Funk and jazz chords in A minor — a chord finder

Listening to an Am7 groove and trying to name the next chord? Find the bass note first, then match the color. Each card shows the left-hand bass and a right-hand voicing.

left-hand bass
right-hand voicing
keyboard C2 to E5

Home: four faces of Am7

Am7 — home base
A C E G. Right hand: 3rd, 5th, 7th.



LH **A** · RH C E G

Am9 — soft vamp
Adds B, the 9th. The neo-soul and jazz-funk default.



LH **A** · RH C E G B

G/A — no 3rd, pure funk
G B D over A. Also written A9sus4 or Am11 (no 3rd).



LH **A** · RH G B D

Am6/9 — Dorian color
F#, the 6th, brightens the minor.



LH **A** · RH C F# B E

Dorian IV: the D chords

D7 — Dorian IV
D F# A C. F# with C means D dominant.



LH **D** · RH F# A C

D9 — Am7's favorite partner
F# C E: 3rd, 7th, 9th. The classic funk right hand.



LH **D** · RH F# C E

D13 — wide IV
Adds B, the 13th. Bar two of a jazz-funk vamp.



LH **D** · RH F# C E B

C/D — D7sus
G instead of F#. Held long, it leans toward Dm7.



LH **D** · RH G C E

Other chords in the key

Bm7♭5 — ii (natural minor)
B D F A. Half a bar before E7.



LH **B** · RH D F A

Bm7 — ii (Dorian)
B D F# A. One step up from Am7.



LH **B** · RH D F# A

Cmaj7 — bIII
C E G B. Shares three notes with Am7.



LH **C** · RH E G B

Dm7 — iv (natural minor)
D F A C. F natural: Dm7. F#: D7.



LH **D** · RH F A C

Em7 — v
E G B D. A soft five, not a dominant.



LH **E** · RH G B D

Fmaj7 — bVI
F A C E. Bass drops to F.



LH **F** · RH A C E

F#m7♭5 — vi (Dorian)
F# A C E. Fmaj7 with the bass a half step up.



LH **F#** · RH A C E

G9 — bVII7
G B F A. Before Am7, or after Fmaj7.



LH **G** · RH B F A

G13 — bVII, wide
Adds E, the 13th. A G vamp.



LH **G** · RH B F A E

The way home: E dominant

E7 — V
E G# B D. Hear G#? It is an E dominant.



LH **E** · RH G# B D

E7(♭9) — jazz V
Adds F, the b9. The minor-key standard.



LH **E** · RH G# D F

E7(♯9) — funk V
G and G# together: the "Hendrix chord".



LH **E** · RH G# D G

E7alt — b13 and #9
C and G on top. Maximum pull home.



LH **E** · RH G# C D G

Bb7 — tritone sub
Bb D F Ab, in place of E7.



LH **Bb** · RH D F Ab

Passing chords

Abm7 — half step below
Slides up into Am7 on the last beat.



LH **Ab** · RH B Eb Gb

Bbm7 — half step above
Between Am7 and Bm7, half a bar.



LH **Bb** · RH Db F Ab

C9 — to Fmaj7
C E Bb D. Bb means C dominant, not Cmaj7.



LH **C** · RH E Bb D

B7 — to Em7
D# means B dominant, not Bm7.



LH **B** · RH D# F# A

F#7 — to Bm7
A# means F# dominant, not F#m7b5.



LH **F#** · RH A# C# E

Eight progressions to listen for

Dorian vamp	**Am7 | D9 | Am7 | D9**	Bass moves only between A and D.
Walking up	**Am7 Bm7 | Cmaj7 Bm7 | Am7**	Bass walks A B C B.
Minor ii-V	**Am7 | Bm7♭5 E7(♭9) | Am7**	Half a bar each for the ii and V.
bVI-bVII	**Am7 | Fmaj7 | G13 | Am7**	Long F and G bass, then back to A.
Wide Dorian vamp	**Am9 | D13 | Am9 | D13**	The same, with 9ths and 13ths on top.
Walking down	**Am7 | G9 | Fmaj7 | E7(♯9)**	Bass falls A G F E, then home.
Half-step approach	**Am7 Abm7 | Am7 | Dm7 | Em7**	Abm7 slips in for half a beat.
Tritone sub	**Am7 | Dm7 | Bb7 | Am7**	Bb7 takes the place of E7.

Spelling: b = flat, # = sharp, G/A = G chord over A in the bass