The Diminished Chord
Which scale on which diminished chord?

As the diminished chords can be transposed in minor thirds and you get the same chord in four different inversions there are three different diminished chords. Let’s have a closer look at these three chords in the key of C.

**key of C major**

![Chord Diagram]

VIIº7  VIIº7  IIº7  IVº7  bVIº7

Fº7  Cº7  Eº7  Fº7  Aº7

#IVº7  Iº7  bIIIº7  #IVº7  VIº7

Cº7  Cº7  Eº7  Gº7  Bº7

**VIIº7**

The most common diminished chord is probably the one on the VIIth degree. It occurs as a diminished chord on the II, IV, bVI and VII degree.

To find out which scale to play over this chord we use harmonic embedding: we fill the gaps between the chord tones with notes from the key we’re in, in this case C major

**key of C major**

![Chord Diagram]

VIIº7

The scale we get is the Cmajor-scale with an Ab starting on B. This scale is called major b6 or harmonic major (according to harmonic minor). So we could call this scale HarmMaj7 (=Harmonic Major Scale starting on the 7th degree).

So over a VIIº7 chord (and it’s inversions) in major we play B HarmMaj7.

Practical experience shows that B HarmMin7 also sounds good, probably because VIIº7 is borrowed from the key of C minor.

Let’s do the same in C minor:

**key of C minor**

![Chord Diagram]

The notes of the chord filled with notes of the scale (C minor)

VIIº7

The resulting scale is C harmonic minor starting on B, so B HarmMin7.

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The next form is #IV°7, I rather see #IV°7 as the basic form of this inversion than I°7, bIII°7 or VI°7. Again we apply harmonic embedding:

**key of C major**

The resulting scale is F# HarmMaj7.

Again F# HarmMin7 sounds good, too.

**key of C minor**

The resulting scale is F# HarmMin7.

The resulting scale is C# HarmMin7.

The resulting scale is C#?? (found no common name for this scale). Practically C# HarmMin7 sounds ok.