

(Book 5.) Lesson 59a.

"Chord Progression in a Minor Key"

Observe the V7 chord progression in a minor key. The same primary and secondary "root movements are present here as in any major key. Songs that are exclusively in a minor key are rather rare. More commonly, composers drift in and out of major and minor keys using both emotional qualities. Songs exclusively in a minor key tend to be overly romantic and perhaps even melodramatic.

b7 falls to 3rd

E7 Am "up 4"

Just as in a major key, the "up 4" is the most common progression in a minor key.

b7 falls to 5th

E7 F "up 2"

The "up 2" in the Dominant to Sub-Mediant progression is rather "Spanish" in sound.

b7 falls to Root

E7 C+ "down 3"

The Dominant to Mediant "down 3" is a rather rare progression.

E7 Bdim

b7 remains as b3rd

E7 Bdim "down 4"

The Dominant to Super-Tonic "down 4" would be very rare but as an example, Dm to Am (IV-I) would be relatively common.

E7 Dm

b7 remains as Root

E7 Dm "down 2"

Lesson 59b will showcase the Primary and Secondary chord progressions in a minor key using any chord in the key as a starting point.

E7 G#dim

b7 remains as b5th

E7 G#dim "up 3"

The complexity of the "musica ficta" key does not necessarily prevent composers from extending the harmony to the 7th partial but traditionally, harmonies in minor keys tend to stay closer to home.

An interesting musical phenomenon is that most amateur composers will write their first song using a minor key. Lyrically, the song will be about love or a protest of some political or social situation. I am not making this up! This is a well documented fact! Minor keys apparently stir our souls in love and in anger. (G.A.)