

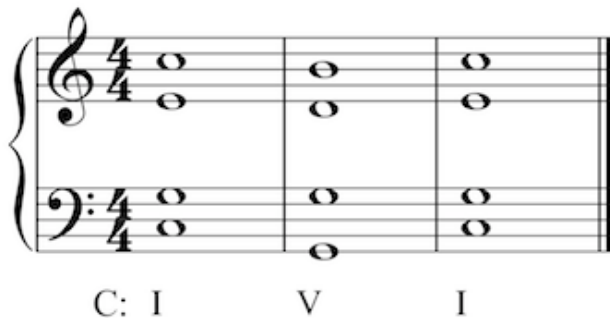
# Compendium of Progressions

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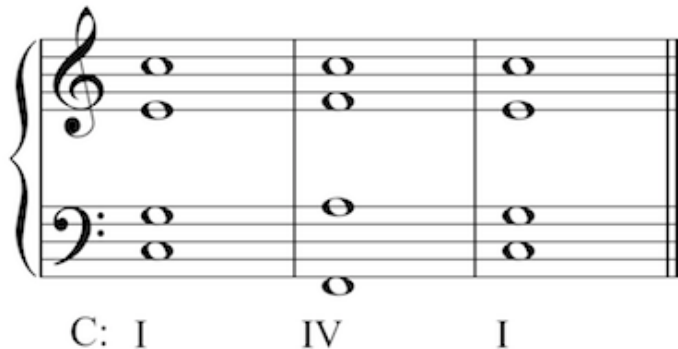
In the Classical era of music, one finds a fairly consistent set of harmonic progressions used. This course presents a rich set of progressions. It isn't exhaustive, but it is fairly comprehensive, and makes for an easy approach to composing in the style of a late 18th century composer. These progressions are catalogued as Basic or Sequential. Common chord inversions as well as approaches to chord substitution and insertion within the basic progressions are offered. Once one is familiar with the strategies for substitution and insertion, then one gains a healthy amount of freedom in crafting harmonic progressions that should stay fairly stylistically accurate. Details on all of this are given in the weekly videos.

## Basic Progressions

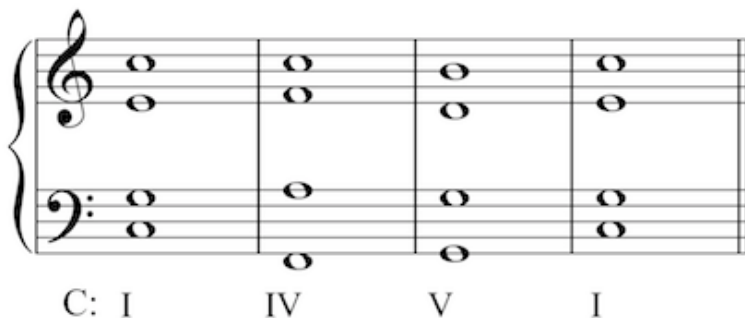
I-V-I



I-IV-I (Plagal Progression)



I-IV-V-I



I-VI-II-V-I

C: I      vi      ii      V<sup>7</sup>      I

## Basic Progressions with Inversions

I-V6-I

5th doubled

d: i      V      i      i      V<sup>6</sup>      i

I-V65-I

One can also use 7th chords in inversions. Unless otherwise noted, dominant 7th chords can be used where dominant triads are illustrated.

d: i      V      i      i      V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>      i

Passing Six-Four Chords: I-V64-I6, I-V43-I6, or IV6-I64-IV

passing                      passing

d:  $i$   $V_4^6$   $i^6$        $i$   $V_3^4$   $i^6$

passing

d:  $iv^6$   $i_4^6$   $iv$

The pedal six-four chord: I-IV<sup>64</sup>-I, also possible with V-I<sup>64</sup>-V

pedal

d:  $i$   $iv_4^6$   $i$

The cadential six-four chord: I<sup>64</sup>-V (This one usually goes to a root position dominant triad rather than a 7th chord.)

cadential  
(a decoration of the  
V or V7 chord)      !!

d: V      i      i<sup>6</sup>      V      i      iv      i<sup>6</sup>      V      i

Put on a strong beat,  
make at least as long  
as the V chord.

The IV6-V progression as well as the V42-I6 progression. Note you can't do a V42-I6 with a dominant triad. You need to 7th in order to do it.

d: i      iv<sup>6</sup>      V<sup>7</sup>      i      V      V<sup>4</sup><sub>2</sub>      i<sup>6</sup>

## Sequential Progressions

### Circle of Fifths

An example of the circle of fifths progression with root position chords.

C: I      IV      vii<sup>°</sup>      iii      vi      ii      V      I

An example of the circle of fifths progression using a mixture of root position and first inversion chords.

