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Worksheet: Spelling Fully-Diminished and Half-Diminished Quality Seventh Chords--Includes Answer Key

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Fully-Diminished and Half-Diminished 7th Chords

Dr. Telesco

The Diatonic half-diminished ($\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$) and fully-diminished ($\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$) 7th chords are built on the Leading Tone (*ti*) in major and minor keys, and are Dominant-function chords.

The half-diminished 7th chord ($\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$) is diatonic in *major* keys, comprising scale degrees:

$\hat{7} \hat{2} \hat{4} \hat{6}$ (*ti re fa la*)

The fully-diminished 7th chord ($\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$) is diatonic in *minor* keys, comprising scale degrees:

$\hat{7} \hat{2} \hat{4} (\downarrow)\hat{6}$ (*ti re fa le*).

Note that the vii° triad in either a major or minor key is the upper three notes of a V^7 . Thus, if you can spell a Dominant 7th in any *major* key, omit the root and add *la* and you will have the $\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$; in *minor*, omit the root and add *le*, and you will have the $\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$:



C: V^7 $\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$



c: V^7 $\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$

Alternatively, many people think of Leading-tone 7th chords as Dominant 9th chords without the roots.

The Dominant 9th in a *major* key is a major-minor 7th with a *Major* 9th, comprising scale degrees:

$\hat{5} \hat{7} \hat{2} \hat{4} \hat{6}$ (*sol ti re fa la*).

The Dominant 9th in a *minor* key is a major-minor 7th with a *Minor* 9th, comprising scale degrees:

$\hat{5} \hat{7} \hat{2} \hat{4} (\downarrow)\hat{6}$ (*sol ti re fa le*).

So if you can spell the diatonic V_7^9 in a major or minor key, just omit the root and you will have the $\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$, or $\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$, respectively:



C: V^7 $\text{V}^{(M)9}$ $\text{vii}^{\flat 7}$



c: V^7 $\text{V}^{(m)9}$ $\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$