

# The 'ii V7 I'

## The Essence of Jazz!

The 'ii V7 I' is the most basic "sentence" of the harmonic (chordal) structure of jazz. Phrases end with this, keys modulate with this, and long static sections of music that linger on one chord can be supercharged with this progression. We cannot stress enough how critical it is you be intimately familiar with this pattern in all 12 keys.

An easy way to grasp this is to take 3 basic **Stock Patterns** and move them up and/or down 1, 2, or 3 frets. You have the benefit of a tactile familiarity, then it's just a matter of hooking up basic music theory (transposing) and moving this set of "relationships" up and down. Don't think **12 keys**; think **3 distinct patterns** moved slightly by a couple of frets.

Two different sets of the **Stock Patterns** need to be mastered, the **Major** and the **Minor**. It's easy to overlook the **Minor**, but try to get them into your fingers, too.

Notice a few of the following chords have a "9" in them, designating an added 9<sup>th</sup> (or 2<sup>nd</sup>) scale degree. This is simply a subjective style choice, and as the 9<sup>th</sup> is a fairly benign, non-tension tone, it can be added in most jazz genres, like a little salt on French Fries. However, you will need to be sensitive to other rhythm accompaniment players; if they are playing a chord voicing with a sharp or flat '9' (#9, b9), you will want to stay out of the way. Generally, in smaller ensembles, it's not an issue.

**Three-note chord patterns** like the very first set are quite versatile. You can move them across the string, and you'll transpose the progression up one fifth:

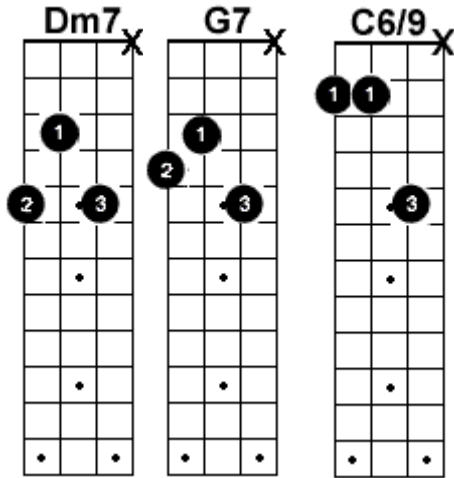
**Key of C: Dm7 G7 C across one string = Key of G: Am7 D7 G**

Or you can substitute the muted string for extended chord voicings, like **9ths** (#9, 9, b9), **11ths** (#11), or **13ths** (13, b13) with the pinky. Many professionals use exclusively for this purpose, or just to retain a kind of "Old Time" purity staying away from the harmonic extensions.

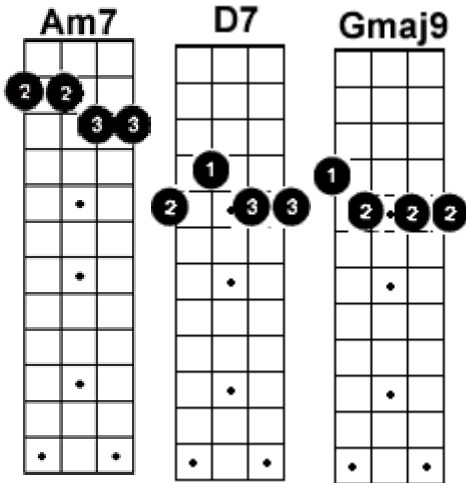
The stock patterns are merely a "jumping off" point for you. Eventually, you'll develop variations of your own, ones that fit your personal style, and the music you choose to play. Don't be afraid to experiment!

*Don't think **12 keys**; think **3 distinct patterns** moved slightly by a couple of frets.*

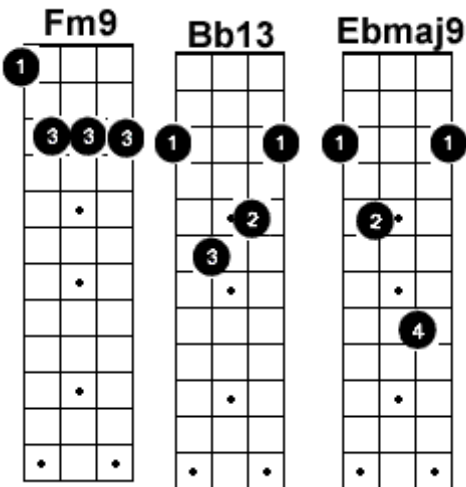
## Sample Stock 'ii V7 I' Chord Fingerings MAJOR PATTERNS:



