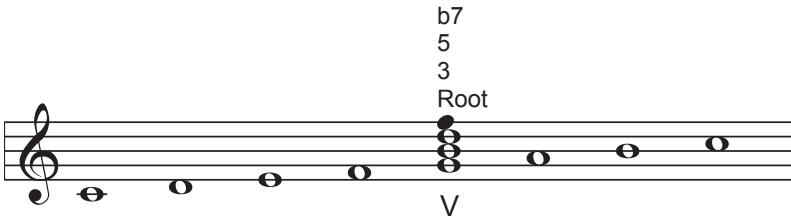


(Book 4) Lesson 43a.

Three Part Dominant 7th Chords (re-visited)

The Dominant 7th chord is essentially a four part chord. As with the triads, its component parts are assessed from the root of the chord. Root---third---5th and a minor 7th. (b7th) It is a triad found on the fifth degree of the major scale with an added third on top.



The difference between the triad and the seventh chord is that the triad is called the Dominant chord and when the seventh is added, it is called the Dominant 7th chord.

We will first do these chords in three parts, omitting a specified note. The chords to be presented are to be considered as a norm, but not the only way. If a situation arises where they might not be exactly what you want, then do as I do. "Invent something that is better for that situation." The probability of having to do this is very limited. The norm is quite substantial in scope.



The Dominant 7th, being a four part chord will have a Root Position and three inversions. The flat seven in the bass makes the third inversion.

Three Part Dominant Seventh Chords: In the chord spelling, it is important to specify the omitted note. In other words, think 4 notes but play 3 notes.

G7

Root pos. Spell: G-B-(omit D)-F

First inv. Spell: B-(omit D)-F-G

Second inv. Spell: D-F-(omit G)-B

Third inv. Spell: F-(omit G)-B-D

In general, harmony sanctions the omission of the fifth from a chord and that is probably why the Root Position and First Inversion have the fifth omitted. Somewhere in the eighteenth hundreds, the chord on seven in a major key (ie. Bdim in C major) was being taught as an incomplete Dominant 7th chord. This is a probable reason for omitting the Root in the second and third inversions.

Even when the four part chords have been reduced to three voices, the chords are still in closed voicing. In other words, the notes are as close to one another in pitch as possible.

Editor: When the same chords were introduced in Book 3, it was suggested that the reduction was made to make them physically playable. This is certainly a part of the truth. The four note chords in close voicing are brutally difficult at best and mostly impossible except in Root Position. Non-believers should test out this theory but don't work at it so much that you hurt your hands.