

15 II V I licks- Altered Dominants

Jens Larsen 11/2/2017

Thanks for the interest in my videos and lessons and for signing up for my newsletter!

The II V I cadence is the most common device in Jazz Harmony. Learning to play freely and develop vocabulary over this is essential for anybody wanting to improvise in a jazz style. The altered dominant is the next level choice for this cadence, and equally important to master.

This short E-book can work as a sort of index to my video lessons on YouTube

I have many lessons on different devices and ideas related to these lines. For each lick I will make a short description of what is going on and if possible link to a YouTube lesson that explores the device further.

As always you can get more out of these licks if you take the idea and try to make your own lines with them. This is a huge part of how I work with new material!

I hope you find some new ideas and can implement it into your own playing!

Remember that you can help me by subscribing to my YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/JensLarsen>

Lick no 1

Lick no 1

Measure 1: Dm7, mf

Measure 2: G7alt

Measure 3: Cmaj7

Tablature:

String	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3
T	5	9	5
A	8	8	
B	7	8	

In this lick I am using a basic Dm7 and a stack of 4ths on the Dm7. The G7 line is built from the Bb minor pentatonic scale.

If you want to check out more about using the pentatonic scale on a II Valt I then you can do so here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mIZGywe8tA>

Lick no 2

Musical notation for Lick no 2. The notation is in treble clef and consists of three measures. The first measure is labeled 'Dm7' and contains notes: B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The second measure is labeled 'G7alt' and contains notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The third measure is labeled 'Cmaj7' and contains notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The guitar TAB below shows fret numbers: 8, 7, 10, 7, 9, 7, 10, 7 for the first measure; 9, 10, 11, 8, 9, 11, 7, 9 for the second measure; and 10 for the third measure.

Lick no 2 is making use of quartal harmony and upper structure triads on the dominant. Starting with a stack of 4ths from B. Note that the first interval is an augmented 4th. It later continues with an Abm triad. The Dm7 line is built around an Fmaj7 arpeggio with a few added scale notes. What Ted Greene might refer to as a condensed Fmaj7(13) arpeggio.

Lick no 3

Musical notation for Lick no 3. The notation is in treble clef and consists of three measures. The first measure is labeled 'Dm7' and contains notes: B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The second measure is labeled 'G7alt' and contains notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The third measure is labeled 'Cmaj7' and contains notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The guitar TAB below shows fret numbers: 8, 5, 6, 7, 5, 6, 8, 5 for the first measure; 8, 4, 4, 6, 6, 3, 5, 6 for the second measure; and 7 for the third measure.

The Dm7 line in this lick is built around a descending Dm7 arpeggio and a small scale fragment. The G7alt line is using two diatonic arpeggios from G altered or Ab melodic minor: AbmMaj7 and Eb7. It's very useful to check out how you can use the other diatonic arpeggios so that you can build a bigger vocabulary with more melodic material than just the basic arpeggio.

For more ideas on chaining together several arpeggios you can look at this lesson:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76yoV6hWOxl>

Lick no 4

Lick no 4
Dm7 G7alt Cmaj7

TAB: 10 7 8 10 8 7 9 7 | 8 9 8 6 9 8 7 11 | 10

This lick is using a scale run and an Fmaj7 Shell voicing for the Dm7 part. The G7 altered part is built from a non diatonic arpeggio: Bmaj7(b5) followed by a B augmented triad.

More “secret” arpeggios in the altered scale can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1jgscnhLt8>

Lick no 5

Lick no 5
Dm7 G7alt Cmaj7

TAB: 12 10 12 9 10 10 13 12 | 11 12 13 11 12 14 11 13 | 12

Shell voicings are a great melodic device! (just ask Pat Metheny...) In no 5 I start with an Am7 shell voicing as arpeggio and follow that with an Fmaj7 arpeggio. On the G7 alt the line is a more conventional construction from an Ab minor triad and a scale run.

If you want more ideas for shell voicings I talk about this here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KD3M-fjFqJ8>

Lick no 6

Lick no 6
Dm7 G7alt Cmaj7

TAB: 8 7 10 9 7 8 8 5 | 4 8 6 4 8 6 6 8 | 5

Using the arpeggio form the 3rd of the chord is an essential technique to add extensions to the line. In this lick I use Fmaj7 to get an Dm7(9) sound in there. On the 2nd half of the Dm7 line I am using a

stack of 4ths from D to create a Dm11 sound. The G7alt line is a scale sequence in the altered scale that sits nicely on the fretboard.

If you want to explore more of the ideas available over a Dm7 arpeggio you can check out this video with 10 arpeggios over a m7 chord: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfXbtYkDHWo>

Lick no 7

Musical notation for Lick no 7. The notation is presented in two systems: a standard staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature system below it. The tablature system is labeled 'T A B' on the left. The lick is divided into three measures. Measure 19 is labeled 'Dm7' and contains a scalar arpeggio starting on the 10th fret. Measure 20 is labeled 'G7alt' and contains a scale sequence starting on the 8th fret. Measure 21 is labeled 'Cmaj7' and contains a single note on the 5th fret. The tablature for measure 19 shows fret numbers 10, 7, 8, 10, 7, 10, 9, 7. The tablature for measure 20 shows fret numbers 8, 9, 8, 6, 6, 9, 8, 6. The tablature for measure 21 shows fret number 5.

In lick no 7 I use a more scalar approach on the Dm7, but you should notice how it still outlines a Dm7 by having the triad notes on the strong beats. The Altered dominant line here is drawing from the tri-tone material. It is using two triads: Ab minor and Db major. You could hear it as spelling out an Abm7 Db7 sound.