**ii                      V7                      I**



**ii                      V7                      I**



**ii                      V7                      I**

**Key of C = Dm7 G7 C**  
-1 Key of B = C#m7 F#7 B  
-2 Key of Bb = Cm7 F7 Bb

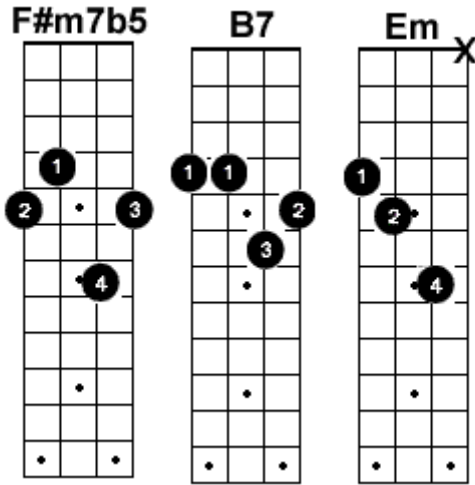
**Key of C = Dm7 G7 C**  
+1 Key of Db = Ebm7 Ab7 Db  
+2 Key of D = Em7 A7 D

**Key of G = Am7 D7 G**  
+1 Key of Ab = Bbm7 Eb7 Ab  
+2 Key of A = Bm7 E7 A  
+3 Key of Bb = Cm7 F7 Bb  
+4 Key of B = C#m7 F#7 B  
+5 Key of C = Dm7 G7 C

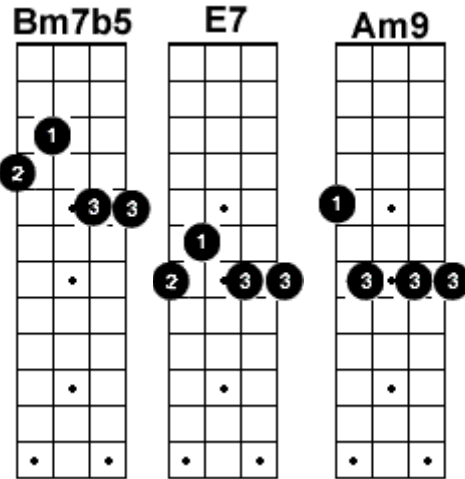
**Key of Eb = Fm7 Bb7 Eb**  
+1 Key of E = F#m7 B7 E  
+2 Key of F = Gm7 C7 F  
+3 Key of F# = G#m7 C#7 F#  
+4 Key of G = Am7 D7 G  
+5 Key of Ab = Bbm7 Eb7 Ab

## Sample Stock 'ii7b5 V7 i' Chord Fingerings

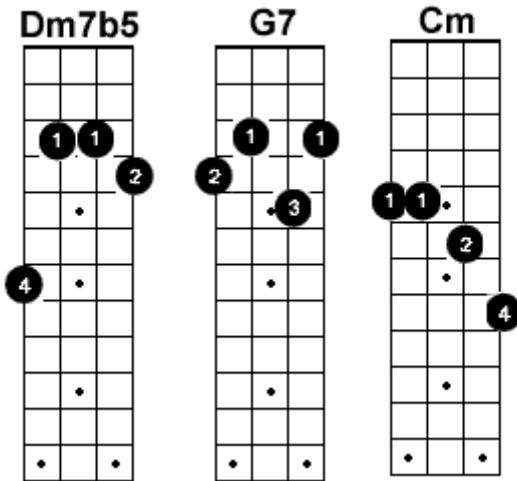
### MINOR PATTERNS:



**ii7b5          V7          i**



**ii7b5          V7          i**



**ii7b5          V7          i**

**Key of Em = F#m7b5 B7 Em**  
 -1 Key of Ebm = Fm7b5 Bb7 Ebm  
 -2 Key of Dm = Em7b5 A7 Dm

**Key of Em = F#m7b5 B7 Em**  
 +1 Key of Fm = Gm7b5 C7 Fm  
 +2 Key of F#m = G#m7b5 C#7 F#m  
 +3 Key of Gm = Am7b5 D7 Gm

**Key of Am = Bm7b5 E7 Am**  
 -1 Key of G#m = A#m7b5 D#7 G#m  
 -2 Key of Gm = Am7b5 D7 Gm

**Key of Am = Bm7b5 E7 Am**  
 +1 Key of Bbm = Cm7b5 F7 Bbm  
 +2 Key of Bm = C#m7b5 F#7 Bm  
 +3 Key of Cm = Dm7b5 G7 Cm

**Key of Cm = Dm7b5 G7 Cm**  
 -1 Key of Bm = C#m7b5 F#7 Bm  
 -2 Key of Bbm = Cm7b5 F7 Bbm

**Key of Cm = Dm7b5 G7 Cm**  
 +1 Key of C#m = D#m7b5 G#7 C#m  
 +2 Key of Dm = Em7b5 A7 Dm  
 +3 Key of D#m = Em7b5 A#7 D#m