

The Dominant Seventh

THE **DOMINANT SEVENTH** IS THE **DIATONIC SEVENTH CHORD** BUILT ON THE **FIFTH SCALE DEGREE**. WE ALREADY DISCUSSED DIATONIC SEVENTH CHORDS... WHY GIVE **THIS ONE** ALL THIS SPECIAL ATTENTION?

FOR ONE THING, THE DOMINANT SEVENTH IS, BY FAR, THE **MOST COMMON SEVENTH CHORD** USED BY THE COMPOSERS OF THE COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD.

BUT ANOTHER REASON FOR SPENDING A LITTLE EXTRA TIME WITH IT IS THE FACT THAT THERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT APPLY TO **IT** THAT **DON'T APPLY** TO THE **OTHER** DIATONIC SEVENTH CHORDS.



FIRST, A NOTE ON **TERMINOLOGY**:

THE TERMS "MAJOR-MINOR SEVENTH" AND "DOMINANT SEVENTH" ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE! "MAJOR-MINOR SEVENTH" IS THE CHORD'S **TYPE**, AND "DOMINANT SEVENTH" IS THE **ROLE** THE CHORD PLAYS IN THE **CONTEXT OF A PARTICULAR KEY**.

IT'S JUST A MAJOR-MINOR SEVENTH....



UNTIL IT'S PLACED IN A PARTICULAR KEY!

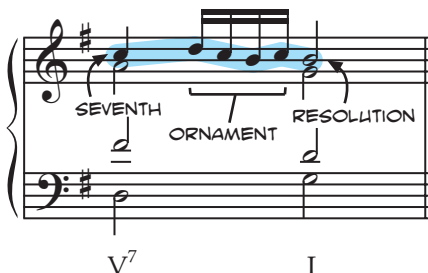


THE REASON THESE ARE OFTEN CONFUSED IS THAT IN **POPULAR AND JAZZ THEORY**, THE TERM "DOMINANT" IS USED TO LABEL THE CHORD **TYPE** INSTEAD OF THE CHORD'S **ROLE**.

THE OTHER IMPORTANT THING TO KNOW ABOUT THE DOMINANT SEVENTH CHORD IS THAT COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD COMPOSERS WOULD SOMETIMES USE SOME **NON-STANDARD** WAYS OF RESOLVING THE **SEVENTH**!

THE **ORNAMENTAL RESOLUTION**

IN THIS RESOLUTION, THE SEVENTH IS STILL RESOLVED **DOWN BY STEP**, BUT IT TAKES AN ORNAMENTAL "**DETOUR**" BEFORE GETTING THERE.

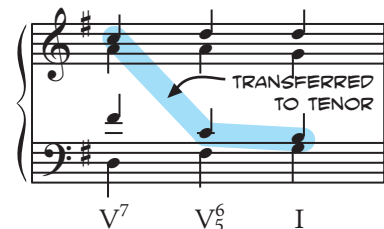


THE ORNAMENT CAN BE ANY SHAPE OR LENGTH, BUT IT **MUST** RESOLVE TO THE NOTE **DOWN A STEP** FROM THE SEVENTH OF THE SEVENTH CHORD.

THE **TRANSFERRED RESOLUTION**

THIS IS THE "HOT POTATO" RESOLUTION: INSTEAD OF BEING RESOLVED DOWN BY STEP IN THE SAME VOICE, THE SEVENTH IS **PASSED TO ANOTHER VOICE** IN ANOTHER DOMINANT SEVENTH CHORD.

THE SEVENTH STILL NEEDS TO RESOLVE **DOWN BY STEP** BY WHATEVER VOICE IS THE LAST TO HAVE IT.



IF THE BASS VOICE GETS IT, HE **RESOLVES IT IMMEDIATELY**, ENDING THE FUN FOR EVERYONE.

THE **DELAYED RESOLUTION**

HERE, THE RESOLUTION OF THE SEVENTH IS **DELAYED** BY MOVING TO SOME OTHER CHORD (USUALLY THE **SUBDOMINANT**) AND HAVING THE SEVENTH OF THE CHORD **HOLD OUT** UNTIL THE DOMINANT SEVENTH RETURNS.



AFTER THE **V7 RETURNS**, THE VOICE THAT HAS THE SEVENTH SHOULD **STILL** RESOLVE IT APPROPRIATELY!

THE **BASS RESOLUTION**

IN THIS RESOLUTION, THE SEVENTH OF THE CHORD IS STILL RESOLVED **DOWN BY STEP**, BUT THE NOTE IT RESOLVES TO APPEARS IN THE **BASS VOICE**.



THE VOICE THAT **HAD** THE SEVENTH RESOLVES **UP**, USUALLY BY **STEP**.