

# Where Chords Come From #2

## The Circle of Keys

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**Where The Chords Come From #2 - The Circle of 4ths/5ths** - Note that when the pointer is to "C" as our key, its IV chord is there on the left and the V chord is there on the right. This will work with any key where you place the pointer. Using the circle, we can go outside of the key to get chords which create a sense of anticipation for the one we're going to. If playing in C, we may use a D chord to help lead in to the G chord. This is called a secondary dominant. We can even go a step further and use an A chord to lead to the D chord. In rarer cases, we might want to land on the IV chord and pick the next chord outside in the circle to lead it in. As you look at the examples below, follow the chords around on the circle.

### The Circle of Keys (4ths/5ths)

D<sup>b</sup>/C<sup>♯</sup> A<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> F C G D A E B/C<sup>b</sup> F<sup>♯</sup>/G<sup>b</sup>

IV I V

**Secondary Dominants to Create Anticipation** - See how the E7 accents the following Am and how the D7 does the same for the G. Most chord outside the basic I-IV-V chord changes are selected by thinking backward from target chords like the Am and the G

C Am E<sup>7</sup> Am D<sup>7</sup> G

Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the pe - ri - ous fight,

**Change of Key Center** - This song is in C, but changes temporarily to key of G in m.3-4.

C D<sup>7</sup> G

I've been wor - kin' on the rail - road just to pass the time a - way.

**Secondary Subdominants to Create Anticipation** - A less frequent use of the Circle is to create anticipation for a IV chord with the IV of IV. In this very famous example, a song that would've just been I & IV is considerably spiced up with addition of B-flat as IV/IV.

C B<sup>b</sup> F C B<sup>b</sup> F

Sweet home A - la - ba - ma, Where skies are so blue,

**Secondary Subdominant Helps Create a Temporary Key Change** - The length over which this B-flat to F chord change occurs makes it seem to function as a IV-I in the key of F. The song is in C.

Am G B<sup>b</sup> F

Rock - y Top, you'll al - ways be home sweet home to me.

**Going Around the Circle** - This old bluegrass tune stretches out to 2 notches past its V chord and works its way back to I along the circle. Follow it as it goes. Starting in C, it lingers in D (with an A7 added for anticipation) and gets back to a V-I in C in m.3-4.

C A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C

Let me be your sal - ty dog, or I won't be your man at all. Honey, let me be your sal - ty dog.