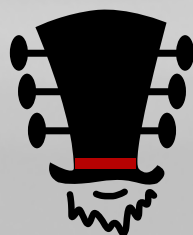


# USE THESE SECRET CHORDS FROM FAMOUS SONGS... THAT SHOULD NOT WORK

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## Relative Major and Minor

EVERY major key has a relative minor key and every minor key has a relative major key. See the Number System Matrix again. The “6-” of any major key is the “1-” of its relative minor key(some will be shown in the lower section of the page). Conversely, the “3” of any minor key is the relative major.

MANY songwriter’s unknowingly use this to their advantage when a basic 1, 4, 5 progression introduces the “sad” 6- chord. Pink Floyd among a myriad of other bands has mastered this emotional pull and push by fluctuating back and forth between relative major and minor. Because these relatives share the same notes and chords, one can easily

Borrowed Chords and “what not”: We are not messing with you now! There really are “borrowed” chords, but we are not borrowing them from another song, we are borrowing them from another key(parallel major or minor). If you refer to the Number System Matrix/Chart, you will notice that major key chords follow this pattern:

1 Major  
2 Minor  
3 Minor  
4 Major  
5 Major  
6 Minor  
7 Diminished

Another way to look at this is with roman numerals like:

I      ii      iii      IV      V      vi      vii\*

To play a minor scale and find our minor chords for a minor key, we simply need to think of vi chord from the major key as our “one” or tonal center. If we do this, our minor key chords are:

vi      vii\*      I      ii      iii      IV      V

With the “vi” or 6 chord being our tonal center. Since our tonal center is usually referred to as our “one” chord, the minor key chords could also be thought of like this:

i      ii\*      III      iv      v      VI      VII

This is REALLY a matter of choice. Living in Nashville, most musicians think about the chords as if they are in a major key, almost always! It makes sense, as you really only have one set of chords to remember, instead of two(major AND minor).

However in the case of analyzing borrowed chords, it’s helpful to think of the minor tonal center as the “one”, or 1-, or 1 minor. Here is why!

The basic “rule of thumb” of borrowed chords says that the major chord set of:

I      ii      iii      IV      V      vi      vii\*

can “borrow” chords from its “parallel” equivalent(minor):

i      ii\*      III      iv      v      VI      VII

NOW, don't freak out if you don't get this yet. Briefly, there are two types of major/minor relationships that we need to discuss quickly. Relative major/minor and Parallel major/minor.

Relative Major/Minor: Let's start with the strict definition which says: In music, relative keys are the major and minor scales that have the same key signatures. A pair of major and minor scales sharing the same key signature are said to be in a relative relationship.

That is, they share the SAME set of notes and chords.

For example:

The key of G major's notes are: G A B C D E F#

The key of E minor's notes are: E F# G A B C D

SAME notes, different order and different tonal center.

G major's chords are: Gmaj Amin Bmin Cmaj Dmaj Emin F#dim

E minor's chords are: Emin F#dim Gmaj Amin Bmin Cmaj Dmaj

SAME chords, different order and different move back and forth between them. Think again about two opposing political views that may be using all the same words, but it's the HOW they use those words that determine their stance on a particular subject.

Parallel major/minor: Okay this one is a LOT easier to understand, but you most likely will not use it as much except in the case of "borrowed chords".

So let's revisit our rule on borrowed chords:

The basic "rule of thumb" of borrowed chords says that the major chord set of:

I ii iii IV V vi vii\*

can "borrow" chords from it's "parallel" equivalent(minor):

i ii\* III iv v VI VII

It's also true that we can do the opposite. If we are in a minor key, we could "borrow" chords from the PARALLEL major.

Now remember, just like every great song sticks to the theme, title or central idea lyrical, music should do the same in order to not "rabbit trail" and end up confusing the listener. Just like one might refer to something else abstract to describe a feeling lyrically(i.e. "cuts like a knife, but it feels to right", we can also do this musically. We know Bryan Adams is not singing about knives, right? Of course not! He's singing about love, but the quick reference to something that normally would not work, actually helps to drive the lyric and give us something to hold on to. Musically, we can do this with borrowed chords, but because we are essentially "changing keys" for that one or two chords that we decide to change, we REALLY need to get back to the symmetry of our original chords as prescribed by the major scale: I ii iii IV V iv iiv\*. If we don't, it will be similar to Bryan singing a whole chorus about knives: paring knives, butter knives, swiss-army knives. Weird, right? EXACTLY! We need to stick to the symmetry that makes music so addictive. However, dropping in a borrowed chord every now and then can REALLY change the feel of your song and melody and may be "just what the doctor ordered"!

Technically, there is no rule that says that we can't use any and every chord with no regards to relative or parallel major/minor whatsoever. However, again music and art in general is based in symmetry, so while technically, there ARE NO RULES, in the real world, there FOR SURE are, especially when it comes to writing commercial/popular music. With that being said, here

are some of our favorite “outside” chords and where they can be found. Some are borrowed and some have yet to be defined here:

If our major chord set is:

Major Scale            1        2-        3-        4        5        6-        7\*

We have found these chords borrowed from the parallel minor:

Borrowed-minor                    2\*                    4-

Other outside chords(not “borrowed”)

    2            b3    b6            b7

If our minor chord set is:

Minor Scale            1-        2\*        3        4-        5-        6        7

We have found these chords borrowed from the parallel minor:

Borrowed-major                    2-    5            6-

Examples:

<u>Song</u>	<u>Artist</u>	<u>Chord(from where)</u>
House /Rising Sun	The Animals	3 (parallel minor) If analyzed as a major key
		2 (just because)
		If from a minor key analyzed 4 and 5 being borrowed from rel major
Refugee	Tom Petty	2 if in a major key
American Girl	Tom Petty	2 if in a major key
Comfortably Numb	Pink Floyd	b7 if in a major key, you are only
coming through in waves	C major to the key of D major	
Before He Cheats	Carrie Underwood	3 if in a major key(4th chord in
verse)		5 if in a minor key
Good Vibrations	Beach Boys	3 if in major key(4th chord in verse)
Rocky Mountain High	John Denver	b7
Is It Any Wonder	Keane	-5(bridge)

## Borrowed Chords

Major Scale	1	2-	3-	4	5	6-	7*
Borrowed-minor		2*	b3	4-		b6	
Alternate		2					b7

Minor Scale	1-	2*	3	4-	5-	6	7
Borrowed-major		2-			5	6-	

### Examples:

House /Rising Sun	The Animals	2 and 3
Refugee	Tom Petty	2
American Girl	Tom Petty	2
Comfortably Numb	Pink Floyd	b7
Before He Cheats	Carrie Underwood	3
Good Vibrations	Beach Boys	3
Rocky Mountain High	John Denver	b7
Is It Any Wonder	Keane	-5(bridge)