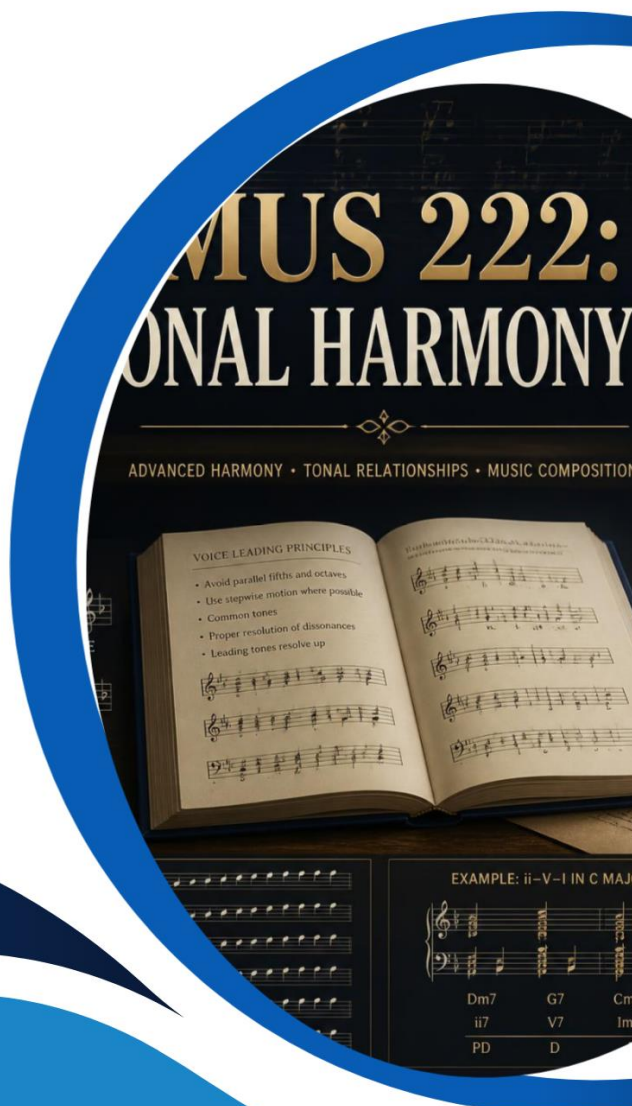


MUS 222

TONAL HARMONY II

2 UNITS



Course video is available on our app

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Course Code: MUS 222

Course Title: Tonal Harmony II

Course Credit Load: 2 Units

Series 1: Composing Melodies with Embellishments

Series 2: Harmonising Melodies for SATB Voices

Series 3: Advanced Study of Seventh to Thirteenth Chords

Series 4: Suspensions and Modulations in Homophonic Writing

Series 5: Employing and Interpreting Figured Bass

Proposed Outline for Series 1

Part 1.1 Understanding melody composition

- 1.1.1 Definition of melody
- 1.1.2 Characteristics of a well-composed melody

Part 1.2 Exploring embellishments in melody writing

- 1.2.1 Definition and types of embellishments (passing notes, neighbour notes, suspensions, appoggiaturas)
- 1.2.2 Functions of embellishments in enhancing melodic expression

Part 1.3 Applying embellishments to given lyrics

- 1.3.1 Techniques for fitting embellishments to text
- 1.3.2 Exercises in composing embellished melodies



Introduction

Melody is the heart of music, and its beauty often lies in the subtle details that enrich its flow. Embellishments, such as passing notes and suspensions, add colour and expression, transforming a simple tune into something memorable. For students of tonal harmony, learning how to compose melodies with embellishments is a vital step in developing creative and technical skills.

The aim of this Series is to introduce you to the principles of melody composition and to equip you with the ability to apply embellishments effectively to given lyrics.

We shall commence this Series by examining the fundamentals of melody composition, including its definition and essential characteristics. Next, we will explore embellishments in detail, considering their types and functions in enhancing melodic expression. Finally, we will apply these concepts by practising techniques for fitting embellishments to lyrics and composing embellished melodies through guided exercises.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 1.1** define melody and describe its essential characteristics,
- **SLO 1.2** explain the concept of embellishments and identify their types,
- **SLO 1.3** analyse the functions of embellishments in enhancing melodic expression,
- **SLO 1.4** apply techniques for fitting embellishments to given lyrics, and
- **SLO 1.5** compose melodies with appropriate embellishments through practical exercises.



1.1 Understanding Melody Composition

1.1.1 Definition of melody

A **melody** is a sequence of musical notes arranged in a meaningful order to create a distinct musical line. It is often the most recognisable part of a piece of music, carrying the main theme or tune. Melodies are built from pitches and rhythms, and they can be simple or complex depending on the context. In tonal harmony, a melody must be coherent, balanced, and expressive, serving as the foundation upon which harmonies and embellishments are added.

Fill in the blank: A melody is a sequence of musical _____ arranged in a meaningful order to create a distinct musical line.

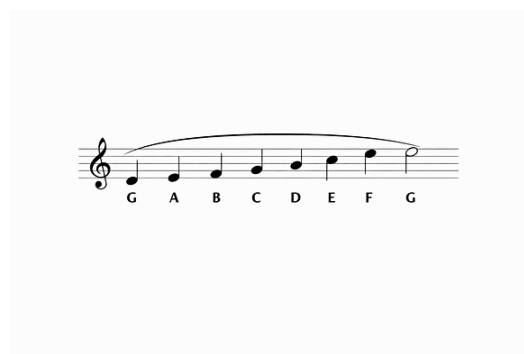


Figure 1.1 Definition of melody

1.1.2 Characteristics of a well-composed melody

A well-composed melody has several defining characteristics. Firstly, it demonstrates **coherence**, meaning the notes flow logically and are easy to follow. Secondly, it shows **balance**, with phrases of similar length and weight that create a sense of symmetry. Thirdly, it exhibits **expression**, using dynamics, rhythm, and contour to convey emotion. Finally, it maintains **singability**, ensuring that the melody can be performed comfortably by voices or instruments. These qualities make a melody memorable and effective in both composition and performance.

