

Borrowed Chords

Music

Taking a chord from the parallel key to darken or brighten a progression.

Chords borrowed from C minor while remaining in C major.

Chord	In C	Effect
VII	B	Rock, modal, open
VI	A	Cinematic lift
III	E	Dark, sudden
iv	F minor	Wistful — the classic borrow
ii°	D dim	Tense, leads to V

IV to iv to I is one of the most reliable emotional moves in songwriting. Major, then the same chord made minor.