I<sup>6</sup>      IV      vii<sup>°6</sup>      iii      vi<sup>6</sup>      ii      V<sup>6</sup>      I

An example of the circle of fifths progression using 7th chords. Notice it also uses a mixture of root and

first inversion chords.

I<sup>6</sup> IV<sup>7</sup> vii<sup>o6</sup><sub>5</sub> iii<sup>7</sup> vi<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub> ii<sup>7</sup> V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub> I

Descending 5-6

C: I V<sup>6</sup> vi iii<sup>6</sup>

Parallel Sixths

C: I<sup>6</sup> vii<sup>o6</sup> vi<sup>6</sup> V<sup>6</sup>

## Passacaglia Progression (Original and a Chromatic Variant as examples)

C: i v<sup>6</sup> iv<sup>6</sup> V i v<sup>6</sup> It<sup>+6</sup> V

# Diatonic Substitutions

## Dominant Substitutions

As seen in the chord chart presented at the beginning of the course, substitutions are possible between the V or viio chords. It is also possible to substitute V7 with viio7 chords. Both of these chords can have a dominant function, that is, they function to bring the progression back to the tonic chord.

Chord progression in C minor (4/4 time):

- Measure 1:  $i$  (C minor)
- Measure 2:  $V_4$  (F major)
- Measure 3:  $i^6$  (C minor)
- Measure 4:  $i$  (C minor)
- Measure 5:  $vii^{\circ 6}$  (Bb major)
- Measure 6:  $i^6$  (C minor)

## Subdominant Substitutions

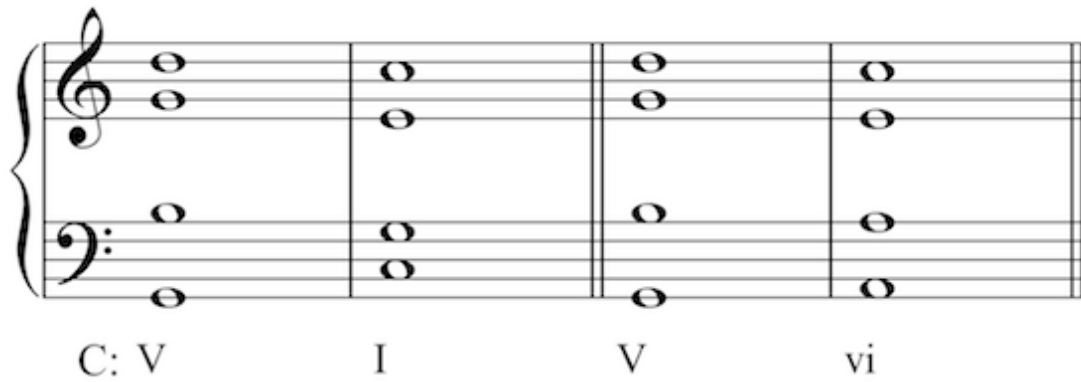
The substitution of a ii chord for a IV chord is very common. In fact, the ii6 chord is so much more common that the IV chord in classical era music, that the substitution probably should be thought of in reverse: the IV chord occasionally substituting for the ii6. Using the ii6 instead of the IV lends greater authenticity to 18th century style writing.

Chord progression in C major (4/4 time):

- Measure 1:  $C: I$  (C major)
- Measure 2:  $IV$  (F major)
- Measure 3:  $V$  (G major)
- Measure 4:  $I$  (C major)
- Measure 5:  $ii^6_5$  (D minor)
- Measure 6:  $V$  (G major)

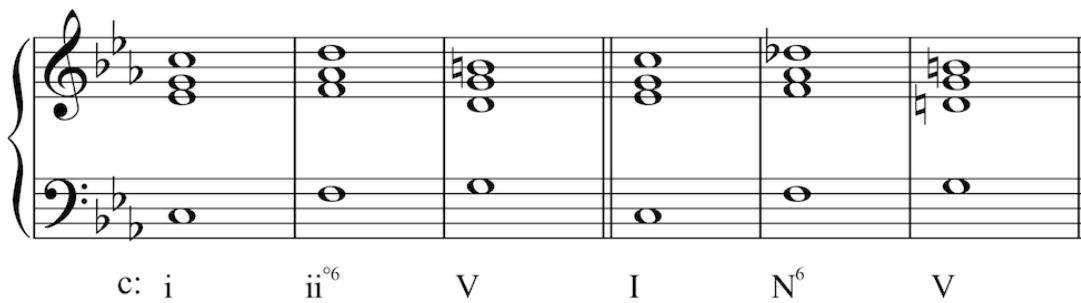
## Tonic Substitutions

As seen with the dominant and subdominant substitutions, the nature of substitution is founded on swapping out one chord for another with which it has a mediant relationship, that is, they are a diatonic third apart. One can also do this with the I and VI chords, but only when preceded by a V chord. For instance, I-IV-V-I cannot be altered into a VI-IV-V-I. Although this is an acceptable progression, in general, the sense of substitution does not exist. However, I-IV-V-VI is also possible, and the sense of substitution is very clear. This progression from V-VI has a distinctive character in classical music, and it is given the name deceptive progression. The name is apt: one feels that they have been cheated of a return to the tonic and are surprised to see the VI chord presented as its substitution. At least, this is what one "should" feel when hearing this progression in the context of 18th century European music making.