Fill in the blank: A well-composed melody must demonstrate coherence, balance, expression, and _____.



Plate 1.1 Characteristics of a well-composed melody

Characteristics of a Well-Composed Melody	
Characteristic	Explanation
Coherence	• Logical structure and thematic unity
Balance	• Phrasing with a sense of proportion
Expression	• Emotional content and dynamics
Singability	• Easy to sing and memorable

Box 1.1 Characteristics of a well-composed melody

Pilot questions 1.1

1. What is a melody in music?
2. Name two characteristics of a well-composed melody.
3. What does coherence mean in melody composition?
4. Why is singability important in a melody?
5. Which quality of melody involves conveying emotion through dynamics and contour?

1.2 Exploring Embellishments in Melody Writing

1.2.1 Definition and types of embellishments

Embellishments are additional notes or musical figures that decorate a melody without altering its fundamental structure. They provide variety, interest, and expressive nuance, making a melody more engaging. Common types include **passing notes** (notes that connect two main pitches by step), **neighbour notes** (notes that move away from a pitch and return), **suspensions** (notes held over from a previous harmony, creating temporary dissonance before resolving), and **appoggiaturas** (non-chord notes that resolve by step to a chord tone). Each type adds a distinct flavour to the melody and enriches its character.

Fill in the blank: Passing notes connect two main pitches by _____.



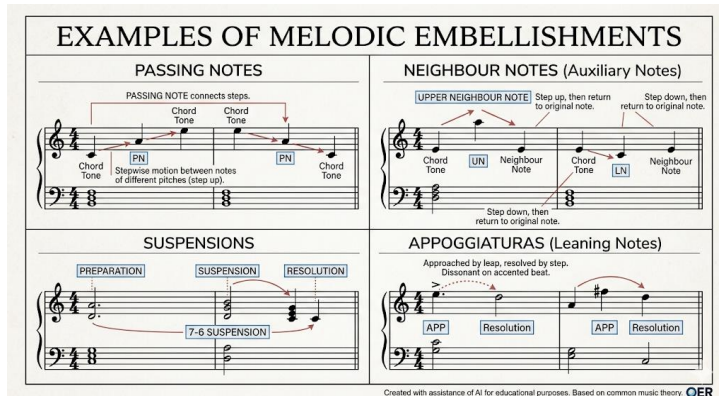


Figure 1.2 Types of embellishments in melody writing

1.2.2 Functions of embellishments in enhancing melodic expression

Embellishments serve several important functions in melody writing. They create **variety**, preventing monotony in repeated phrases. They add **expression**, allowing performers to convey emotion through subtle dissonances and resolutions. They also provide **smoothness**, helping melodies flow naturally between chord tones. Finally, embellishments enhance **stylistic authenticity**, as they reflect the conventions of tonal harmony and classical composition practice. When used thoughtfully, embellishments elevate a melody from being plain to being artistically refined.

Fill in the blank: Embellishments add expression by allowing performers to convey emotion through subtle _____ and resolutions.

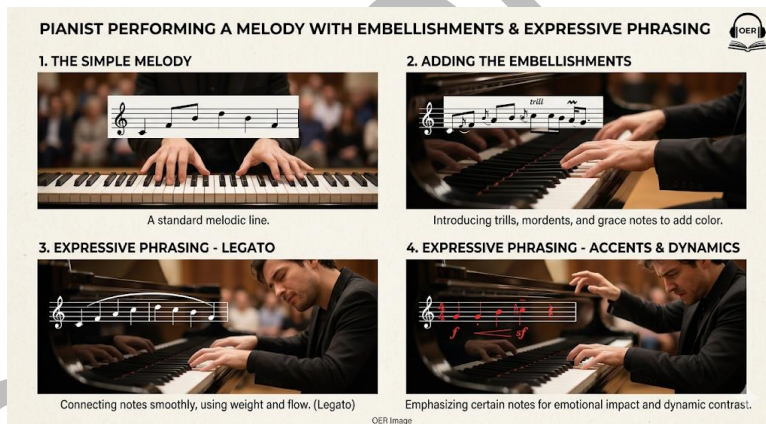


Plate 1.2 Functions of embellishments in melodic expression



FUNCTIONS OF EMBELLISHMENTS IN MELODY WRITING	
FUNCTION OF EMBELLISHMENT	EXPLANATION & IMPACT
VARIETY	- Adds musical interest by breaking up static melodic lines. - Prevents monotony by introducing decorative elements (trills, grace notes, etc.) and varied rhythmic patterns. - Example: Turning a plain scale degree into a more complex melodic shape.
EXPRESSION	- Enhances emotional depth and conveys specific feelings. - Certain embellishments emphasize particular notes or create tension and release (e.g., appoggiaturas, suspensions). - Contributes to the overall affect or character of a piece (e.g., poignant or playful).
SMOOTHNESS	- Connects otherwise disjointed intervals, making a melody feel continuous and graceful. Helps to link primary chord tones through stepwise motion (passing notes, neighbor notes). Creates a natural flow. - Example: A leap of a 4th can be filled with diatonic passing notes for a smooth transition.
STYLISTIC AUTHENTICITY	- Establishes and reinforces the characteristic sound of a specific musical era or genre. The correct use and ornamentation are essential for performing and writing music that adheres to historical performance practice (e.g., Baroque trills, Classical grace notes, Jazz syncopation, and note bends). - Demonstrates mastery of appropriate stylistic vocabulary.

