



Soloing over Major II V I's: Ideas for The 1 and V Chords

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Following on from the previous two articles, this time we will take a look at how melodic ideas can be created over the I chord in a major II V I progression and take a further look at how interesting lines can be created over the Valt chord.

Once again we will use this sequence as a basis for our ideas: -

4/4 | Dm7 /// | G7alt /// | C Maj 7 /// |
II V I

1. Resolving V Lines To Chord Tones

Of the three chords in the sequence, the I chord probably throws up the least melodic possibilities. Perhaps this is because it is our 'resting place' and the chord towards which our altered line over the V chord 'pulls'.

Your II V I line naturally wants to come to rest on a chord tone of the I chord, as shown in the previous articles' examples. Notes available for C Major 7 are C (root), E (third), G (fifth), B (Major 7th). These are the obvious notes to target. The root note is probably a bit too obvious, but try all possibilities and decide for yourself which ones you prefer.

Disregarding alterations for the time being, the Major 7th chord could be extended to Major 9 or Major 13, throwing up two extra target tone possibilities – D and A. Again you need to experiment with some altered V lines, resolving in each case to a I chord tone and make a note of *what sounds good to you*.

2. Extending Lines Over the I Chord

2.1 In the first article of this series the two examples showed extended I chord lines. These were:-

a) C major scale b) C major 7 arpeggio.

The purpose of including these was to help you internalise the sound quality of the I chord. Using these lines exactly as written would be somewhat 'cheesy', but they can be used as a basis for melodic phrases. See *examples 1 and 2*.

Example 1 uses **fourth intervals**. Try also using the scale in intervals of thirds, fifths, 7ths etc.

Example 2 is based on a C Maj7 arpeggio.

2.2 A very modern sounding line can be created using the appropriate I chord **Lydian mode**. A Lydian scale is merely a major scale with a sharpened fourth (b5) instead of a natural 4th.

See *example 3*

C Lydian (fourth mode of G Major)

C	D	E	F#	G	A	B
1	2	3	b5/#4	5	6	7

An easy way of creating a Lydian sound is by playing a minor pentatonic scale a semitone below the I chord root, so for C Major 7 this would be B minor pentatonic.

See *example 4*

3. V Chord Melodic Ideas

V lines in the examples are based on the following scales and arpeggios, which include one or more of the V chord's altered tones: -

Example 1

G7b9/ G#dim7 arpeggio – first two bars
inspired by Pat Metheny.

The notes of a diminished 7th arpeggio
played a semitone above the root of the V
chord form a rootless V chord dominant 7b9

Example 2

Db major pentatonic scale - used on the
basis that Db7 is a b5 chord substitution for
G7 - inspired by John Scofield

Example 3

G half/whole tone scale

Example 4

G whole tone scale

Notice how the lines change direction in
order to maintain rhythmic interest and are
not just played 'straight'.

4. I hope these examples inspire you to
create some lines of your own. The next
and final article in this series will
concentrate on melodic ideas for the II chord
and try to bring everything together that we
have looked at so far.

- **Simon Newton**

MAJOR II V I MELODIC LINES

Example 1

	Dm9	G7b9	Cmaj9
	G7b9 arpeggio/C# diminished arpeggio		Cmajor scale
T	10 10 12 13 12 11 10	9	10 9 7 9
A	10	10 12 9 12 9 9	10 9 9 7
B		11	

Example 2

	Dm9	G7b9	Cmaj9
	Gtr I	Dm9 arpeggio	Db Major pentatonic -----
		C Major arpeggio	
T	5 8 6 5	6 4 6 4	8 7
A	5 7	6 4	5 4
B	8		

Example 3

	Dm9	G7b9b5	Cmaj9b5
	C half/whole		C Lydian
T	5	5 3	3 2 5 3 2
A	5 7	3 4 6 4	4
B	8 7 5 4 5	5 6	

Example 4

	Dm9	G9b5	Cmaj9b5
	C Whole tone scale		B minor pentatonic
T	5 8 7 6 5	6 8 6 5	7 5 7 5
A	7 7 5	6	7 7
B	7		7 9