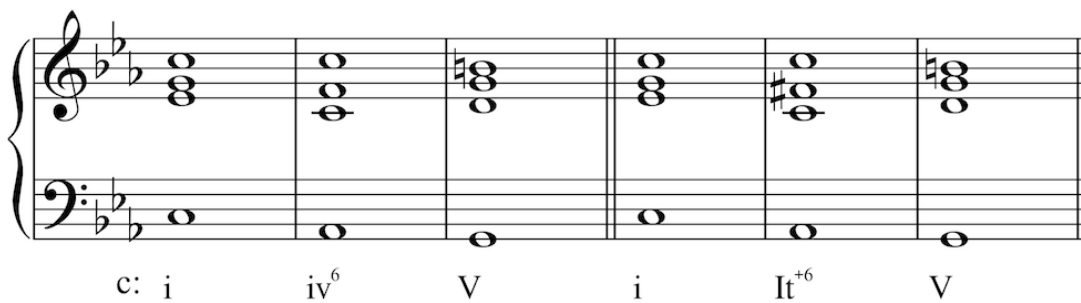


## Chromatic Substitutions

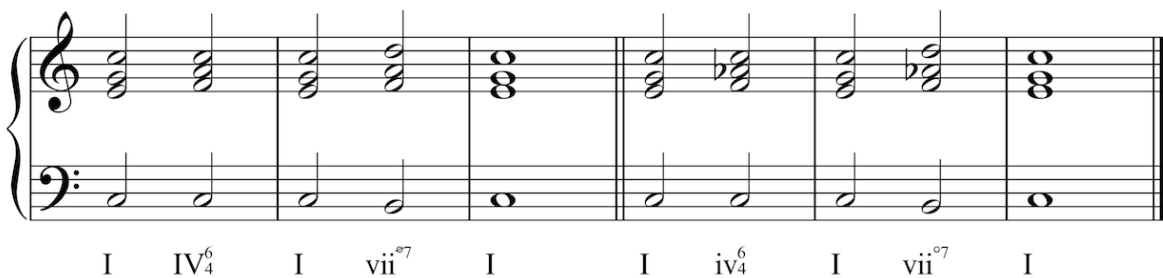
Neapolitan 6



Augmented 6



Borrowed Chords



## Insertion (Progressions within Progressions)

It is possible to place dominant-tonic progressions within a larger harmonic progression. When this is

done, the inserted dominant is called a secondary dominant. For instance, in a I-IV-V-I progression, one could do something like the following: I-IV-V/V-V-I. Here there is a dominant-tonic progression on the dominant. The V chord acts as both a tonic and a dominant. The insertion is seen in the example below. In this example, the V/V is a 7th chord placed in first inversion. This smooths out the voice leading. This example should serve as an approach to adding a secondary dominant for any progression that is a 2nd apart - for instance, the V-vi progression.

Chords a 2nd apart (upward)

IV                      V                      IV                      V<sup>7</sup>/V                      V

Below are further examples of common secondary dominants. They have been listed by the interval (and direction) separating the 2 chords in the original progression.

Chords a 3rd apart (downward)

I                      vi                      I                      V<sup>7</sup>/vi                      vi

Chords a 4th apart (upward)

I                      IV                      I                      V<sup>7</sup>/IV                      IV

Chords a 5th apart (upward)

I                      V                      I                      V<sup>7</sup>/V                      V

Finally, it should be noted that the leading tone chord as well as the fully diminished 7th chord can be used as a substitution for the secondary dominant. These chords are called secondary leading tone chords.



## Function in Tonal Harmony

The concept of a harmonic function is very important in classical music. There are really only 3 functions - pre-dominant, dominant, and tonic. The tonic (the I chord) functions as both the start and end of any progression. It is a goal to be achieved. At a minimum, it needs to return by the end of a work. But frequently, we see it returning at the end of a phrase. The dominant function (usually presented by the V chords, but also the viio chords) serves to bring the progression back to the tonic. It is generally the case that the return of a tonic chord is preceded by a chord with a dominant function. Finally, there are pre-dominant chords. These are largely presented by the subdominant collection of chords - IV chords, ii chords, and their various substitutes.

