



Study Notes:
The Ultimate I - IV - V Lesson
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THE I - IV - V LESSON

Review Of Basic Diatonic Harmony:

The basis and foundation of music theory and modern song writing technique is the Major Scale and the chords associated with harmonizing the Major scale with itself. in intervals of thirds. Those chords are then referred to with roman numerals, or a roman numeral analysis. (FYI *Dia* means through and *tonic* means center, *Diatonic* -through the

The diagram illustrates the seven diatonic chords of the C major scale. Above each chord name (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, I) are its Roman numeral and a simplified chord symbol: C, DMIN, EMIN, F, G, AMIN, Bm7(b9), and C. Below each name is a guitar fretboard diagram showing the chord's fingering. At the bottom, a musical staff shows the root notes of each chord: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, and C.

Harmonic Function:

I Chord. The Tonic, this is the chord built on the first degree of the scale. It determined the tonality of the piece and is most often the beginning ending of the song, the resting place. Home base. For this lesson that chord is C Major.

V Chord. The Dominant chord is built on the 5th degree of the scale and demands resolution, movement back to the I chord. For this lesson that chord is G Major (or G7).

IV Chord. The Sub-Dominant chord is built on the 4th degree of the scale, F Major for this lesson, and normally precedes the dominant chord. The Sub-Dominant chord also has a strong tendency to return to the I chord.

Cadences:

The basic building blocks of chord progressions are called *Cadences*. A *Cadence* is a feeling of release and resolution produced by chord to chord motion. This feeling of release and rest is usually most evident when we arrive at the **I Chord**, the **Tonic**. The desire to resolve is most strikingly produced by the **V Chord**, the **Dominant** and the **IV Chord**, or **Subdominant**. The strongest cadence in music is the **V to I** or **Dominant to Tonic**. The next strongest cadence in music is the **IV to I** or **Subdominant to Tonic**.

The Authentic Cadence & The Plagal Cadence

The diagram illustrates two types of cadences. On the left, the Authentic Cadence is shown with the V chord (G7) moving to the I chord (C). On the right, the Plagal Cadence is shown with the IV chord (F) moving to the I chord (C). Above each chord name is its Roman numeral and a simplified chord symbol: C, G7, C, F, and C. Below each name is a guitar fretboard diagram. At the bottom, a musical staff shows the root notes. Arrows point to the G7 and F chords with the label 'Tension', and arrows point to the C chords with the label 'Release'.

Log On And Learn:

These harmonic principles are clearly illustrated on my website: www.getgoodfast.com. To see and hear further explanations of the principles of harmony and the art of creating cadences, log on and click on the word *harmony*.

Chord Patterns:

In modern music, the basic cadences and obvious variations of the I - IV and V chords have become so well known and common that they known as standardized chord patterns. I like to think of the following chord patterns as musical building blocks, or a songwriters tools. As you work with the chord patterns, try using a metronome, drum track or garage band loop to help you strum the chords for their exact duration.

Chord Patterns:

I-V chord patterns have long been used to set up a funky groove, break or vamp. As you work with the chords below, make sure to give each one it's full four counts. interestingly, the second example begins on the five chord and puts the emphasis on bar two of that pattern.

PATTERN C G7 C G7

A musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff are four guitar chord diagrams: C (3fr), G7 (3fr), C (3fr), and G7 (3fr). Below the staff, the first two bars are marked with a red 'I' and the last two bars with a red 'V'. The staff contains rhythmic slashes indicating a steady quarter-note accompaniment.

PATTERN G7 C G7 C

A musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff are four guitar chord diagrams: G7 (8fr), C (8fr), G7 (8fr), and C (8fr). Below the staff, the first two bars are marked with a red 'V' and the last two bars with a red 'I'. The staff contains rhythmic slashes indicating a steady quarter-note accompaniment.

I - IV patterns always sound very solid. The first example reminds me of the very sensitive song *Wild Horses* by the Rolling Stones. In the second example the IV chords sounds really killer, this is one of everybody's favorite rock grooves. The third example to follow uses a little blues thinking because both the I chord and the IV chord, called I seven and IV seven, are dominant chords. The expression 'it's close enough for rock and roll' may apply here.