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Box 1.2 Functions of embellishments

Pilot questions 1.2

1. What are embellishments in melody writing?
2. Name two types of embellishments.
3. What does a suspension create before resolving?
4. Why are embellishments important for stylistic authenticity?
5. How do embellishments prevent monotony in melodies?

1.3 Applying Embellishments to Given Lyrics

1.3.1 Techniques for fitting embellishments to text

When composing melodies to lyrics, it is important to ensure that embellishments enhance rather than obscure the words. **Text setting** refers to the way musical notes are matched to syllables of lyrics. Embellishments must respect the natural rhythm and accent of the text, so that the words remain clear and expressive. For example, passing notes can be used to smooth transitions between syllables, while suspensions may highlight emotionally charged words. The key is to balance musical decoration with textual clarity.

Fill in the blank: Text setting refers to the way musical notes are matched to _____ of lyrics.

DIAGRAM: APPLYING EMBELLISHMENTS TO SYLLABLES IN LYRICS

I. PASSING NOTES (NON-CHORD TONES)

EXAMPLE A: STEPWISE PASSING NOTES

PASSING NOTE 1 | PASSING NOTE 2 | PASSING NOTE 3

The stream-*ing* ri-*ver* flows

CONNECTING notes between main chord tones by steps. Applied to unaccented syllables. Creates smooth vocal lines.

EXAMPLE B: LEAPING PASSING NOTES (APPOGGIATURAS)

LEAPING PASSING NOTE (Appoggiatura) | LEAPING PASSING NOTE (Appoggiatura)

Oh, how my heart leaps

Approached by leap, resolved by step. Accented.

II. SUSPENSIONS

EXAMPLE A: 7-6 SUSPENSION

PREPARATION | SUSPENSION | RESOLUTION

Voice: Wait... wait for me.

Instrument: Wait... wait for me.

Held note from previous chord creates tension on an accented beat, resolving downwards by step. Can emphasize emotional words.

EXAMPLE B: 4-3 SUSPENSION

PREPARATION | SUSPENSION | RESOLUTION

Voice: Love, my guide

Bass: Love, my guide

Emphasizes the syllable 'guide' with tension.

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Figure 1.3 Techniques for fitting embellishments to text

1.3.2 Exercises in composing embellished melodies

Practical exercises help learners apply embellishments effectively. One exercise involves taking a simple lyric line and composing a plain melody, then adding passing notes or neighbour notes to enrich it. Another exercise is to highlight key words in the text and use suspensions or appoggiaturas to emphasise them musically. A third exercise is to compare embellished and non-embellished versions of the same melody, noting how expression and flow are improved. These exercises train the ear and hand to use embellishments thoughtfully, ensuring that both music and text work together harmoniously.

Fill in the blank: Suspensions or appoggiaturas can be used to emphasise _____ words in a lyric line.



Plate 1.3 Exercises in composing embellished melodies

EXERCISES FOR EMBELLISHED MELODY WRITING WITH BENEFITS			
Exercise Type	Exercise Description & Application (Lyrics Context)	Example/Process	Benefits
Plain to Embellished	Start with a simple, 'plain' melodic line for a set of lyrics. Gradually add embellishment (passing tones, neighbor tones, suspensions) to enhance specific words or phrases.	PLAIN MELODY Love is a rose EMBELLISHED MELODY Love is a rose	Increases creativity in melodic development; improves understand of non-chord tones; allows for gradual progression.
Highlighting Key Words	Identify key emotional words in the lyrics. Compose specific embellishments (e.g., appoggiaturas for tension, trills for excitement) to draw attention to these words.	Sorrow, and a certain words, Joy, The sun will a certain words.	Connects melody with lyrical meaning; develops expressive word painting; enhances emotional impact.
Comparing Versions	Write two or three different embellished versions for the same short melodic phrase and lyrics. Analyze and perform each to see which serves the text best.	Version A Version B Version C The sun will rise The sun will rise The sun will rise	Develops critical listening and analysis skills; encourages exploration of diverse stylistic choices; helps build artistic judgment.
Style Imitation	Take a specific musical style (e.g., Baroque, Jazz, Folk) and apply its characteristic embellishments to a plain melody. (Focus on performance practice and specific ornaments).	Baroque Embellishments trills mordents Plain Melody Jazz Embellishments trills grace notes Pitch bends and slides	Teaches historical and stylistic authenticity; broadens musical vocabulary; enhances versatility in different genres.

Box 1.3 Sample exercises for embellished melody writing

Pilot questions 1.3

1. What is text setting in melody composition?
2. How can passing notes be used when fitting embellishments to lyrics?
3. Which embellishments are useful for emphasising key words in a lyric line?
4. Why is it important to compare embellished and non-embellished versions of a melody?
5. What is the main goal of exercises in composing embellished melodies?



Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the art of composing melodies with embellishments, a vital skill in tonal harmony. We began by defining melody and identifying the characteristics of a well-composed line, such as coherence, balance, expression, and singability. We then explored embellishments, learning their types and functions in enriching melodic writing. Finally, we applied these concepts to given lyrics, practising techniques for fitting embellishments to text and composing expressive melodies through guided exercises.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to define melody, explain its essential characteristics, identify and analyse different types of embellishments, apply them thoughtfully to lyrics, and compose embellished melodies. These achievements align directly with the Series Learning Outcomes, equipping you with both theoretical understanding and practical skills in melodic composition.

