Music 232
Chapter 13, The V\(^7\) (Dominant) Chord

These notes are a distillation of Kostka/Payne's *Tonal Harmony*. They are in no way a substitute for reading and working through the actual textbook.

**Overview**

- Root Position, 4-parts
- 3-parts
- Other Resolutions
- Inversions and Approaches

*The V\(^7\) chord is always a Mm7th chord when functioning as a dominant harmony.*

**The basic voice leading for all inversions of the chord are:**

- The 7\(^{th}\) (scale degree 4) resolves down by step
- The 3\(^{rd}\) (leading tone) resolves up by step

**I. Root Position**

A. The 7\(^{th}\) (scale degree 4) resolves down by step and the 3\(^{rd}\) (leading tone) resolves up by step
B. Another way to look at it is how the tritone resolves:
   1. the +4 resolves out
   2. the 6\(^{th}\) resolves in
C. Following this procedure for resolving complete root position V\(^7\) chords will yield an incomplete tonic triad.
D. To resolve a root position V\(^7\) chord to a complete tonic triad:
   1. use an incomplete V\(^7\) chord by omitting the 5\(^{th}\) (or less commonly, the 3\(^{rd}\)) and doubling the root
   2. use a complete V\(^7\) chord, but put the leading tone (3\(^{rd}\) of the chord) in an inner voice and frustrate (resolve down) its resolution by taking it down to the 5\(^{th}\) of the tonic triad

**II. Three-Parts**

In three parts, either the 5\(^{th}\) or possibly 3\(^{rd}\) of the V\(^7\) chord will be omitted (but never the root or 7\(^{th}\) of course)

**III. Other Resolutions**

A. The V7 can resolve to the vi/VI deceptively, just as the V chord does
   1. the leading tone resolves up by step and the other voices move down to the nearest chord tone of the submediant
   2. the exception is when the leading tone is in an inner voice, where it may resolve down according to the practice of the frustrated leading tone
   3. in four-parts, the V7 chord should be complete and the bass note will be the only one that moves deceptively, as the other voices will resolve in their usual manner
IV. Inversions of the V7 and their resolutions

The same basic voice leading applies to resolutions of inverted V7 chords:

- The 7th (scale degree 4) resolves down by step
- The 3rd (leading tone) resolves up by step

A. The V6/5
   1. often used in a relatively weak position of a phrase (or in an IAC)
   2. usually resolves to a root position tonic triad

B. The V4/3
   1. often used like the V6/4 as a passing chord between a root position and first inversion tonic triad
   2. will be in the middle of a 1-2-3 or 3-2-1 bass line
   3. in such cases, the 7th of the chord may resolve up to the 5th of the tonic chord, creating parallel 10ths with the bass—a sonority that overrides the usual need for the 7th to resolve down

C. The V4/2
   1. Because of the usual downward resolution of the 7th, the V4/2 will usually resolve to a first inversion tonic chord

V. Approaching the 7th

Approaches to the 7th can be thought of in the same way that dissonances in counterpoint are prepared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approached by</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same tone</td>
<td>Suspension figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step above</td>
<td>Passing tone figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step below</td>
<td>Neighbor tone figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above (leap)</td>
<td>Appoggiatura figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(historically the least popular, but usually approached by an ascending leap)</td>
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</tbody>
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