

Lesson FFF: The vii° Chord

Exam:

Question 1:

What makes the vii° chord unique among the other triads in a major key?

- It is built entirely of diatonic pitches.
[Feedback: Incorrect. While the vii° chord *is* made entirely of diatonic pitches, it is not alone. All of the diatonic triads are built using only diatonic pitches. The correct answer is that it is dissonant.]
- It is dissonant.
[Feedback: Correct! The vii° chord constitutes the only dissonant member of the set of diatonic triads. All of the other triads are consonant; they are either major or minor.]
- It is a minor triad.
[Feedback: Incorrect. Although the symbol for the vii° chord is written with lowercase letters, it also has a small circle indicating that it is not minor, but rather diminished. The correct answer is that it is dissonant.]

Question 2a:

Identify the tritone-forming pitches:



G: vii°⁶

[Answers: F# and C]

[Feedback for correct answer: “Correct! F# and C form a tritone.”]

[Feedback for pitch that appears in the chord, but is not correct: “Incorrect. F# and C are the tritone forming pitches in this chord.”]

[Feedback for pitch that does not appear in the chord: “Incorrect. That pitch does not belong to vii°⁶ in G major.”]

Questions 2b: [For each correct answer from Question 2a.]

What interval does F# form with the bass?

[Answers: “M6” or “major sixth”]

[Feedback for correct answer: “Correct! F# forms a major sixth with the bass.”]

[Feedback for incorrect answer: “Incorrect. F# forms a major sixth with the bass.”]

Questions 2c: [For each correct answer from Question 2a.]

What interval does C form with the bass?

[Answers: “m3” or “minor third”]

[Feedback for correct answer: “Correct! C forms a minor third with the bass.”]

[Feedback for incorrect answer: “Incorrect. C forms a minor third with the bass.”]

Question 2d:

What type of tritone is formed by F# and C in this chord?

[Answer: “d5” or “diminished fifth”]

[Feedback for correct answer: “Correct! F# and C form a diminished fifth in this chord.”]

[Feedback for incorrect answer: “Incorrect. F# and C form a diminished fifth in this chord.”]

Question 3:

The following example presents you with a tritone (consisting of the leading tone and scale degree $\hat{4}$) and the resolution of one of the voices. Complete the tritone resolution by providing the pitch for the second voice.



[Answer: B]

[Feedback for correct answer: "Correct! This is the only valid answer. If the lower voice ascends to B, the tritone resolves from a d5 (diminished fifth) to a m3 (minor third)."]

[Feedback for answer "A#": "This is not a valid answer. Oblique motion is not permitted when resolving a tritone. The lower voice may not sustain A#."]]

[Feedback for answer "G": "This is not a valid answer. The tritone may only resolve from a d5 (diminished fifth) to a P5 (perfect fifth) if both voices are ascending by step. In this example, the lower voice may not descend because it is the leading tone and must resolve upwards to the tonic."]]

[Feedback for all other answers: "This is not a valid answer. Both voices must move by step when resolving a tritone. [X] creates disjunct motion in the lower voice."]]

Question 4:

The following example presents you with a tritone (consisting of the leading tone and scale degree $\hat{4}$). Resolve the tritone according to the rules given in this lesson by first providing a pitch for the upper voice, then one for the lower voice.



[Answers: C (upper) / F (lower) or A (upper) / F (lower)]

[Combine the following feedback texts as appropriate.]

[Feedback for C/F correct answer: "Correct! This is a valid resolution. If the upper voice ascends out of a d5 (diminished fifth), the lower voice must also ascend. The tritone then resolves from a d5 to a P5 (perfect fifth). Furthermore, E is the leading tone and must resolve to the tonic."]]

[Feedback for A/F correct answer: "Correct! This is a valid resolution. If the upper voice descends after a d5 (diminished fifth), the lower voice must ascend. The tritone then resolves from a d5 to a M3 (major third). Furthermore, E is the leading tone and must resolve to the tonic."]]

[Feedback for B^b in the upper voice: "B^b is not a valid answer for the upper voice. Oblique motion is not permitted when resolving a tritone. The upper voice may not sustain B^b."]]

[Feedback for anything other than C or A in the upper voice: "This is not a valid answer. Each voice must move by step when resolving a tritone. [X] creates disjunct motion in the upper voice."]]

[Feedback for E in the lower voice: "Incorrect. Oblique motion is not permitted when resolving a tritone. The lower voice may not sustain E."]]

[Feedback for D in the lower voice with C in the upper voice: "Incorrect. This is not a valid answer. If the lower voice descends to D while the upper voice ascends to C, the resulting interval will be a m7 (minor seventh). This is also a dissonance and cannot be used as a resolution from a tritone. Furthermore, E is the leading tone and must resolve to the tonic."]]

[Feedback for above F or below D in the lower voice: "Incorrect. Both voices must move by step when resolving a tritone. Your answer, [X], creates disjunct motion in the lower voice."]]

[Feedback for D in the lower voice with C in the upper voice: "Incorrect. This is not a valid answer. The tritone may only resolve from a d5 (diminished fifth) to a P5 (perfect fifth) if both voices are ascending by step. In this example, the lower voice may not descend because it is the leading tone and must resolve upwards to the tonic."]]

Question 5a:

The following exercise consists of a vii° chord resolving to a I chord.

d: vii° i

Is the voice leading correct in every voice as vii° resolves to i?

- Yes. [response: That is incorrect. Look again at the alto voice and try again.]
- No. [response: Correct!]

[Answer: “No.”]

[Feedback for correct answer: “Correct! The leading tone ($C^{\#}$) does not resolve properly.”]

[Feedback for incorrect answer: “Incorrect. The $C^{\#}$ in the alto voice should ascend to D because it is the leading tone.”]

Question 5b:

If you answered “No” to the previous question, adjust the necessary voice to fix the voice leading. If you answered “Yes,” proceed to Question 6.

[Correct move: Alto voice should move from $C^{\#}$ to D instead of $C^{\#}$ to B.]

[Feedback for correct move: “Correct! The alto voice needed to be adjusted to properly resolve the leading tone.”]

[Feedback for incorrect move: “Incorrect. The voice leading in that voice is already valid. The alto voice should have been adjusted to move from $C^{\#}$ to D instead of $C^{\#}$ to B to properly resolve the leading tone.”]

Question 6:

Complete the following progression in four-voice SATB texture:

b: vii° i