Glossary of Terms

- **Appoggiatura:** A non-chord note that resolves by step to a chord tone, often creating expressive tension.
- **Balance:** The quality of a melody where phrases are of similar length and weight, creating symmetry.
- **Coherence:** Logical flow of notes in a melody that makes it easy to follow.
- **Embellishments:** Additional notes or figures that decorate a melody without altering its fundamental structure.
- **Expression:** The emotional quality of a melody conveyed through dynamics, rhythm, and contour.
- **Melody:** A sequence of musical notes arranged in a meaningful order to form a distinct musical line.
- **Neighbour note:** A note that moves away from a pitch and returns to it.
- **Passing note:** A note that connects two main pitches by step.
- **Singability:** The ease with which a melody can be performed by voices or instruments.
- **Suspension:** A note held over from a previous harmony, creating temporary dissonance before resolving.
- **Text setting:** The process of matching musical notes to syllables of lyrics.

Concept Check Questions [Series 1]

Objective questions

1. What is a melody in music? (Linked to SLO 1.1)
2. Which quality of a melody ensures it can be performed comfortably by voices or instruments? (Linked to SLO 1.1)
3. Which embellishment connects two main pitches by step? (Linked to SLO 1.2)



Short-answer questions

4. Define embellishments in melody writing. (Linked to SLO 1.2)
5. Explain why coherence is important in melody composition. (Linked to SLO 1.1)
6. Describe one function of embellishments in enhancing melodic expression. (Linked to SLO 1.3)

Long-answer questions

7. Analyse the characteristics of a well-composed melody and explain how they contribute to musical effectiveness. (Linked to SLO 1.1)
 - Basic response: A well-composed melody shows coherence, balance, expression, and singability, making it memorable and effective.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how these qualities also support harmonisation, stylistic authenticity, and audience engagement.
8. Evaluate the role of embellishments in transforming a plain melody into an expressive one. (Linked to SLO 1.3, SLO 1.4, SLO 1.5)
 - Basic response: Embellishments add variety, expression, and smoothness, making melodies more engaging.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explore how embellishments also highlight textual meaning, reflect stylistic conventions, and enhance performance practice.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 1]

- A melody is a sequence of musical notes arranged in a meaningful order to create a distinct musical line.
- Characteristics include coherence, balance, expression, and singability.
- Coherence means the notes flow logically and are easy to follow.
- Singability ensures the melody can be performed comfortably by voices or instruments.
- Expression involves conveying emotion through dynamics and contour.
- Embellishments are additional notes that decorate a melody without altering its structure.
- Types include passing notes, neighbour notes, suspensions, and appoggiaturas.
- A suspension creates temporary dissonance before resolving.
- Embellishments reflect stylistic authenticity in tonal harmony.
- They prevent monotony by adding variety to repeated phrases.
- Text setting is the way musical notes are matched to syllables of lyrics.
- Passing notes smooth transitions between syllables.
- Suspensions and appoggiaturas emphasise key words in a lyric line.
- Comparing embellished and non-embellished versions shows how expression and flow are improved.
- The main goal of exercises is to train the ear and hand to use embellishments thoughtfully.



References and Attributions [Series 1]

- Figure 1.1: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram illustrating a simple melody line with notes arranged in sequence.” Search string: “music melody definition diagram notes sequence OER.”
- Plate 1.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir singing a melody that demonstrates balance and singability.” Search string: “choir singing melody balance singability OER image.”
- Box 1.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing characteristics of a well-composed melody with explanations.” Search string: “characteristics of melody coherence balance expression singability OER table.”
- Figure 1.2: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing passing notes, neighbour notes, suspensions, and appoggiaturas in a melody line.” Search string: “music embellishments passing notes neighbour notes suspensions appoggiaturas diagram OER.”
- Plate 1.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a pianist performing a melody with embellishments, showing expressive phrasing.” Search string: “pianist performing melody embellishments expressive phrasing OER image.”
- Box 1.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing functions of embellishments in melody writing with explanations.” Search string: “functions of embellishments melody writing OER table.”
- Figure 1.3: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing how embellishments such as passing notes and suspensions are applied to syllables in lyrics.” Search string: “music text setting embellishments lyrics syllables diagram OER.”
- Plate 1.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a student writing a melody to lyrics, adding embellishments for expressive effect.” Search string: “student composing melody lyrics embellishments OER image.”
- Box 1.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing exercises for embellished melody writing with benefits.” Search string: “melody writing exercises embellishments lyrics OER table.”



Course Code: MUS 222

Course Title: Tonal Harmony II

Course Credit Load: 2 Units

Series 1: Composing Melodies with Embellishments

Series 2: Harmonising Melodies for SATB Voices

Series 3: Advanced Study of Seventh to Thirteenth Chords

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Proposed Outline for Series 2

Part 2.1 Fundamentals of SATB harmonisation

- 2.1.1 Definition of SATB texture
- 2.1.2 Voice ranges and characteristics (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass)

Part 2.2 Principles of voice leading

- 2.2.1 Rules of smooth voice movement
- 2.2.2 Avoiding parallel fifths and octaves
- 2.2.3 Maintaining independence of voices

Part 2.3 Techniques for harmonising melodies

- 2.3.1 Using primary triads (I, IV, V)
- 2.3.2 Incorporating secondary chords and cadences
- 2.3.3 Exercises in harmonising short melodies



Introduction

In tonal harmony, the ability to harmonise a melody for SATB voices is one of the most important skills for a composer or arranger. SATB texture, which stands for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, forms the foundation of choral writing and is widely used in both classical and modern contexts. Harmonisation requires careful attention to voice ranges, independence, and smooth movement between parts.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the knowledge and skills to harmonise melodies effectively for SATB voices, applying principles of voice leading and chord usage to create balanced and expressive arrangements.

We shall commence this Series by examining the fundamentals of SATB harmonisation, including the definition of SATB texture and the characteristics of each voice. Next, we will explore the principles of voice leading, focusing on smooth movement, independence of voices, and avoiding common errors such as parallel fifths. Finally, we will apply these principles in practical techniques for harmonising melodies, beginning with primary triads and progressing to secondary chords and cadences, supported by exercises in harmonising short melodies.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** define SATB texture and describe the ranges and characteristics of each voice,
- **SLO 2.2** explain the principles of voice leading in SATB harmonisation,
- **SLO 2.3** analyse common errors such as parallel fifths and octaves in harmonisation,
- **SLO 2.4** apply primary triads to harmonise simple melodies.



