

ALTERED DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS

In a four part Dominant 7th chord, the Root and Fifth may be altered. In general, the third and the flatted seventh remain constant.

The fifth may be raised or lowered. In a Dominant 7th chord containing two fifths, one may be raised while simultaneously lowering the other, a double alteration.

The root may be raised three half tones, but when the root is raised, it becomes a ninth, and consequently is not symbolized as a raised root but as an altered ninth as the situation demands.

Chords are altered basically for two reasons. First, to ensure a closer chord connection and second, to depict some human emotion such as fear, hate, love, anger etc.

Unless the melodic concept of a chord makes it mandatory for alteration, there are no real rigid rules one can follow. The musical taste and concept of the particular performer in any situation seems to be the norm. The validity as to alter or not to alter is usually always open to argument.

(Tony Bradan)

The following pages are somewhat deceptive in that they contain a rather abbreviated view of the altered Dominant 7th series. It is expected that the student will follow the same type of intense study program that has now been demonstrated many times. In other words, practice altering the Dominant 7th chord inversions in all keys and on all three sets of four strings. Practice resolving the altered Dominant 7th chords to their tonic majors and minors. The ii7-V7-I is so common in "jazz" that practicing a myriad of renditions of this progression should be deemed to be of paramount importance. (G.A.)