One needs to understand that not all V chords carry a dominant function. For instance, the V64 chord can serve as a passing chord between a I and I6 chord. (See Basic Progressions with Inversions above.) In such a case, that chord has no dominant function. Instead, dominant function is expressed most clearly when the dominant doesn't just bring us back to I, but when it serves to also help to establish the key of the passage.

## Using this Compendium

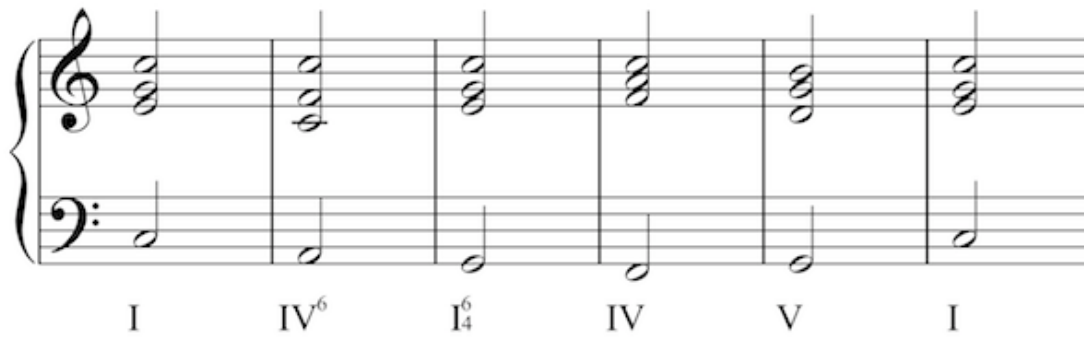
With the progressions and strategies presented above, let us look at an example of using them to create something elaborate out of something very simple. We start with a I-IV-V-I progression from the list of basic progressions.

I                  IV                  V                  I

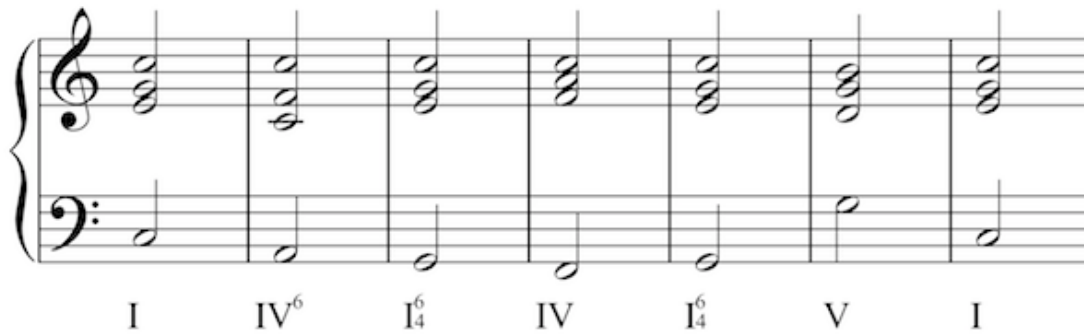
We know that we can use an inversion here, so we add it: I-IV6-V-I

I                  IV<sup>6</sup>                  V                  I

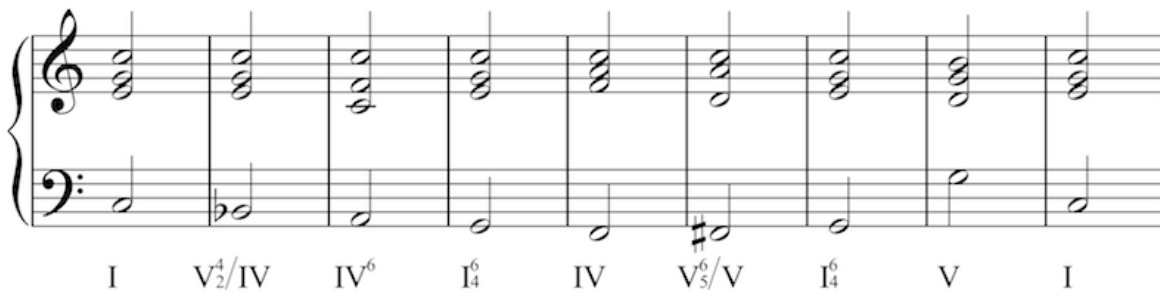
We also know that there is a passing progression often seen with the IV6 chord, so we insert it: I-IV6-[I64-IV]-V-I



We also know that the V chord can be expanded to include a cadential six-four chord, so we add that: I-IV<sup>6</sup>-[I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>-IV]-[I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>]-V-I



We also know that we could add a progression within a progression between I and IV chords (a 5th apart) as well as the IV and V chords (a 2nd part). So, we add those in and use nice inversions to smooth out the bass line: I-[V<sup>4</sup><sub>2</sub>/IV]-IV<sup>6</sup>-[I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>-IV]-[V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub>/V-I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>]-V-I.



Now, we have something quite elaborate.

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