2.1 Fundamentals of SATB Harmonisation

2.1.1 Definition of SATB texture

SATB texture refers to the arrangement of four distinct vocal parts: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. Each voice contributes to the overall harmony, with the soprano usually carrying the melody, the alto and tenor filling the inner harmonies, and the bass providing the foundation. This texture is the standard framework for choral writing and is widely used in both sacred and secular music traditions.

Fill in the blank: SATB texture refers to the arrangement of four distinct _____ parts.

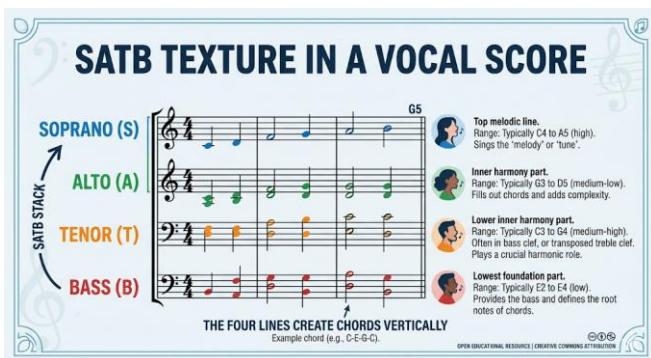


Figure 2.1 SATB texture in choral writing

2.1.2 Voice ranges and characteristics (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass)

Each SATB voice has a distinct **range** and **characteristic** that must be respected in harmonisation. The **soprano** typically sings the highest notes and often carries the melody. The **alto** provides lower harmonies within the female voice range, adding depth. The **tenor** is the higher male voice, often supporting the soprano line with close harmonies. The **bass** sings the lowest notes, anchoring the harmony and giving weight to the texture. Understanding these ranges ensures that harmonisation is both practical and effective, avoiding strain for singers and maintaining balance across the ensemble.

Fill in the blank: The bass voice anchors the harmony by singing the _____ notes in SATB texture.



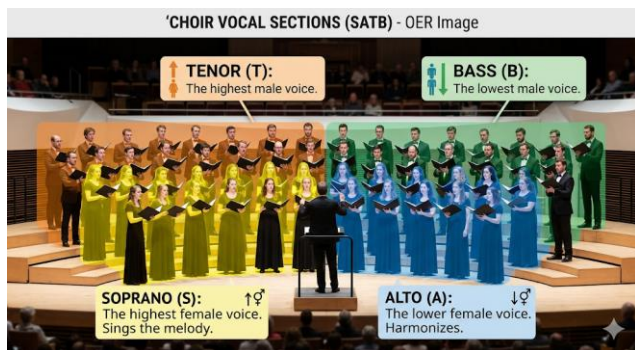


Plate 2.1 Voice ranges and characteristics in SATB harmonisation

Vocal Part & Symbol	Approximate Vocal Range (C4-C6)	Role in Harmonisation & Composition	Key Words & Character
Soprano (S)	C4-G5	Often the 'MELODY' or 'LEAD' part. Provides the primary tune, often highest pitch.	Bright High Top Line
Alto (A)	C3-D5	Primary 'INNER HARMONY' or 'FILLER' part. Adds color, warmth, and harmonic texture, links chords.	Warm Full Inner Harmony
Tenor (T)	C3-G4	Secondary 'INNER HARMONY' part. Below Alto, adds depth and crucial chords. Connects Bass and upper voices.	Mellow Middle Voice Rich
Bass (B)	E2-E4	Providing the 'FOUNDATION' or 'ROOTS' of chords. Establishes the key and Lowest part.	Strong Solid Grounding

Box 2.1 Voice ranges and characteristics

Pilot questions 2.1

1. What does SATB texture mean in choral writing?
2. Which voice usually carries the melody in SATB harmonisation?
3. What role does the alto voice play in SATB texture?
4. Which voice provides the lowest notes in SATB harmonisation?
5. Why is it important to respect voice ranges when harmonising?

2.2 Principles of Voice Leading

2.2.1 Rules of smooth voice movement

Voice leading refers to the way individual vocal lines move from one note to another in harmony. Smooth voice movement ensures that each part flows naturally, avoiding awkward leaps or strained intervals. Generally, stepwise motion (moving by seconds) or small skips (thirds) are preferred, while large leaps should be used sparingly. This creates a pleasing and singable texture for all voices.



Fill in the blank: Smooth voice movement is achieved by using stepwise motion or small _____.

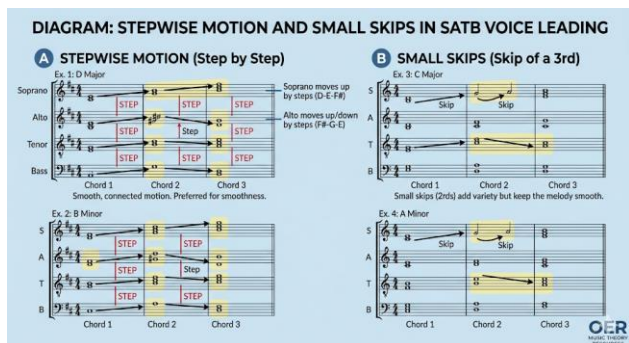


Figure 2.2 Rules of smooth voice movement

2.2.2 Avoiding parallel fifths and octaves

One of the most important rules in SATB harmonisation is to avoid **parallel fifths** and **parallel octaves**. These occur when two voices move in the same direction by the same interval, resulting in a hollow sound that reduces independence between parts. For example, if the soprano and bass both move up a fifth together, the harmony loses richness. Instead, composers should aim for contrary or oblique motion, which preserves the individuality of each voice.

