

MUSIC 233
Further Elements of Harmonic Vocabulary

So far, we have seen how chromaticism can embellish chord progressions, aid in modulations and be used for enharmonic reinterpretation. But **chords** themselves can also be embellished, both chromatically and otherwise. Consider how both a V^7 and a vii^{o7} function as *dominant* harmony. In a sense, the vii^{o7} is a type of embellished dominant chord, so we are already familiar with this type of behavior. There are two other ways to embellish a dominant chord: the *Substitute 6th* and the *Raised 5th*. Both of these techniques are a kind of *coloration* of a dominant chord and do not effect the chord's basic *function*.

Subs 6th

Simply put, in a V or V^7 chord, the 6th of the chord substitutes (replaces) the 5th of the chord. In these instances, the chord is usually in root position with the substituted 6th on top. The 6th will resolve down by small leap to the root of the following tonic chord (which is usually where this sonority resolves).

ii V⁽⁷⁾ I ii V⁽⁷⁾_{subs 6th} I

Dominant with a raised 5th (V⁽⁷⁾⁺⁾ (Augmented)

Here the V or V^7 chord has a raised (sharp) 5th. The “+5” resolves up by half step (like a leading tone) to the 3rd of the subsequent tonic chord. This only occurs when the tonic chord major.

- Sometimes the $V^{(7)+}$ chord is preceded by the diatonic version of the chord (second example below)
- This alteration can also be applied to secondary dominant chords

ii V⁺⁽⁷⁾ I ii V⁽⁷⁾ V⁺⁽⁷⁾ I

Another way use chromaticism in the embellishment or ornamentation of **chord progressions** is to use chromatic chords in a non-traditionally functional way. Two such techniques are the *Common Tone Diminished 7th Chord* and *Simultaneity*.

Common Tone Diminished 7th Chord (ct^{o7})

Usually the diminished 7th chord functions as a leading-tone chord or as a secondary leading-tone chord. In this case the chord functions as an ornamental harmony much like the way a neighbor or passing tone ornaments a single line. It is not analyzed with Roman numerals, but merely with its symbol (ct^{o7}).

- It can embellish any triad or dominant 7th chord (see first two examples)
- It can act as a passing chord (see third example)
- It maintains one note in common with the chord that it precedes, specifically the root of the subsequent chord, meaning that as a common tone diminished 7th chord, a C^{o7} chord could be followed by a C major triad (both chords have the note C in common and it is the root of the second chord)
- The common tone can be in any voice of the chord

I (ct^{o7}) I V⁷ (ct^{o7}) V⁷ IV⁶ (ct^{o7}) V⁵ I

Simultaneity

This refers to the use of traditional sonorities used in non-traditional ways. In this case, the chromatic chords are effectively sounding at the same time as (simultaneously) a traditional sonority is heard. It is as if a traditional path (progression) of chords takes a slight chromatic and functional detour and then resumes its usual resolution. Since these chords do not have a specific function beyond that of ornamentation, they are not analyzed with Roman numerals, but just with their chord names in parentheses.

Here is how a I ii^o V I passage might be ornamented. All the “simultaneous” chords do not change the overall, basic harmonic effect:

I (D^{#o7}) D^{o7} C^{#o7} C^{o7}) ii^{o2} V⁵ I