

Beginner's Guide to Improvisation

Lesson 7

So, we know that a lot of jazz standards (popular jazz tunes) like to take a detour via chord 4. But once we get there, how do we get back? There are a few ways to get from chord 4 back to chord 1, but let's focus on this one...

Think of it like a holiday gone wrong - you take a trip to a sunny major chord 4, but then find that the weather is awful. Your holiday gets all sad and minor so you hop on the next plane back to chord 1!

This is known as the "BACKDOOR" progression and can be played in three ways:

The image displays three musical examples of the "BACKDOOR" progression in 4/4 time, each on a single staff. The first example shows the progression Fmaj7 - Fm7 - Cmaj7. The second example shows Fmaj7 - Bb7 - Cmaj7. The third example shows Fmaj7 - Fm7 - Bb7 - Cmaj7. Each example includes a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, and the corresponding chord symbols are written above the staff.

Can you figure out what chord the Fm7 - Bb7 wants to go to? Here's a hint - C major, Eb major, F#major and A major are all related keys, as they are all associated members of the same DIMINISHED chord...

Not quite ready to return from your holiday yet? Sometimes, you might like to take the scenic route home via chord three, six, two and five...



Why not have a go at making your own backdoor licks and sing or play them with your tutor?