chord progressions for almost any typical song. You can read more about this in the previous article at <http://www.FolkWorks.org>. If you do look back to the previous article, pay careful attention to the discussion



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one 7th chord) is a major 7th chord. The same is true for construction on the four chord; the four 7th chord is also a major 7th chord. Looking at the chord built on the two note you see a minor 3rd and a minor 7th interval. This chord is a minor 7th chord. The same structure also exists for the three chord and for the six chord, which are also minor 7th chords. The chord built on seven is also a minor 7th, but notice that it has a flatted 5th. This is understandably called a "minor 7th flat 5" and is, in this instance, written as Bm7b5.

Last, but definitely not least, is the five 7th chord. As shown in **Figure 2** the structure is 1-3-5-7b. This is called a dominant 7th and is far and away the most commonly occurring type of 7th chord. You might remember from a previous lesson that most songs are built on a I-IV-V (one-four-five) chord progression. Actually, most I-IV-V chord progressions use a dominant 7th chord for the five chord making it a I-IV-V7 progression.

OK, but why is this called a dominant 7th chord? Good question. It works like this. Each degree of the scale has a name as listed in **Figure 3**. You have the option of calling chords by these names as well as by their numeric names. Instead of I-IV-V, you can now say "Tonic-Subdominant-Dominant". As seen above, the type of 7th chord that results in 1-3-5-7b is the one built on the dominant degree of the scale. This is naturally referred to as the dominant 7th chord.

That concludes the magnificent 7th roundup except for a quick review of the various types of 7th chords that we have discovered. **Figure 4** lists the four types of 7th chords from **Figure 2**. So, when you have questions about music don't take the 5th, take the 7th, and of course stay tuned,

Figure 1

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7								
C			E			G						B		
	D			F			A					C		
		E			G			B				D		
			F			A			C			E		
				G			B			D		F		
					A			C			E		G	
						B			D			F		A

of the difference between the key of a chord versus the key of a song or chord-progression.

You may have guessed by now that there must be more to chords than just triads. Yes, chords may have more than three notes. The every-other-note technique still applies and another note can simply be added. Here's how: start on the one note and add a fourth note to get 1-3-5-7. Adding the "7" note generally results in a "7th" chord but, as you might suspect, there is more than one type of seventh chord. A good way to understand this is to build the same type of chord chart as we did in the last issue for triads. Use a C scale, apply the every-other-note technique to each degree of the scale and, this time, add a fourth note to each chord structure. See **Figure 1**—it shows the 7th chord that can be built on each degree of the scale.

It might be difficult to look at **Figure 1** and get a sense of what chord types are being shown. It becomes more clear by "lining up" all the chords to see how the interval spacing differs or agrees from one to the next. This is shown in **Figure 2** where the visual clues are more obvious. The chord built on the one note is basically a major chord with the addition of a major 7th interval. So, the 7th chord built on the one note (the

Figure 2

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7						
			1	b3	3	b5	5	b7	7						
IM7	CM7		C	-	-	E	-	-	G	-	-	B		1	Major 7th
ii7	Dm7		D	-	-	F	-	-	A	-	-	C		2	minor 7th
iii7	Em7		E	-	-	G	-	-	B	-	-	D		3	minor 7th
IVM7	FM7		F	-	-	A	-	-	C	-	-	E		4	Major 7th
V7	G7		G	-	-	B	-	-	D	-	-	F		5	Dominant 7th
vi7	Am7		A	-	-	C	-	-	E	-	-	G		6	minor 7th
vii	B07?		B	-	-	D	-	-	F	-	-	A		7	diminished 7th?

Figure 3

Tonic
Super Tonic
Mediant
Sub Dominant
Dominant
Sub Mediant
Leading

Figure 4

Major 7th 1 - 3 - 5 - 7
Minor 7th 1 - 3b - 5 - 7b
Minor 7th flat 5 1 - 3b - 5 - 7b
Dominant 7th 1 - 3 - 5 - 7b

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