

Diminished Subs – Comping and Soloing

The next set of subs is based on the dim7 chord, and is referred to as diminished subs.

These subs are applied to each 4-bar phrase, so bars 1-4, 5-8, etc.

When doing so, you start inside, then move outside for 3 bars, before resolving back to the tonic chord and can start again from there.

These subs are built by make the tonic chord, Dm7 and Ebm7, into a dim7 chord, then harmonizing those notes from there.

So, you turn Dm7 into Ddim7, D-F-A \flat -B, then make each of those notes a m7 chord, Dm7-Fm7-Abm7-Bm7.

Here's how you build these tension/release subs for Dm7 and Ebm7.

Here are the notes in a Ddim7 chord.

D-F-A \flat -B

And here are the notes in an Ebdim7 chord.

E \flat -G \flat -A-C

Now, you make each of those notes in Ddim7 a m7 chord, like so:

Dm7-Fm7-Abm7-Bm7

And here are the chords added to the Ebdim7 chord.

Ebm-Gbm7-Am7-Cm7

Now that you know how to build the subs, and that you add them to any 4-bar phrase in the tune, here are some tips on practicing.

When working on chords, you can use any/all of the following chord types to work on these subs over So What.

- 3-Note 4th Chords
- 4-Note 4th Chords
- Bill Evans Chords
- Drop 3 Chords
- Drop 2 Chords

As well, you can use the following to get started with working on these subs as single notes in your solos.

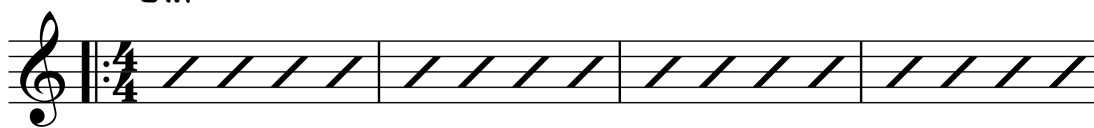
- Pentatonic Scales
- Arpeggios
- Dorian Mode
- Extended Arpeggios
- Melodic Minor
- Licks and Phrases

As you apply these subs to So What, you might find that in bars 16 and 24 you need an extra tonic chord before changing sections.

If this is the case, you can add a short Dm7 in the second half of bar 16 and a short Ebm7 in the second half of bar 24.

This resolves those sections before you change the chord in the next section, in bars 17 and 25.

Dm⁷



Dm7_____ Fm7_____ Abm7_____ Bm7_____



Dm7_____ Fm7_____ Abm7_____ Bm7_____

Ebm⁷



Ebm7_____ Gbm7_____ Am7_____ Cm7_____



Ebm7_____ Gbm7_____ Am7_____ Cm7_____

Dm⁷



Dm7_____ Fm7_____ Abm7_____ Bm7_____



Dm7_____ Fm7_____ Abm7_____ Bm7_____

Here's the descending variation of the diminished subs that you can add to your comping and/or soloing over So What.

The concept is the same, but now you descend the harmonized dim7 chord over Dm7 and Ebm7.

Here's how that would look over Dm7:

Dm7-Bm7-Abm7-Fm7

And over Ebm7 you would play:

Ebm7-Cm7-Am7-Gbm7

Again, when switching sections, you can sneak in an extra tonic chord to resolve that section before moving on.

This means adding in an extra Dm7 in bar 16 and an extra Ebm7 in bar 24 of the form to resolve those sections before changing chords.

As was the case with the ascending version of these subs, you can work the follow chords over the diminished subs.

- 3-Note 4th Chords
- 4-Note 4th Chords
- Bill Evans Chords
- Drop 3 Chords
- Drop 2 Chords

And, to get you started, here are some ideas for working single notes over these chord subs.

- Pentatonic Scales
- Arpeggios
- Dorian Mode
- Extended Arpeggios
- Melodic Minor
- Licks and Phrases

Now that you know how to practice these subs, time to take them to the fretboard.

Start by adding these subs to the slow backing track, then move on to the faster tracks when ready.

Lastly, you can mix up the ascending and descending versions of these subs when comfortable in your comping and soloing.

So, you could play the ascending version over bars 1-4, then the descending version over bars 5-8 for example.

Have fun with these tension/release subs as you expand your playing over So What in the woodshed.

Dm7

Dm7_____ Bm7_____ Abm7_____ Fm7_____

Dm7_____ Bm7_____ Abm7_____ Fm7_____

Ebm7

Ebm7_____ Cm7_____ Am7_____ Gbm7_____

Ebm7_____ Cm7_____ Am7_____ Gbm7_____

Dm7

Dm7_____ Bm7_____ Abm7_____ Fm7_____

Dm7_____ Bm7_____ Abm7_____ Fm7_____