

Triads

Stack of Thirds

- Begin with an extended major or harmonic minor scale
- Build a three note stack of thirds on each note within the given key
- Identify the characteristic intervals of each of the triads

The image shows two musical staves. The first staff is in G major and contains seven triads: G major (M3/P5), A minor (m3/P5), B minor (m3/P5), C major (M3/P5), D major (M3/P5), E minor (m3/P5), and F# diminished (m3/d5). The second staff is in G harmonic minor and contains seven triads: G major (m3/P5), A minor (m3/d5), B augmented (M3/A3), C major (m3/P5), D major (M3/P5), E minor (M3/P5), and F# diminished (m3/d5).

Triad Quality

- Four possible triad types in diatonic music:
 - * Major: M3 - m3 (P5)
 - * Minor: m3 - M3 (P5)
 - * Diminished: m3 - m3 (d5)
 - * Augmented: M3 - M3 (A5)
- In the Major Scale (all major scales!)
 - * Major triads on scale degrees 1, 4, 5
 - * Minor triads on scale degrees 2, 3, 6
 - * Diminished triad on scale degree 7
- In the Harmonic Minor Scale (all harmonic minor scales!)
 - * Major triads on scale degrees 5 & 6
 - * Minor triads on scale degrees 1 & 4
 - * Diminished triads on scale degree 2 & 7
 - * Augmented triad on scale degree 3
- Using a natural minor scale will alter the triad quality of three chords
 - * Major triad on scale degree 3 (used more often)
 - * Minor triad on scale degree 5 (used very rarely)
 - * Major triad on scale degree 7 (used rarely)

Using Roman Numerals for Triads

- Roman Numeral labels allow us to identify any triad within a given key - key signature label is **required!**
- There are two parts to a Roman Numeral label
 - * The number (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII) tells us what the scale degree is for the root of the triad.
 - * Lowercase numerals (i, ii, iii) indicate minor; Uppercase numerals (I, II, III) indicate major
 - * A diminished triad is indicated with lowercase numerals and °
 - * An augmented triad is indicated with an uppercase numeral and +

Lead Sheet Symbols

- Lead Sheet Symbols can be used without a key signature context and are listed above the staff.
- There are three possible parts to a Lead Sheet chord label
 - * A letter indicating the root of the chord (i.e. E, B \flat , F \sharp)
 - * The chord quality label (M Δ , m, dim, °, +, etc.) - without a quality label, the chord is understood as major
 - * An alternate bass note after a "/"

First Inversion Triads

First Inversion Triad Function

- First inversion triads share virtually the same function as root position triads
- Triads are utilized in first inversion for three primary purposes
 - * improve the contour and variety of pitches within the bass line
 - * lessen the weight of dominant and tonic chords that are not the goals of harmonic motion (triads in first inversion are less harmonically stable or conclusive)
 - * prolong a given harmony with a change of chord position (bass arpeggiation, voice exchange, etc.)
- Diminished triads are typically found in first inversion
 - * avoids a dissonant interval above the bass
 - * places at least one tendency tone in an inner voice

First Inversion Triad Voice Leading and Doubling

- Avoid doubling the third (bass) in a first inversion triad - best instead to double the soprano (root or 5th)
- The third should be doubled in a diminished triad because it is not a tendency tone (part of the tritone)
- For a dominant triad in first inversion (V^6):
 - * Do not double the leading-tone
 - * If approached from a root position V , do not leave the previous leading-tone unresolved
- The fifth of the chord may be omitted and the root tripled
- Approach doubled tones by contrary or oblique motion
- Apply counterpoint guidelines to create interesting and independent melodic lines with appropriate doublings

Common First Inversion Triad Uses

- Arpeggiation
 - * First inversion triads may come about through bass arpeggiation of a static chord
 - * The inverted triad is simply an embellishment within that chord's standard function

The image shows a musical score in 4/4 time with two staves. The bass line is arpeggiated, moving from the root of each chord to the third, then the fifth, and finally the root again. The chords are labeled I, I⁶, IV, and V.

- Static Bass
 - * A first inversion triad can be the result of a static bass line under a chord change (root motion down a third)
 - * Both chords serve similar harmonic functions (i.e. tonic, predominant, or dominant)

The image shows a musical score in 3/4 time with two staves. The bass line is static, with the same note for each chord. The chords are labeled IV, ii⁶, and V.

First Inversion Triads continued

Common First Inversion Triad Uses cont.

