After learning about secondary dominants, you might wonder if it’s possible to extend the concept to other chords. For example, if we can use a dominant function chord from a related key, what about a subdominant function chord from a related key, like IV of V?

Well, the answer is yes, and the chords that result are called secondary subdominants. But before we talk about them, you need to understand a few things.

First of all, the very existence of these chords is debatable.

What one theorist might call a secondary subdominant:

\[
\begin{align*}
C: & \quad \text{ii}^7 \quad V^3 \quad V^6 \quad I \\
G: & \quad \text{ii}^7 \quad V^3 \quad I^6 \\
& \quad C: \quad V^6 \quad I
\end{align*}
\]

Another might call a short modulation.

Second, the only place we find chords that we can call secondary subdominants is in the music of the Romantic era.

Lastly, since these chords are already pushing the limits of tonality, composers would only use secondary subdominants from closely related keys. In other words, secondary subdominants should only be "of IV" and "of V."

Keeping these things in mind, let’s look at the possibilities: what are all the subdominant function chords we’ve encountered?

First, there are the diatonic triads:

- ii
- IV

Next, the diatonic seventh chords:

- ii7
- IV7

And, lastly, a few borrowed chords:

- ii°
- iv

So a secondary subdominant can have any subdominant function chord above the slash, and a IV or V below the slash.

However, the most commonly found secondary subdominants are those that use the half-diminished supertonic seventh.

To approach these chords, use any of the basic root movements, which are awesome.

The most common way to resolve secondary subdominants is to the corresponding secondary dominant.