

Fresh Comp'n

Part 2: 'ii V7'

By Ted Eschliman



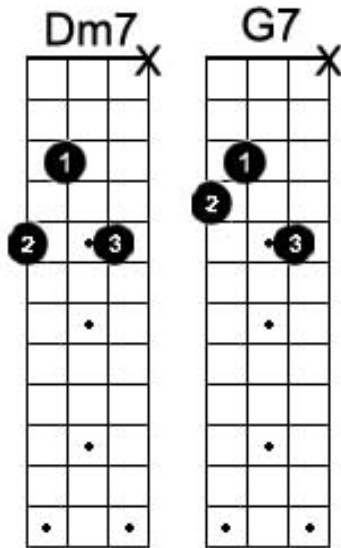
Static Bling

Our latest session, if you will recall, took a look at some new ways to freshen up the accompaniment . If you haven't had a chance to read through it, now would be a good time to review our take on dressing up a one-chord minor modal section of a song with chord extensions by borrowing from the diatonic material (chords based on notes of the same key). Catch up with **Fresh Comp'n Part 1: Bottom of the (Minor) 9ths**: <http://mandolinsessions.com/jun08/Eschliman.html>. Nobody wants to hear the same chord pounded out in tedious progression, and we showed some fingerings that would energize the music without distracting from the music's harmonic integrity.

In Preparation

Now we want to look at one of the most common chord combinations, second only to the '**V7 I'** (**G7 C**, **A7 D**, **F#7 B**, etc.) in occurrence; that would be the '**ii V7**' pair (**Dm7 G7**, **Am7 E7**, **Fm7 C7**, etc.). In our very first **Mandolin Sessions** submission, in December 2003, we explored the prominence of this combination , Understanding the 'ii V7 I' Progression, <http://mandolinsessions.com/dec03/ted.html> , using terms like **Dominant** and **Preparation**, the **V7** chord being the Dominant, and the **ii** being Preparation for the Dominant.

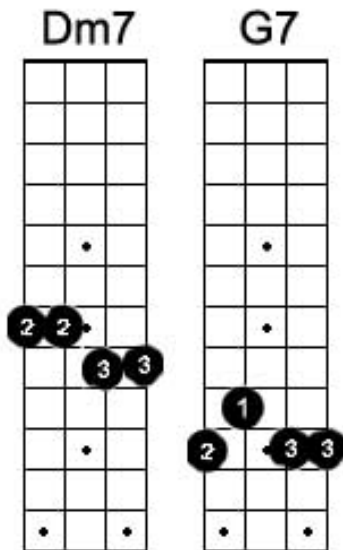
Because this occurs so frequently in jazz (really, Pop and Classical, too), it's great to absorb a solid collection of pairings, a stock vocabulary, and the best way to do this is to learn them in at least two positions on the fretboard. We'll start with **Dm7 G7**. Again, don't let the **7th** chord version of **Dm7** trip you up, adding the **7th** to the chord doesn't change the function at all; it's merely a personal choice (a straight **Dm** will work, too). The first voicing is a personal favorite because of its stealth motion. You only move one note between to the two, but it still packs a powerful notion of motion:



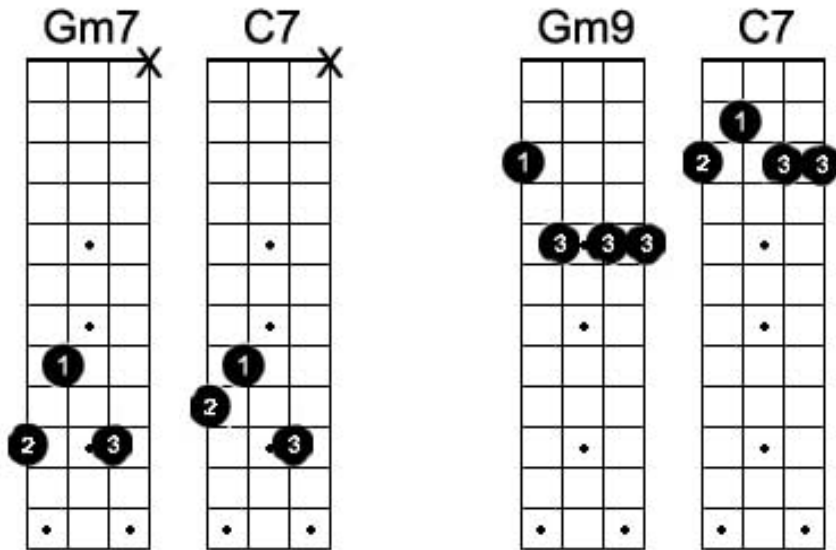
Try repeating these as four beats to a bar, one chord per bar:

Dm7 **G7** **Dm7** **G7**
 //// | //// | //// | //// | (repeat)

Can you hear the first two measures of **Satin Doll** as you do these? Do two beats of each and you've got the first two measures of the song "**Tea for Two**," as well as "**Scrapple from the Apple**," and "**Perdido**," If you are playing one of the myriads of songs with this, you can freshen the accompaniment by playing a different finger variation:

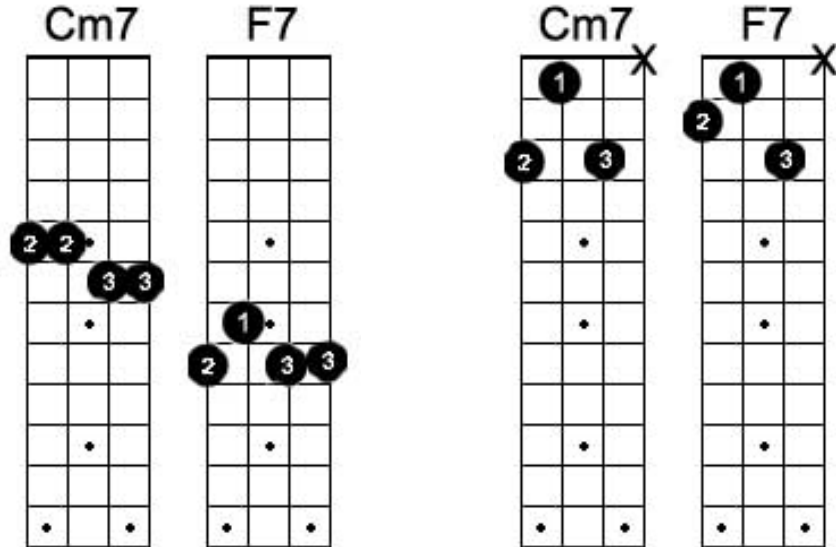


This sound may sound rudimentary, but going back to **Satin Doll**, the next two measures of the song will be **Em7 A7**, which is easily accomplished by moving the above stock positions up two frets. When these become part of your regular vocabulary, you can continue to move them up and down the fretboard, as in the **Gm7 C7** in the first pair below:



Notice the "wholeness" of the three-note chord (muting the 1st string). This also allows you to add some chord extensions as we did by enlisting the note A on the 2nd pair above and filling out with a **Gm9** chord instead of just a straight **Gm7**. This 2nd combination isn't as ergonomic because of the leap back a couple frets, but it's still a good sound. **In general, proper voicing leading will not move more than a couple frets; it's smoother to the ears and, obviously, quicker for the fingers.**

Again the transposable benefit of enlisting these stock voicings allows you to play the 'ii V7' all up and down the fretboard, and even just knowing a couple of them can get you around all **12 keys** effectively:



A good practice routine for you is to drill these frequently through the **Circle of Fifths** using a different voice in the 2nd pairing:

Dm7	G7	Dm7	G7
////	////	////	////
Gm7	C7	Gm7	C7
////	////	////	////

Cm7	F7	Cm7	F7	
////		////		////
Fm7	Bb7	Fm7	Bb7	
////		////		////
Bbm7	Eb7	Bbm7	Eb7	
////		////		////
Ebm7	Ab7	Ebm7	Ab7	
////		////		////
Abm7	Db7	Abm7	Db7	
////		////		////
Dbm7	Gb7	Dbm7	Gb7	
////		////		////
F#m7	B7	F#m7	B7	
////		////		////
Bm7	E7	Bm7	E7	
////		////		////
Em7	A7	Em7	A7	
////		////		////
Am7	D7	Am7	D7	
////		////		////

Should these not be familiar to you, by all means, write the chords out on a blank chord template. You can print one off the JazzMando website: <http://jazzmando.com/FretboardTemplate.pdf>

Of course there will be many other voicings out there you'll uncover as you build up more experience, but if you start thinking of these chords in terms of their function, rather than as individual chords, you'll supercharge your ability to remember them and transpose in other contexts.



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