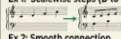
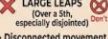
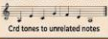
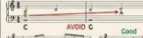
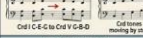
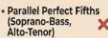
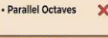
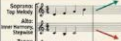
Fill in the blank: Parallel fifths and octaves reduce the _____ between voices in SATB harmonisation.

Plate 2.2 Avoiding parallel fifths and octaves

2.2.3 Maintaining independence of voices

Independence of voices means that each part in SATB texture should sound like a distinct musical line, even when combined with others. This is achieved by varying rhythm, contour, and direction of movement between voices. For example, while the soprano may ascend, the bass could descend, creating contrast. Independence ensures that the harmony is rich and layered, rather than sounding like a single merged line.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SATB VOICE LEADING: A SUMMARY TABLE.				
PRINCIPLE NAME  Smooth Movement	EXPLANATION Move each vocal part by step or small skip. Prefer short distances over large leaps to maintain vocal flow and predictability.	APPLICATION Ex 1: Scalewise steps (D to E)  Ex 2: Smooth connection 	BENEFITS • Increases vocal comfort, creates a more flowing and graceful melodic line. • Easy for singers to follow.	COMMON ERRORS ✗ LARGE LEAPS (Over a 5th, especially disjunct)  ✗ Disconnected movement 
PRINCIPLE NAME  Avoiding Parallels	EXPLANATION Do not move perfect intervals (Fifths, Octaves) in parallel motion between any two voices (e.g., Soprano and Bass).	APPLICATION  	BENEFITS • Ensures the distinct identity of each vocal part, preventing the texture from becoming too thin and "fused".	COMMON ERRORS ✗ Parallel Perfect Fifths (Soprano-Bass, Alto-Tenor)  ✗ Parallel Octaves 
PRINCIPLE NAME  Maintaining Independence	EXPLANATION Give each voice part (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) a unique melodic character and harmonic role. Use varied rhythms and directions.	APPLICATION 	BENEFITS • Creates a rich, multi-dimensional, and interesting four-part texture. • Prevents 'thickening' and monotony. • Each part has importance.	COMMON ERRORS ✗ 'Chordal Thickening' (Voices too close)  ✗ Similar Direction (all voices move up/down together) 

Pilot questions 2.2

1. What is voice leading in SATB harmonisation?
2. Which type of motion is preferred for smooth voice movement?
3. What are parallel fifths and octaves, and why should they be avoided?
4. What type of motion helps preserve independence between voices?
5. How can independence of voices be achieved in SATB texture?

2.3.1 Using primary triads (I, IV, V)

Fill in the blank: The three primary triads are the tonic, subdominant, and _____.

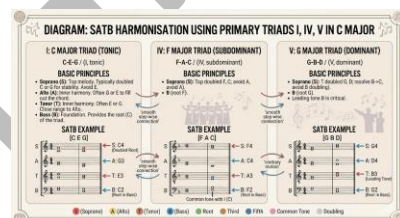


Figure 2.3 Primary triads in SATB harmonisation

2.3.2 Incorporating secondary chords and cadences

Beyond primary triads, **secondary chords** such as ii, iii, and vi add richness and variety to harmonisation. They provide alternative pathways between primary chords and help avoid monotony. **Cadences** are specific chord progressions that signal the end of a phrase or section. Common cadences include the perfect cadence (V–I), plagal cadence (IV–I), and imperfect cadence (ending on V). Using secondary chords and cadences allows the harmonisation to sound more complete and musically satisfying.

Fill in the blank: A perfect cadence is formed by the progression from _____ to I.

Ach bleib bei uns,
Herr Jesu Christ

J. S. Bach

Plate 2.3 Incorporating secondary chords and cadences

2.3.3 Exercises in harmonising short melodies

Practical exercises are essential for mastering SATB harmonisation. One exercise involves harmonising a simple melody using only primary triads, ensuring smooth voice leading. Another exercise introduces secondary chords, encouraging learners to experiment with different progressions. A third exercise focuses on cadences, requiring learners to harmonise short phrases that end with perfect, plagal, or imperfect cadences. These exercises build confidence and reinforce the principles of harmonisation in a hands-on way.

Fill in the blank: Harmonisation exercises often begin with primary triads before introducing _____ chords for variety.

Name	Notation	Chord Tones Intervals	Jazz/Pop Symbol	Keyboard Diagram
Major		1–3–5 M3+m3	C CM C ⁺ CM	
Minor		1–3♭–5 m3+M3	C ⁻ Cm Cm	
Diminished		1–3♭–5♭ m3+m3	C ^o Cdim	
Augmented		1–3–5♯ M3+M3	C ⁺ Caug	

Box 2.3 Sample harmonisation exercises



Pilot questions 2.3

1. What are the three primary triads in tonal harmony?
2. Which chord progression forms a perfect cadence?
3. Name one secondary chord used in SATB harmonisation.
4. Why are cadences important in harmonisation?
5. What is the purpose of harmonisation exercises?

Series Summary

This Series has guided you through the essential principles of harmonising melodies for SATB voices, a cornerstone of tonal harmony and choral writing. We began by examining the fundamentals of SATB texture, including the definition and characteristics of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices. We then explored the principles of voice leading, focusing on smooth movement, avoiding parallel fifths and octaves, and maintaining independence of voices. Finally, we applied these principles in practical techniques for harmonising melodies, using primary triads, incorporating secondary chords, and practising cadences through exercises.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to define SATB texture, explain voice leading principles, analyse common harmonisation errors, and apply both primary and secondary chords to harmonise melodies effectively. These skills align directly with the Series Learning Outcomes, enabling you to create balanced, expressive, and stylistically authentic SATB arrangements.

