Minor ii-V-i

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Nature of Minors

- Variety of minor scales (all have b3):
  - Melodic: b3
  - Dorian: b3, b7 (mode 2 of major)
  - Natural or Aeolian: b3, b6, b7 (mode 2 of major)
  - Phrygian: b3, b6, b7, b2 (mode 3 of major)
  - Locrian: b3, b6, b7, b2, b5 (mode 7 of major)
  - Super-Locrian: b3, b6, b7, b2, b5, b4 (mode 7 of melodic minor)
  - Harmonic: b3, b6
Composite Minors

• In addition to the above, there are minor scales that combine several other minors, e.g. there are two different scales called “Minor bebop”:
  - 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, b7, 7
  - 1, 2, b3, 3, 4, 5, 6, b7

• And there are lots of other forms of minor we’ve not mentioned.
The Soloist

• The soloist does not have to be too concerned with which minor it is:
  - Use b3.
  - Use any of b6, 6, b7, 7 that “sound good” over the changes.
  - Use b9 when it sounds good.
Tonic Minor Chords

• This refers to the i chords in the Melodic Minor scale:
  - $i_{m69}$: 1, b3, 5, 6, 9
  - $i_{Maj7}$: 1, b3, 5, 7

• These are typically the most “stable” sounding minor i chord, although they are at the same time fairly “pungent”
Tonic Minor Chords

- minor 69 has the stronger sound
- minor 69 has **same voicings** as a V\(^7\), but different root, one a 5th below, and with the type switched.
  - example: Fm69 type A voiced the same as Bb7 type B
Tonic Minor Chords

$Cm^6_{99}$

$Cm^{Maj7}$
ii Chord in Minor

• Here we have a minor-7 flat-5 or “half-diminished” chord ∅ (b3-b5-b7).

• This chord is not in the melodic minor scale; it is in the harmonic and natural minor scales (b3 of ii = 4 of i, and b5 of ii = b6 of i).

• These considerations are based on sound.
Scale for the ii Chord

• Consider the Locrian scale, possibly avoiding the 9 or with a raised 9.
• The Locrian scale is the same key as the major scale one half-step above.
• Example: D locrian = Eb major.
Voicing the ii Chord in Minor

- Adding a 9 is problematic, since it is minor in the scale
  (9 of ii = b3 of i) and doesn’t always sound good.
- A natural, rather than flat, 9 can sometimes be used.
- We can avoid the problem by using 1 instead of 9:
  b3, b5, b7, 1 (= 4, b6, 1, 2 of i)
- An alternative nice-sounding voicing is to use 4 instead of b3:
  1, 4, b5, b7 (= 2, 5, b6, 1 of i)
- The latter voicing is the same as one used for dominants (3, 6, b7, 9).
V Chord in Minor

• Usually we use a V7b9 or V7alt (= V7#5#9)
• Note that #9 = b3.
• With the V7b9 it is only necessary to move one finger from the ii chord b3, b5, b7, 1 voicing.
• Using V7b9 therefore parallels the ii-V in major.
• The V7alt voicing: 3, #5, b7, #9 is the same as the voicing of a dominant chord a tritone below: b7, 9, 3, 6, which is also just the second voicing for ii transposed up a fourth.
Scale for the V chord in minor

- The scale is a a dominant or (more usually) altered dominant scale.
- The alterations can include:
  - b9
  - #9
  - #5 (= b6)
- Do not play unaltered 9 or 5 respectively when these alterations are present.
Typical Scales for V in minor

For $V7^b9$: $G$ Half-Whole Diminished Scale

(Note that this scale has 8 tones, consisting of alternating half and whole steps.)

For $V7^#5^#9$: $G$ Altered scale (diminished whole-tone scale)

(Note that this scale has 7 tones, and is the seventh mode of melodic minor. From b4 (= 3) on, it is a whole-tone scale.)
Minor ii- $V7^{b9}$ Progression A-B

$b7$ resolves to 3. Only one finger moves, the one on 7. The type changes.

Type A:
$b3$-$b5$-$b7$-$1$

Type B:
$b7$-$b9$-$3$-$5$

![Diagram of the progression with finger numbers and types labeled]
Minor ii- $V7^{b9}$ Progression B-A

b7 resolves to 3. Only one finger moves, the one on b7.
The type changes.

Type B: $b7-1-b3-b5$

Type A: $3-5-b7-b9$
Minor V7\textsuperscript{b9}-i Progression B-A

b7 resolves to b3. Three fingers move. The type changes.

Type B:  \( b7-b9-3-5 \)

Type A:  \( b3-5-6-9 \)
Minor V7º9-i Progression A-B

b7 resolves to b3. Three fingers move. The type changes.

Type A: 3-5-b7-b9

Type B: 6-9-b3-5
Minor ii-V-i Progression A-B-A

Type A:
\[ b3-b5-b7-1 \]

Type B:
\[ b7-b9-3-5 \]

Type A:
\[ b3-5-6-9 \]
Minor ii-V-i Progression

using $V7^{alt}$ (= $V7^{#5#9}$)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{DØ} & & \text{G7}^{alt} & & \text{Cm}^{69} \\
\text{everything} & & \text{up minor 3rd} & & \\
\begin{array}{l}
1-4-b5-b7 \\
b7-#9-3-#5 \\
b3-5-6-9
\end{array}
\end{align*}
\]
Note

• I have not shown all the possible inversions of the voicings.
• I am leaving it to you to work out some of these, as well as deal with the range issues of the various voicings.
Reference


• Phil DeGreg, *Jazz Keyboard Harmony*, Jamey Aebersold Jazz, Inc.

• Randy Halberstadt, *Metaphors for the Musician*, Sher Music, Inc.