

Circle of Fifths Progressions

Sometimes referred to as a “1-3-6-2-5” progression.

Also called “going around the horn”.

A very common chord sequence in tin pan alley songs.

“Five Foot Two” example

I III-7 VI-7 II-7 V-7 I numerical

C E7 A7 D7 G7 C example chords

D F#7 B7 E7 A7 D other keys

E G#7 C#7 F#7 B7 E

F A7 D7 G7 C7 F

G B7 E7 A7 D7 G

A C#7 F#7 B7 E7 A

B Eb7 Ab7 Db7 Gb7 B

- Take the circle of fifths.
- Start at the key of interest (easiest to rotate to the top of page)
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- Go four steps clockwise around the circle (which happens to be the third note in the scale).
- The first step is always the root chord going to the “three” chord.
- From the “three” chord, follow the circle back counterclockwise to “home base” one step at a time.
- You must pay attention to the sharps and flats.

Most fretted instruments play in the “caged” keys plus F.

Notice that a7 - d7 - g7 keeps appearing.

Notice that the sequence “bead” keeps appearing.