

Tools of the Trade

By Chris Buono

V7 chords and the Diminished 7th Arpeggio

In this lesson I'm going to show you a common shortcut that allows you to utilize the sound of the **b9** tension over V7 chords by using dim7 arpeggios as a clever substitute. With a slight adjustment to a dom7 arpeggio you can turn a simple tool into a very hip idea.

The trick is to play a dim7 arpeggio with a root one half step above the dom7 chord you are playing. A quick way to achieve this is to raise the root of the dom7 arpeggio one half step above while playing all the other chord tones as they were. This actually creates a dom7b9 arpeggio with no root for the chord you are playing over with minimal movement! This is a very handy tool for smooth and cohesive sounding lines that are played over changes.

Play this C7 arpeggio:

C7 Arpeggio

The image shows the C7 arpeggio in three formats: musical notation, a fretboard diagram, and a chord diagram. The musical notation is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are C4, E4, G4, Bb4, C5, E5, G5, Bb5. The fretboard diagram shows the notes on strings 1-4: 1 (open), 2 (2), 3 (3), 4 (4). The chord diagram shows the notes on strings 1-4: 1 (open), 2 (2), 3 (3), 4 (4). The fretboard diagram also shows the notes on strings 5-6: 5 (7), 6 (10), 7 (10), 8 (12).

Now play through this C#dim7 arpeggio:

C7b9 Arpeggio

The image shows the C7b9 arpeggio in three formats: musical notation, a fretboard diagram, and a chord diagram. The musical notation is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat. The notes are C4, Eb4, G4, Bb4, C5, Eb5, G5, Bb5. The fretboard diagram shows the notes on strings 1-4: 1 (open), 2 (2), 3 (3), 4 (4). The chord diagram shows the notes on strings 1-4: 2 (x), 1 (1), 3 (1), 4 (x). The fretboard diagram also shows the notes on strings 5-6: 5 (7), 6 (10), 7 (10), 8 (12).

Take a close look at how the chord tones are spelled out for each arpeggio. See how the C#dim7 chord tones are actually spelled out according to a C7b9 chord. This is done so you can clearly see the function of this substitution. Also, take note of the "reference" chord provided. I often use chords as visual pictures to associate with so I can better retain where to play my arpeggios and better understand their function.

Some chords to try this over are dom7, dom7b9, and dom7b9b13. Other altered dominants could benefit from this concept as well but they might sound out of place to your ear. Experimentation is always in order and remember to let your ear be the final judge.

Here s some lines put in some common harmonic contexts for you to hear the effects of this technique. Enjoy!

The Blues: IV7 - I7

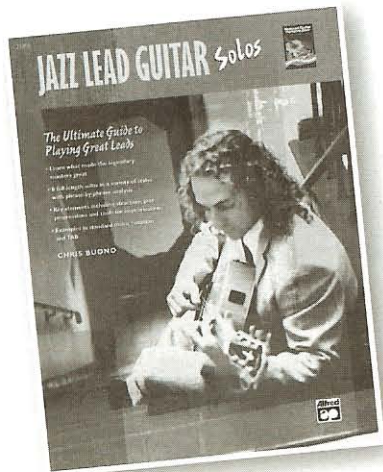
Musical notation for 'The Blues: IV7 - I7'. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with a C7 chord above the first measure and a G7 chord above the final measure. Below the staff are guitar fretboard diagrams for the Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Dynamics include piano (p) and accents (acc).

Standard V7 - I

Musical notation for 'Standard V7 - I'. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with a C7 chord above the first measure and an Fmaj7 chord above the final measure. Below the staff are guitar fretboard diagrams for the Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Dynamics include piano (p) and accents (acc).

VI7b9b13 to ii-7 (or V7b9b13 to i-7)

Musical notation for 'VI7b9b13 to ii-7 (or V7b9b13 to i-7)'. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with a C7b9b13 chord above the first measure and an F-7b5 chord above the final measure. Below the staff are guitar fretboard diagrams for the Treble (T), Middle (A), and Bass (B) strings. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4.



Chris Buono is a guitar department instructor at Berklee College of Music in Boston and a regular contributor to Guitar One magazine. In addition to teaching private lessons in his home studio, Chris conducts seminars for the National Guitar Workshop. Please visit www.chrisbuono.com for more information on Chris, his upcoming CD releases, product endorsements, and how to purchase his Alfred publications book "Jazz Lead Guitar Solos".

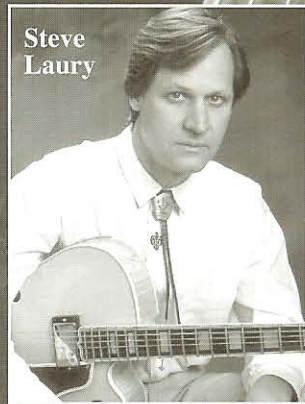
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A large, high-contrast black and white photograph of Bill Frisell playing a guitar. He is wearing glasses and a dark jacket, looking down at his instrument. The guitar's neck and fretboard are prominent in the foreground.

Bill Frisell