

AP Music Theory: Unit 5

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Harmony and Voice Leading II: Chord Progressions and Predominant Functions

Harmony and Voice Leading II

Predominants usually precede the dominant and are independent chords that link the harmonies between the tonic and dominant. The main examples of predominants are IV and ii.

- IV: the subdominant is used a lot by composers because it can create a smooth transition from the tonic to dominant. In the excerpt below, which is in the key of E flat Major, the bass section ascends a step, and the upper voices go from A to G. This helps steer from voice-leading issues.

D5 A2 D5 A2 D5 A2

- Going from IV_6 to V is another pre-dominant progression. It is very useful because it creates an intensified tonal motion to the dominant. iv_6 to V in minor form is a type of half cadence known as **phrygian cadence**.

g: i iv⁶ V
 T PD D

- II (major), ii° (minor): The supertonic is the most common type, and it is an effective pre-dominant due to 3 reasons:

- When the progression ii-V continues by a descending fifth (or ascending fourth) format, it is the strongest tonal root motion.
- It introduces strong timbre and modal contrast during progressions.
- In the image, the 2-7-1 in the soprano (ii-V-I) is a better scale degree pattern because it produces a stronger cadence in comparison to the original 1-7-1.

G: I ii V I
T PD D T

Keep in mind..

- The predominant model is tonic → predominant → dominant
- When the bass of a predominant transitions to the dominant by (4 to 5) or (6 to 5), the soprano moves in the opposite motion of the bass.

The vi (VI) chord

In a major key, the submediant is a minor triad (vi) because IV, V, and I are major triads. In a minor key, it is the opposite.

- The vi (VI) chord is a weaker predominant chord/tonic substitute. It can function as a tonic substitute and as a weaker pre-dominant.
 - Tonic substitute example: In Haydn's String Quartet in D minor, the cadential progression V-I results in an ascending second (V-vi), while the bass moves from 5 to 6. This progression creates a **deceptive motion** because the expected outcome was V-I instead of V-vi.

Predominant

arco

arco

arco

D: I IV⁶ I⁶ IV V₄⁶ $\frac{5}{3}$ vi

T PD D "T"

Seventh Chords

- Just like how V7 is created by adding a diatonic seventh to the V triad, the same can be applied to predominant ii and IV triads.

G: ii ii (mm)⁷ IV IV (MM)⁷ g: ii[°] ii[°](dm)⁷ iv iv (mm)⁷

- The predominant 7th chords are also categorized into nondominant 7th chords, meaning they don't have a dominant (major-minor) nor a leading-tone (diminished-diminished) seventh chord.

iii (III) chord

The mediant harmony is used less often, and its common role is a relative major key as a mediant triad. The mediant is often harmonized with I⁶ but can also be combined with a root-positioned mediant chord.

- The iii chord is more commonly used than the III mode. Since iii is a perfect fifth above vi, the predicted progression usually descends back to a perfect fifth.

Types of Chords

- These appear less inversion

have a

interval above the bass. (Root and first

inversion triads only have consonant

intervals: octaves, thirds, fifths, and

sixths). They occur in harmonies as

neighboring tones in multiple voices and

are either unaccented or accented.

- **Unaccented six-four chords:**

Neighboring or pedal

- Occur on weak beats and since the bass sustains over until the neighboring chord comes, pedal six-fours can appear in upper-voice neighboring motion. It can lengthen the tone of the tonic and also the dominant.
- During passing motion, they can also arise while the top voices are ascending thirds, as seen in Mozart's Symphony in A major.

- **Unaccented six-four chords: Passing**

- The name is derived from bass passing motion in third intervals. It also occurs on a weak beat.

- **Unaccented six-four chords: Arpeggiating**

- Commonly used in marches and waltzes (aka waltz six-four chord). They are

G: I iii vi ii⁷ V⁶/₄ : 5/3 I
T ————— PD ————— D ————— T

Cadential 6/4

types of chords than root or first chords, since they fourth dissonant

I ————— V 5 - 6 - 5
I ————— V 3 - 4 - 3
I ————— V Ped⁶/₄ V
T ————— D —————

A: I ————— V₇ Ped⁶/₄ V₇ I
T ————— D ————— T

usually in between chords in which their roots are located below the fifth position on the staff.

A. Schubert, Ländler, D 336, op. 67, no. 16

G: I IV $\text{Arp } \frac{6}{4}$ I $\text{Arp } \frac{6}{4}$ V⁷ I IV $\text{Arp } \frac{6}{4}$ I $\text{Arp } \frac{6}{4}$ V⁷ I

● **Accented six-four chords: Cadential**

- Cadential six-four chord: regularly used throughout the Classical era. It is a root-position dominant harmony.
- It is a chord used in the progression between the “suspension” and the accented passing tone.

A. B. C. D. $\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ $\hat{1}$

I - 6 V I I - 6 V₄₋₃ I I - 6 V⁶⁻⁵₄₋₃ I I - 6 V⁶⁻⁵₄₋₃ I

T D T T D T T D T T D T

Graphics are from *The Complete Musician!*

We do not claim all of this as original work but most of it is.