PATTERN C F C F

A musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff are four guitar chord diagrams: C, F, C, and F. Below the staff, the first two bars are marked with a red 'I' and the last two bars with a red 'IV'. The staff contains rhythmic slashes indicating a steady quarter-note accompaniment.

PATTERN C F C F C

A musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff are six guitar chord diagrams: C (8fr), F (8fr), C (8fr), C (8fr), F (8fr), and C (8fr). Below the staff, the first bar is marked with a red 'I', the second bar with a red 'IV', the third bar with a red 'I', the fourth bar with a red 'I', the fifth bar with a red 'IV', and the sixth bar with a red 'I'. The staff contains rhythmic slashes indicating a steady quarter-note accompaniment.

PATTERN C7 F7 C7 F7

A musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff are four guitar chord diagrams: C7 (8fr), F7 (8fr), C7 (8fr), and F7 (8fr). Below the staff, the first two bars are marked with a red 'I7' and the last two bars with a red 'IV7'. The staff contains rhythmic slashes indicating a steady quarter-note accompaniment.

When discussing I - IV - V patterns, just about anything and everything goes. The amount of interesting, new and novel uses of I - IV - V harmony is truly astounding. Think of these as pieces of the puzzle, as your musical vocabulary when writing or arranging chord progressions. The examples to follow represent some interesting and well known I - IV - V applications with mention to some of the songs the patterns have given life to. Learning to play and do a roman numeral analysis of excellently written songs is another habit of the talented guitarists and songwriters I have known . The first example to follow ascends through the harmony (I - IV - V), and is reminiscent of songs like *La Bamba* or *Twist & Shout*. The second example is similar to *The Wind Cries Mary*.

PATTERN C F G C F G

PATTERN C G F C G F

The next example to follow descends through the harmony (V -IV - V), and is similar to *Cant Explain* (The Who) and *The Hard Way* (The Kinks). The chord pattern after that serves as the basis for *Wild Thing* by The Troggs

PATTERN G F C G F C

PATTERN C F G F C F G F

The next example to follow ascends through the harmony (I -IV - V),but returns to the I Chord in the same way as *Lay Down Sally* by Eric Clapton. The chords after that serve as the basis for *Brown Eyed Girl* by Van Morrison and *Teach Your Children* by Crosby, Stills and Nash.

PATTERN C F G C

PATTERN C F C G

The first of the following chord patterns provides a useful and well known cadence found across all styles. The next example to follow employs the harmony in the same way as *Ruby Tuesday* by The Rolling Stones and *The First Cut Is The Deepest* by Rod Stewart.

PATTERN C G F C

PATTERN C G F G C G F G

Two Chord Songs:

Many interesting songs have been written in a variety of musical settings using only two chords. Two chord songs are a necessary part of our musical education because they are examples of simplicity in all of its beauty. The first of the two chord songs is similar to *Jambalaya* by the great Hank Williams and the second is just like the well known cowboy song called *Deep In The Heart of Texas*.

SONG C G

SONG G C

SONG C G

SONG G C

Like A Rolling Stone:

Bob Dylan's folk-rock classic song *Like A Rolling Stone* was recently named the greatest rock song of all time by **Rolling Stone** magazine. Although calling any song "the greatest" is open to debate this particular song is deserving in so many ways. First because it is not merely fluff or cheap pop music, it is meaningful and discusses issues associated with coming of age and growing up in modern America, in this regard it has remained timeless. The Pulitzer Prize jury in 2008 awarded Bob Dylan a special citation for "his profound impact on popular music and American culture, marked by lyrical compositions of extraordinary poetic power".

Interestingly the song uses only the three most basic and iconic chords in popular music: the I - IV - V chord pattern, in various combinations.

SONG

SIMILAR TO THE ROLLING STONES

IV Chord
Returns To
I Chord

A The "A" section or verse. Each *verse* is unique and tells a continually developing story.

Bass Notes: **C D E F G** (the scale itself)

pre chorus

IV Chord
The Basis Of
The New Section

IV Chord
Precedes
The V Chord

B The "A" section or chorus. Each *chorus*, called a *hook* is the same and is the famous part of the song.

IV Chord
Precedes
The V Chord