Glossary of Terms

- **Alto:** The lower female voice in SATB texture, providing inner harmonies.
- **Bass:** The lowest male voice in SATB texture, anchoring the harmony.
- **Cadence:** A chord progression that signals the end of a phrase or section.
- **Dominant (V):** The fifth degree chord, creating tension that resolves to the tonic.
- **Parallel fifths/octaves:** Two voices moving in the same direction by the same interval, reducing independence.
- **Primary triads:** The tonic (I), subdominant (IV), and dominant (V) chords, forming the basis of harmonisation.
- **SATB texture:** The arrangement of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices in harmony.
- **Soprano:** The highest female voice in SATB texture, often carrying the melody.
- **Tenor:** The higher male voice in SATB texture, supporting harmonies above the bass.
- **Tonic (I):** The chord built on the first degree of the scale, establishing the key.
- **Voice leading:** The smooth and logical movement of individual voices in harmony.



Concept Check Questions [Series 2]

Objective questions

1. What does SATB texture stand for? (Linked to SLO 2.1)
2. Which voice usually carries the melody in SATB harmonisation? (Linked to SLO 2.1)
3. Which three chords are known as the primary triads? (Linked to SLO 2.4)

Short-answer questions

4. Define voice leading in SATB harmonisation. (Linked to SLO 2.2)
5. Explain why parallel fifths and octaves should be avoided. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
6. Describe one function of cadences in harmonisation. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Long-answer questions

7. Analyse the principles of voice leading and explain how they contribute to effective SATB harmonisation. (Linked to SLO 2.2, SLO 2.3)
 - Basic response: Voice leading ensures smooth movement, avoids parallels, and maintains independence of voices.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how these principles also enhance stylistic authenticity, support text setting, and improve performance quality.
8. Evaluate the role of primary and secondary chords in harmonising melodies for SATB voices. (Linked to SLO 2.4, SLO 2.5)
 - Basic response: Primary chords provide stability, while secondary chords add variety and richness.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explore how combining these chords with cadences creates expressive and stylistically complete harmonisations.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 2]

- SATB texture means the arrangement of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices.
- The soprano voice usually carries the melody.
- The alto voice provides inner harmonies within the female range.
- The bass voice provides the lowest notes, anchoring the harmony.
- Respecting voice ranges ensures balance and avoids strain for singers.
- Voice leading is the smooth and logical movement of voices in harmony.
- Stepwise motion or small skips are preferred for smooth voice movement.
- Parallel fifths and octaves occur when two voices move in the same direction by the same interval, and they should be avoided because they reduce independence.
- Contrary or oblique motion helps preserve independence between voices.
- Independence of voices is achieved by varying rhythm, contour, and direction of movement.
- The three primary triads are I, IV, and V.



- A perfect cadence is formed by the progression V–I.
- One secondary chord is ii.
- Cadences are important because they signal the end of a phrase or section.
- Harmonisation exercises build confidence and reinforce principles of SATB writing.

References and Attributions [Series 2]

- Figure 2.1: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing SATB texture with soprano, alto, tenor, and bass lines in a score.” Search string: “SATB texture diagram soprano alto tenor bass OER.”
- Plate 2.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir performing, with soprano, alto, tenor, and bass sections highlighted.” Search string: “choir SATB voices soprano alto tenor bass OER image.”
- Box 2.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing SATB voices with ranges and roles in harmonisation.” Search string: “SATB voices ranges roles harmonisation OER table.”
- Figure 2.2: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing stepwise motion and small skips in SATB voice leading.” Search string: “SATB voice leading stepwise motion skips diagram OER.”
- Plate 2.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir score showing soprano and bass moving in parallel fifths.” Search string: “SATB choir parallel fifths octaves OER image.”
- Box 2.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table summarising principles of voice leading in SATB harmonisation.” Search string: “SATB voice leading principles smooth movement avoiding parallels independence OER table.”
- Figure 2.3: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing SATB harmonisation using primary triads I, IV, V in C major.” Search string: “SATB harmonisation primary triads I IV V diagram OER.”
- Plate 2.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir performing a hymn with clear cadences in SATB harmonisation.” Search string: “choir hymn SATB cadence harmony OER image.”
- Box 2.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing SATB harmonisation exercises with primary triads, secondary chords, and cadences.” Search string: “SATB harmonisation exercises primary triads secondary chords cadences OER table.”



Course Code: MUS 222

Course Title: Tonal Harmony II

Course Credit Load: 2 Units

Series 1: Composing Melodies with Embellishments

Series 2: Harmonising Melodies for SATB Voices

Series 3: Advanced Study of Seventh to Thirteenth Chords

Series 4: Suspensions and Modulations in Homophonic Writing

Series 5: Employing and Interpreting Figured Bass

Proposed Outline for Series 3

Part 3.1 Introduction to extended chords

- 3.1.1 Definition of seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords
- 3.1.2 Role of extended chords in tonal harmony

Part 3.2 Construction and notation of extended chords

- 3.2.1 Building seventh chords from triads
- 3.2.2 Adding ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths
- 3.2.3 Figured bass notation for extended chords

Part 3.3 Application of extended chords in composition

- 3.3.1 Using extended chords in progressions
- 3.3.2 Expressive functions of extended chords
- 3.3.3 Exercises in composing with extended chords



Introduction

In tonal harmony, extended chords such as sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenth add richness and depth to musical writing. They expand the harmonic vocabulary beyond simple triads, allowing composers to create more expressive and sophisticated progressions. These chords are widely used in both classical and modern music, making their study essential for advanced learners of harmony.

The aim of this Series is to provide you with a thorough understanding of extended chords, from their construction and notation to their expressive use in composition.