- Passing Motion

- * First inversion triads may appear as part of passing motion within three or more chords
- * Often the first and third chord will be the same triad in root position and first inversion
- * An intermediate first inversion triad often appears between chords a third apart or the same chord in root position and first inversion

I vii^o6 I6 ii I6 IV

- Neighbor Motion

- * Neighbor chords appear between two of the same chord in the same position
- * A first inversion neighbor chord can prolong a given harmonic function
- * Voice leading involves one static pitch and three neighbor tones (one voice in contrary motion)

I V6 I

Parallel Sixth Chords

- Since a first inversion triad is made of a 6th and 3rd above the bass, it can be spelled without a perfect 5th
 - * the 6th above the bass must be in the soprano to create P4 instead of P5
- Parallel first inversion triads may be used provided that:
 - * the progression is in three voices (no doubled pitch) or
 - * alternate doubled pitches are used and approached by contrary motion
- Parallel sixth chords typically suspend normal harmonic functions and operate as a linear sequence
- Doubled leading-tones should still be avoided if the chord resolves to tonic

I6 ii6 iii6 IV6 I6 ii6 iii6 IV6

Second Inversion Triads

Second Inversion Triad Function

- Second inversion triads almost never work as the primary chord for a functional area
- Instead, they typically function as an elaboration of another functional area
- Two types of second inversion chords
 - * consonant
 - * dissonant

Consonant Second Inversion Triads

- Arpeggiated
 - * As with first inversion triads, second inversion chords may come about through bass arpeggiation
 - * In this case, the second inversion triad is simply an embellishment within that chord's standard function
- Oscillating
 - * This is a specific type of arpeggiated second inversion triad in which the bass alternates between root and 5th
 - * This bass motion is typical of marches and waltzes
- Melodic Bass
 - * Second inversion triads may also be encountered when the bass line is the primary melodic activity
 - * In this case, the bass line is not fulfilling a harmonic function and inversions should not be considered
- These consonant triads typically neighbor root position and first inversion triads with the same root
- Analysis should consider the most consonant triad position and only parenthetically notate additional inversions

I (I⁶ I⁴ I)

I (I⁴ I I⁴) I (I⁴ I⁴)

I (I⁶ I⁴ I I⁴ I⁶)

Second Inversion Triads continued

Dissonant Second Inversion Triads

- Neighbor or Pedal Six-Four
 - * The neighbor six-four embellishes a static root position triad
 - * The fifth & third above the bass move up by step then down by step
 - * The intermediate chord is a second inversion triad a P4 above the initial root position chord
- Passing Six-Four
 - * The passing six-four connects two chords with the same function
 - typically root position and 1st inversion of same chord
 - common alternate is using ii and IV with both chords in root position or 1st inversion
 - * Voice leading for the passing six-four involves exclusively stepwise motion - most common is:
 - voice exchange in two voices (i.e. do, re, mi in one voice and mi, re, do in another)
 - one voice held constant
 - one voice moving down by step then returning to the original pitch (neighbor tone motion)

Dissonant Second Inversion Voice-Leading

- The bass note (5th of the triad) should always be doubled in a second inversion triad
 - * all other tones are tendency tones
 - * helps to avoid parallel or improper motion in resolution
- The 4th above the bass (and often the 6th) should be introduced and resolved by step
 - * dissonant tones are typically approached and resolved by step
 - * these tones most often resolve down (to 5th & 3rd)

I IV⁶ I V I⁶ V

I V⁶ I⁶ ii⁶ I⁶ IV⁶

Second Inversion Triads continued

Cadential Six-Four Triads

- Cadential six-four chords are an expansion of the cadential dominant harmony (half, deceptive, or authentic cadence)
- They may appear as a suspensions, passing chords, neighbor chords, or a combination thereof
- Cadential six-four chords always resolve by stepwise motion
- Typical cadential six-four sequence:
 - * predominant, dominant, or tonic chord in root position or 1st inversion
 - * tonic chord in 2nd inversion
 - * resolution down by step to root position dominant or dominant 7th chord (half cadence possible here)
 - * completion of authentic or deceptive cadence by resolving to tonic or submediant

Cadential Six-Four Voice Leading

- Double the bass note (^5)
- Approach the 6th and 4th above the bass by step or common tone and resolve down by step
 - * when approached from predominant chords, they are introduced by step
 - * when approached from tonic, they are held over as common tones
- The doubled bass note may move down by step (8-7) to create V⁷
- Bass may jump an octave

Musical notation in 4/4 time showing a cadential six-four sequence. The bass line starts with a double bass note (5) on the tonic, which moves down by step to the root of the dominant. The treble line shows the 6th and 4th above the bass moving by step. The sequence is: I, I⁶₄, V, I.

Musical notation in 4/4 time showing a cadential six-four sequence. The bass line starts with a double bass note (5) on the submediant, which moves down by step to the root of the dominant. The treble line shows the 6th and 4th above the bass moving by step. The sequence is: IV, I⁶₄, V, I.

Musical notation in 4/4 time showing a cadential six-four sequence. The bass line starts with a double bass note (5) on the dominant, which moves down by step to the root of the tonic. The treble line shows the 6th and 4th above the bass moving by step. The sequence is: V, I⁶₄, V, I.