

Diatonic Scales

Secondary Dominants and Subdominant functions in major and minor

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*"The name of the game is not change,
the name of the game is development!"*

"Stay right with it!"

Major

#1

By playing the diminished major scale from every step you associate every chord with the Tonic:

Exercise #1: Diminished major scale starting from C6. The scale is played in 4/4 time, moving up step by step from C6 to Fmaj7, Em7, Dm7, and finally C6. The notes are: C6 (C, E, G, Bb), Fmaj7 (F, Ab, C, Eb), Em7 (E, G, Bb, D), Dm7 (D, F, Ab, Bb), and C6 (C, E, G, Bb).

#2

Leave out the leading note to the sixth of the Tonic and add a leading note to the root of those chords that do not have a leading note already. In that way you emphasize the root of the different chords:

Exercise #2: Diminished major scale starting from C6. The scale is played in 4/4 time, moving up step by step from C6 to Fmaj7, Em7, Dm7, and finally C6. The notes are: C6 (C, E, G, Bb), Fmaj7 (F, Ab, C, Eb), Em7 (E, G, Bb, D), Dm7 (D, F, Ab, Bb), and C6 (C, E, G, Bb). Leading notes are added to the roots of the chords: F (Ab) for Fmaj7, E (G) for Em7, and D (F) for Dm7.

#3

When creating secondary diatonic Dominants, you add diatonic notes between the chord notes and keep the chromatic leading note the root of the chord:

C⁶ Fmaj⁷

B⁷ Em⁷

A⁷ Dm⁷

G⁷ C⁶

#4

In the previous exercise all the secondary dominants had diatonic ninths. In this exercise all the secondary Dominants and the primary one have altered ninths:

C⁶ Fmaj⁷

B⁷_b⁹ Em⁷

A⁷_b⁹ Dm⁷

G⁷_b⁹ C⁶

#5

In this exercise all steps, except the 1st and 4th degree, are secondary Dominants.
All Dominants have diatonic ninths:

Cmaj⁷ Fmaj⁷
B⁷ E⁷
A⁷ D⁷
G⁷ Cmaj⁷

#6


Same exercise as above but with altered ninths:

Cmaj⁷ Fmaj⁷
B⁷_b⁹ E⁷_b⁹
A⁷_b⁹ D⁷_b⁹
G⁷_b⁹ Cmaj⁷

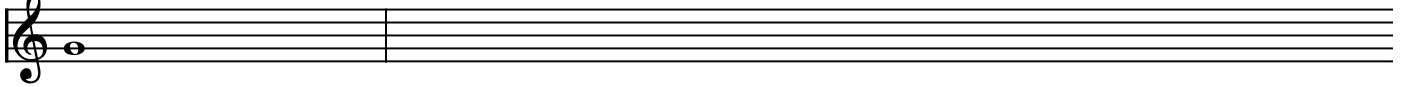
#7

The Subdominant behaves differently than the Dominant. The first exercise adds a minor seven:

Cmaj⁷ F⁷



Cmaj⁷/E



A musical exercise in 4/4 time. The first staff contains a melodic line with four measures. The first measure is labeled Cmaj⁷ and the second measure is labeled F⁷. The second staff is a blank staff with a treble clef and a whole note in the first measure, labeled Cmaj⁷/E.

#8

Then the root is augmented:

C⁶ Fmaj⁷ F^{#dim.} Cmaj⁷



A musical exercise in 4/4 time with four measures. The first measure is labeled C⁶, the second Fmaj⁷, the third F^{#dim.}, and the fourth Cmaj⁷.

#9

Same chord, different scale:

Cmaj⁷ Fmaj⁷ F^{#dim.} Cmaj⁷



A musical exercise in 4/4 time with four measures. The first measure is labeled Cmaj⁷, the second Fmaj⁷, the third F^{#dim.}, and the fourth Cmaj⁷.

#10

Then add the minor third to it. The name of this chord is double diminished (diminished third and fifth). There is no symbol for this chord. So the symbol refers to the third as the root:

C⁶ Fmaj⁷ A^{b7} Cmaj⁷



A musical exercise in 4/4 time with four measures. The first measure is labeled C⁶, the second Fmaj⁷, the third A^{b7}, and the fourth Cmaj⁷.

#11

Diminished chords with Dominant function:

Cmaj⁷ C#dim.

Dm⁷ D#dim.

Cmaj⁷/E

#12

C#dim is actually A7b9 and D#dim is actually B7b9:

Cmaj⁷ C#dim.

Dm⁷ D#dim.

Cmaj⁷/E

Compared to the altered scale (half-step/wholestep), all of the Dominant scales shown above relates to the key as well as to the following chord, while the altered scale only relates to the following chord. Now, we have a variety of Dominant scales and we are able to tie them to a key!

Minor

#1

By playing the diminished minor scale from every step you associate every chord with the Tonic:

Exercise #1: Diminished minor scale starting from each chord. The scale is written in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The chords and their corresponding scale starting notes are: Cm⁶ (C), F⁷ (F), Bm⁷_{b5} (B), E^bmaj⁷_{#5} (E^b), Am⁷_{b5} (A), Dm⁷ (D), G⁷ (G), and Cm⁶ (C). The scale consists of eight eighth notes per measure, with a final quarter rest.

#2

Leave out the leading note to the sixth of the Tonic and add a leading note to the root of those chords that do not have a leading note already. In that way one emphasizes the root of the different chords.

Exercise #2: Diminished minor scale starting from each chord with leading notes. The scale is written in 4/4 time on a treble clef staff. The chords and their corresponding scale starting notes are: Cm⁶ (C), F⁷ (F), Bm⁷_{b5} (B), E^bmaj⁷_{#5} (E^b), Am⁷_{b5} (A), Dm⁷ (D), G⁷ (G), and Cm⁶ (C). The scale consists of eight eighth notes per measure, with a final quarter rest.

Now, add secondary Dominants:

The image shows four staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melodic line with a secondary dominant chord indicated above it. The chords are: Cm⁶, F⁷, Bm⁷_{b5}, E_bmaj⁷_{#5}, A⁷_{b5}, D⁷_{b9}, G⁷_{b9}, and Cm⁶.

Creating secondary dominant by alteration of the root (i.e. B_b7_{#5} instead of Bm7_{b5} in the exercise above) demands another scale approach than the diatonic one.

Please see the chapter about *Diminished Scales*.

This is not a complete appendix of diatonic scales. What this chapter merely shows you is how to build scales that relate to the key while having secondary functions as well.

Naming these scales only have theoretical interest.

I am a musician, so I hold functionality and beauty above identification.