

## Satin Doll

Here are the fingerings that I use to play a chord-melody arrangement of Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and Johnny Mercer’s 1953 standard *Satin Doll* from "Sophisticated Ladies." The song form is "A–A–B–A." I play it in the key of G not the original key of C. The song is played in a medium 4/4 swing tempo. Alternate chord substitutions are indicated in parentheses above the chord I used.

K. J. McElrath, Musicologist for JazzStandards.com, explains the tune this way: "The repetitive “A” section melody sounds suspiciously as if it began life as a “riff” or background figure that section players use as accompaniment to a soloist (similar to an ostinato). Section “B” is a bit more developed, based on a scale pattern that descends a fourth and then ascends back up a fourth.

The chord progression of “A” is interesting because it starts out with a harmonic sequence often used as a “turnaround” at the end of a tune—ii7 – V7 – ii7 – VI7. The fifth and sixth measures of “A” almost defy analysis. If a composer following the classical rules of voice leading had written the harmonic progression here, it would have been II7 (or ii7) – V7(#9)– I (D7 or Dm7 – G7(#9) – Cma7 in the original). Instead, the chords used seem completely coloristic and yet disguise the voice-leading function definitely present when looked at closely. In the fifth measure, the first chord written is Am7(b5)/Eb (which could have been written as an Ebø7—and actually is), which proceeds to the D7 – the II7 we would expect to find there. The next chord, however, is Abm9, which resolves to Db9. Under normal circumstances, one would think of this as a ii7 – V7 – I in Gb, but really what has happened is that the Abm9 has been an embellishment of the “Neapolitan” chord (in the key of C, a Db7) which is nothing more than a tri-tone substitution for V7. Indeed, proper voice-leading technique is still present, albeit disguised almost beyond recognition.

Section “B” is more orthodox sounding: ii7 – V7 – I in F and G major. Transition back to section “A” is accomplished by dropping the middle three voices of the G7 chord a half-step, creating a vii°7/ii in the original tonic key of C major."

### Intro

Am7	A#m7	Bm7	Bbm7	Am7	Abm7	Gm7	Gbm7	Gm7	G#m7
E-----	A#m7	Bm7	Bbm7	Am7	Abm7	Gm7	Gbm7	Gm7	G#m7
B--5----	6----	--7---	6----	--5---	4----	--3--	2--	3--	4--
G--5----	6----	--7---	6----	--5---	4----	--3--	2--	3--	4--
D--5----	6----	--7---	6----	--5---	4----	--3--	2--	3--	4--
A-----									
E--5-5--	6-6--	--7-7-	6-6--	--5-5-	4-4--	--3--	2--	3--	4--

**A**

(Am9 D7 D13) (Bm9) (Bm9)  
 Am7 D7 D9 Am7 D7 D9 Bm7 E7 E13 Bm7 E7 E13

E-----0--|--0-----0--|--2---2--0-2--|--2--0-2--|  
 B--5-3-5--3-3--|--1---3-3--|--3-5-----0-2--|--3--0-2--|  
 G--5---5--5-5--|--0---5-5--|--2-----1-1--|--2--1-1--|  
 D--5---5--4-4--|--2---4-4--|--4-----0-0--|--4--0-0--|  
 A-----5-5--|-0-----5-5--|--2-----2-2--|-2---2-2--|  
 E--5---5-----|-----|-----0-0--|-----0-0--|

1. 2. 3. 4.

(A9 G A9)  
 (Em7b5 A7) (G69 Ebo Am7 D7 )  
 (Gm/Bb A7) (G6 C Bm7 E7b9)  
 C13 C9 C13 Ebm9 Ab7 Ab13 GM7 Gb7#5 F13 E7

E---5--3--5---|-----|-----|-----|  
 B---3--3--3---|---6--4--6---|---3---3---|---3---3---||  
 G---3--3--3---|---6--5--5---|---4---3---|---2---1---||  
 D---2--2--2---|---4--4--4---|---4---2---|---1---0---||  
 A--3---3--3---|--6---6-----|-----|-----2---||  
 E-----|-----4--4---|---3-3-2-2-|---1-1-0-0-||

5. 6. 7. 8.