For more ideas on drawing altered sounds from the tri-tone dominant you can check out this lesson:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51MCFyXYyas>

Lick no 8

Musical notation for Lick no 8. The notation is presented in two systems: a standard staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature system below it. The tablature system is labeled 'T A B' on the left. The lick is divided into three measures. Measure 22 is labeled 'Dm7' and contains an extended arpeggio starting on the 5th fret. Measure 23 is labeled 'G7alt' and contains a scale sequence starting on the 8th fret. Measure 24 is labeled 'Cmaj7' and contains a single note on the 5th fret. The tablature for measure 22 shows fret numbers 5, 8, 7, 5, 5, 8, 6, 5. The tablature for measure 23 shows fret numbers 8, 8, 8, 6, 6, 6, 8, 6. The tablature for measure 24 shows fret number 5.

Extended arpeggios like the Dm11 arpeggio I use in Lick no 8 has been a standard part of the jazz vocabulary since Wes Montgomery. They work extremely well for sweep picking. The altered dominant line is in this case a triad pair of the triads Db and Eb. These are both diatonic to Ab melodic minor (or G altered)

If you want to check out more on Triad pairs in the altered scale you can here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wtvmPkMJN8>

Lick no 9

Musical notation for Lick no 9. The treble clef staff shows notes for measures 25, 26, and 27. Measure 25 is marked with a Dm7 chord. Measure 26 is marked with a G7alt chord. Measure 27 is marked with a Cmaj7 chord. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: 10, 8, 7, 10, 7, 7, 10, 7 for measure 25; 8, 10, 11, 8, 9, 10, 11, 9 for measure 26; and 8 for measure 27.

The pentatonic scale is always going to be a great resource for melodic ideas. In this example I am using one of the exercises that I cover in my lesson on unconventional pentatonic exercises. The Altered line is first a scale run and then a stack of 4ths from B.

If you want to check out the video on pentatonic exercises you can do so here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6kLHolnO6A>

Lick no 10

Musical notation for Lick no 10. The treble clef staff shows notes for measures 28, 29, and 30. Measure 28 is marked with a Dm7 chord. Measure 29 is marked with a G7alt chord. Measure 30 is marked with a Cmaj7 chord. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers: 7, 5, 5, 8, 6, 5, 7, 5 for measure 28; 4, 4, 8, 6, 7, 9, 6, 9 for measure 29; and 8 for measure 30.

Using the arpeggio from the 5th to encircle the 3rd is a great, tried and true trick for the II minor chord. The line continues after this with a descending scale run. On the G7alt I am using the Bmaj7(#5) arpeggio and following this with a small scale-pattern before resolving to Cmaj7.

For another thorough look at Altered dominant ideas you can also check out this lesson:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_OTV0GIJfg

Lick no 11

Lick no 11

Dm7

G7alt

Cmaj7

TAB

1 3 2 2 5 3 5 3 4 7 6 4 6 6 4 4 7

Drop2 voicings are such a great tool for structures with large intervals and range. In this line I am using an Fmaj7 drop2 voicing as an arpeggio over the Dm7. Notice how the Dm7 line has a range of more than 2 octaves! On the G altered chord I am using a mix of a scale run and some diatonic 3rd. The line sounds better if one part has a lot of huge intervals and the other is a bit more in a natural smaller range.

If you want to check out more about using Drop2 voicings as arpeggios you can do so here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnNEwNgFZiw>

Lick no 12

Lick no 12

Dm7

G7alt

Cmaj7

TAB

6 5 5 6 3 5 6 3 6 6 6 4 4 3 6 5

Quartal harmony has been a big part of the modern jazz sound since Kind Of Blue and Coltrane in the late 50's and beginning 60's! The entire line here is using quartal 3 part arpeggios. First a stack of 4ths from the G on the Dm7. This gives us a Dm7(11) sound. On the G7alt it's an arpeggio from the Eb that gives us the alterations: b13, b9 and b5.

If you want to check out some more quartal harmony you can do so with in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aL8gSjxRE6E>

Lick no 13

Lick no 13

Dm7

G7alt

Cmaj7

TAB

12 12 13 10 10 12 12 | 13 10 12 13 10 11 13 11 | 10

Some of the “normal” exercises yield some unusual melodies if you apply them to the pentatonic scale. This example starts off with the Dm pentatonic played in “diatonic triads” The G7 part of the lick is focused more on the Bbm connection but not strictly pentatonic.

If you want to explore more ideas from the pentatonic scale you can do so here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-K_oG-GQFE

Lick no 14

Lick no 14

Dm7

G7alt

Cmaj7

TAB

7 6 8 5 6 7 5 6 | 8 4 4 6 6 6 5 8 | 7

Open triads are another great way to use triads in your lines. The wide intervals make for a beautiful open sound! In this lick I am using an open F major triad. The altered dominant line is using a triad pair consisting of a B augmented and Db major triad.

If you want to check out more about triad pairs you can also do so in this first part of 3 videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVjqS7R5HEQ>

Lick no 15

The image shows a musical score for a guitar lick. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a guitar TAB staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The lick is divided into three measures. The first measure is labeled 'Dm7' and contains a quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, and F5. The second measure is labeled 'G7alt' and contains a quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes on Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, and F5. The third measure is labeled 'Cmaj7' and contains a quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes on Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, and F5. The guitar TAB staff shows the fret numbers for each note: 5-10 for the first measure, 9-14 for the second measure, and 11-16-13-15-13-16 for the third measure. The final note in the third measure is on the 17th fret.

This lick opens with a very useful way of playing quartal arpeggios. I cover this in my 3 lessons in the pentatonic scale video that I also linked to above. The altered line is using an Absus4 triad as an upper-structure triad. Something you can also explore further in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWEPQaBMMi8>

I hope you can use the lines and have some new ideas to start working with!