

AP Music Theory: Unit 7

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Harmony and Voice Leading IV: Secondary Function

Tonicization through Secondary Dominant Chords

When the key changes for a few beats/measures, to a key other than its tonic, it experiences **tonicization**, which has **secondary dominant chords** (aka applied/applied dominant chords).

- This plays a huge role in creating a diverse display of diatonic harmony.
- Example: In the measures below, the ii region has 2 chords (A major and D minor) instead of one. Thus, it participates in the harmonic progression form: T-PD-D-T.
 - T = tonic, PD = predominant, D = dominant

1̂ CPT 2̂

P8 P5

C: I ii V I I → ii V I
T — PD D T T — PD D T

Secondary Dominant Chords

For a chord to even be a secondary dominant chord, it has to function as a dominant chord first. It has to be either a major triad (V) or a dominant seventh chord (V7) to transition back into its tonic form.

- Example: We want to determine the secondary dominant chord of V in a C minor scale. V is a G major chord, so the secondary is going to be D major. D major is not the original

key we were in, and thus, we have to label the roman numerals as simply “V/V”, which means “applied dominant of V” or “V of V”.

C: I V/IV ii V/V iii V/vi IV ~~V/vii°~~ V vi V/ii vii° V/iii

C: i V/iv ii V/V III V/VI iv V/VII V VI ~~V/vii°~~ VII V/III

- Major triads and major-minor seventh chords can be secondary dominant chords

D E A B

C: V/V V/vi V/ii V/iii

C⁷ D⁷ E⁷ A⁷ B⁷

C: V⁷/IV V⁷/V V⁷/vi V⁷/ii V⁷/iii

- These are all the examples of minor secondary dominant triads (first image) and the minor secondary dominant seventh chords (second image).

C D F

c: V/iv V/V V/VII (same as IV)

C⁷ D⁷ Eb⁷ F⁷ Bb⁷

c: V⁷/iv V⁷/V V⁷/VI V⁷/VII V⁷/III (same as VII⁷)

Secondary diminished chords (Major and minor):

E° $F^\#\circ$ G° A°
 c: vii°/iv vii°/V vii°/VI vii°/VII

$D^{\circ 7}$ $E^{\circ 7}$ $F^\#\circ 7$ $G^{\circ 7}$ $A^{\circ 7}$
 c: $vii^{\circ 7}/III$ $vii^{\circ 7}/iv$ $vii^{\circ 7}/V$ $vii^{\circ 7}/VI$ $vii^{\circ 7}/VII$

Secondary diminished triads and Seventh Chords in Major:

$C^\#\circ$ $D^\#\circ$ E° $F^\#\circ$ $G^\#\circ$
 C: vii°/ii vii°/iii vii°/IV vii°/V vii°/vi

$C^\#\circ 7$ $D^\#\circ 7$ $E^{\circ 7}$ $F^\#\circ 7$ $G^\#\circ 7$
 C: $vii^{\circ 7}/ii$ $vii^{\circ 7}/iii$ $vii^{\circ 7}/IV$ $vii^{\circ 7}/V$ $vii^{\circ 7}/vi$

Secondary Dominant Chords in Inversion

- In the variations displayed below, section A is a diatonic progression with several secondary dominant chords from section B. Inversions can smooth out the chord progression of the bass line, so when played, the latter chords have smoother transitions by ear.

A. B. C.

D: I vi IV V I I V^7/vi vi V^7/IV IV V^7/V V I I V^6/vi V^4_3/IV IV V^6_5/V V I
 T ——— PD D I T ——— PD ——— D ——— T T ——— PD ——— D ——— T

- When looking/hearing for secondary dominant chords, they are very distinctive on the staff and by ear. The common forms are a chromatically raised note on the secondary dominant third and a chromatically lowered note on the secondary dominant seventh.
 - Example: As you can see below, the first chromatic pitch to come across is F sharp. Because it is a chromatically raised pitch, it is indicating a secondary chord on note G.

Chord progression: $d: i V^7/iv iv V^7/VI VI V^3_4/iv iv V^5_6/V V^8-7 i$

Part Writing Secondary Dominant Chords

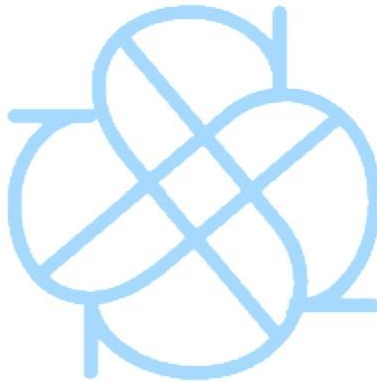
There are guidelines when writing these chords:

- The leading tone/seventh of the chord cannot be doubled
- The leading tone must go upward in the soprano tone
- The seventh of the chord always go downward
 - Example: This image indicates the proper part writing for secondary chords to vi and IV in the C major key. (The root position secondary chords can be either complete or incomplete).

Chord progression: $C: V^7/vi vi V^7/IV IV$

Tonicization through Secondary Leading Tone Chords

- Secondary leading tone chords are diminished triads and diminished seventh chords (half/fully diminished).
- When writing secondary leading tone chords:
 - The two-chord model must be built correctly so that the voice leading is checked.
 - Every root of the chords is diatonic to the key.



Graphics are from *The Complete Musician!*

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