**A**

Am7 D7 D9 Am7 D7D9Bbm7 Bm7 E7 E13 Bm7 E7 E13

E--0---0---0--|--0---0-1-|--2---2--0-2--|--2--0-2--|  
 B--1-3-1--3-3--|--1--3-3-2-|--3-5-----0-2--|--3--0-2--|  
 G--0---0--5-5--|--0--5-5-1-|--2-----1-1--|--2--1-1--|  
 D--2---2--4-4--|--2--4-4-3-|--4-----0-0--|--4--0-0--|  
 A--0---0--5-5--|-0--5-5-1-|--2-----2-2--|-2---2-2--|  
 E-----|-----|-----0-0--|-----0-0--|

9. 10. 11. 12.

(C13C9C13) (G69 Ab13 G69 G7sus)  
 Gm9 A7 Ebm9 Ab7 Ab13 GM7 Am11 A#o7 Bm7

E---5--3--5---|-----|-----|-----|  
 B---3--2-----|---6--4--6---|---3---3---|---2---3---||  
 G---3--0-----|---6--5--5---|---4---0---|---0---2---||  
 D---3--2-----|---4--4--4---|---4---2---|---2---0---||  
 A-----0-----|--6---6-----|-----0-0-|---1-1-2-2-||  
 E--3-----|-----4--4---|---3-3-----|-----|

13. 14. 15. 16.

**B**

(Dm9)				(C69 Db9 C69 B7)	
Dm11	G7	Dm11	G7	CM7 Am7	Dm11 G7
E--3-1-0-----	--3-1-0-----	-3---3---	--3---3---		
B--1-----3-5-6--	--1-----3-5-6-	-0---1---	--1---3---		
G--2-----4-----	--2-----4-----	-0---0---	--2---4---		
D--0-----3-----	--0-----3-----	-2---2---	--0-0-3---		
A-----5-----	-----5-----	-3-3-0-0	-----5---		
E-----3-----	-----3-----	-----	-----3-3-		
17.	18.	19.	20.		

Em11	A7	Em11	A7	Eo	Am7 D9	Bm7 E7
E--5-3-2--0-2-3--	--5-3-2--0-2-3--	-5---5---	-----			
B--3-----2-----	--3-----2-----	-5---5---	--3--0--			
G--4-----0-----	--4-----0-----	-5---5---	--2--1--			
D--2-----2-----	--2-----2-----	-5---4---	--4--0--			
A-----0-----	-----0-----	-----5-5	-2---2---			
E-----	-----	-5-5-----	-----0--			
21.	22.	23.	24.			

**A**

Am7	D7 D9	Am7 D7 D9	Bm7	E7 E13	Bm7 E7 E13
E--0---0---0---	--0---0---	--2---2---0-2--	--2--0-2--		
B--1-3-1--3-3--	--1--3-3--	--3-5---0-2--	--3--0-2--		
G--0---0--5-5--	--0---5-5--	--2-----1-1--	--2--1-1--		
D--2---2--4-4--	--2---4-4--	--4-----0-0--	--4--0-0--		
A--0---0--5-5--	--0---5-5--	--2-----2-2--	-2---2-2--		
E-----	-----	-----0-0--	-----0-0--		
25.	26.	27.	28.		

A7	Ebm9 Ab7 Ab13	G69	(Bm7b5 E7b9)
E--5-----5---	-----	-----	-----
B--5---8--5---	---6--4--6---	-----3-----	-----
G--6--6--6---	---6--5--5---	-----2-----	-----
D--5--5--5---	---4--4--4---	-----2-----	-----
A--7--7--7---	---6--6-----	-----2-----	-----
E--5--5--5---	---4--4-----	-----3-----	-----
29.	30.	31.	32.