We shall commence this Series by introducing the concept of extended chords, defining their types and explaining their role in tonal harmony. Next, we will explore how these chords are constructed and notated, including their representation in figured bass. Finally, we will apply this knowledge by examining how extended chords are used in progressions, considering their expressive functions, and engaging in exercises that involve composing with them.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** define seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords and explain their role in tonal harmony,
- **SLO 3.2** demonstrate how to construct extended chords from triads,
- **SLO 3.3** apply figured bass notation to represent extended chords,
- **SLO 3.4** analyse the use of extended chords in harmonic progressions, and
- **SLO 3.5** compose short passages that employ extended chords for expressive effect.



3.1 Introduction to Extended Chords

3.1.1 Definition of seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords

Extended chords are harmonies that go beyond the basic triad by adding notes above the fifth. A **seventh chord** adds the seventh degree of the scale to a triad, creating tension and colour. A **ninth chord** adds the ninth degree, often producing a richer sound. An **eleventh chord** includes the eleventh degree, which can add dissonance and complexity. Finally, a **thirteenth chord** adds the thirteenth degree, resulting in a full and layered harmony. These chords are essential in tonal harmony because they expand the palette of sounds available to composers.

Fill in the blank: A seventh chord is formed by adding the _____ degree of the scale to a triad.

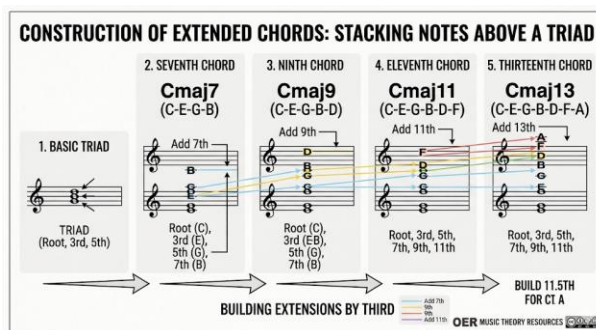


Figure 3.1 Extended chords beyond the triad

3.1.2 Role of extended chords in tonal harmony

Extended chords play a significant role in tonal harmony by adding depth, tension, and expressive possibilities. They are often used to enrich progressions, highlight important moments, or create contrast. For example, a dominant seventh chord intensifies the pull towards resolution, while a thirteenth chord can provide lush sonorities in jazz or Romantic music. Extended chords also allow composers to experiment with dissonance and resolution, making their music more dynamic and engaging.

Fill in the blank: Extended chords enrich progressions by adding depth, tension, and _____ possibilities.



Plate 3.1 Role of extended chords in tonal harmony



ROLES OF EXTENDED CHORDS IN TONAL HARMONY					
SEVENTH CHORDS					
CHORD TYPE	COMMON STRUCTURE	PRIMARY HARMONIC ROLE	FUNCTION & CHARACTER	TONAL EXAMPLE	
Major 7th	Cmaj7 C-E-G-B	Tonic	Adds color and jazz feel	Cmaj7	
Dominant 7th	C7 C-E-G-Bb	Dominant	Creates major tension and drive to tonic	C7	
Minor 7th	Cm7 C-Eb-G-Bb	Predominant	Creates major tension and drive to tonic	Cm7	
Minor 7th	Cm7 C-Eb-G-Bb	Predominant	Adds color and jazz feel	Cm7	
Minor 7th	Cm7 C-Eb-G-Bb	Tonic	Creates moorish and drive to tonic	Cm7	
NINTH CHORDS					
CHORD TYPE	COMMON STRUCTURE	PRIMARY HARMONIC ROLE	FUNCTION & CHARACTER	TONAL EXAMPLE	
Major 9th	Cmaj9 C-E-G-Bb-A	Enhanced tension & color	Adds color and jazz feel	Cmaj9	
Dominant 9th	C9 C-E-G-Bb-A	Dominant	Enhances major tension and drive	C9	
Minor 9th	Cm9 C-Eb-G-Bb-A	Enhanced tension & color	Enhances in all modern function	Cm9	
Dominant 9th	Cm9 C-Eb-G-Bb-A	Predominant	Creates major tension and drive to tonic	Cm9	
ELEVENTH CHORDS					
CHORD TYPE	COMMON STRUCTURE	PRIMARY HARMONIC ROLE	FUNCTION & CHARACTER	TONAL EXAMPLE	
Dominant 11th	C11 C-E-G-Bb-A-C#	Rare use handles of the 3rd and 11th intervals	Creates major complex, tension	C11	
		Write advice and only if 11th required	Creates major complex, tension		
THIRTEENTH CHORDS					
CHORD TYPE	COMMON STRUCTURE	PRIMARY HARMONIC ROLE	FUNCTION & CHARACTER	TONAL EXAMPLE	
Dominant 13th	C13 C-E-G-Bb-A-C#-F#	Most extended tension, lush texture & complex function	Lush texture and extended and complex function	C13	

Box 3.1 Types and roles of extended chords

Pilot questions 3.1

1. What are extended chords in tonal harmony?
2. Which degree is added to a triad to form a seventh chord?
3. Name two types of extended chords beyond the seventh.
4. Why is the dominant seventh chord important in tonal harmony?
5. How do extended chords enrich harmonic progressions?

3.2 Construction and Notation of Extended Chords

3.2.1 Building seventh chords from triads

A **seventh chord** is formed by adding the seventh degree of the scale to a basic triad. For example, a C major triad (C–E–G) becomes a C major seventh chord when the note B is added. Seventh chords can be major, minor, dominant, or diminished depending on the quality of the triad and the seventh interval. They are widely used because they create tension that seeks resolution, making them essential in tonal progressions.

Fill in the blank: A seventh chord is formed by adding the _____ degree of the scale to a triad.

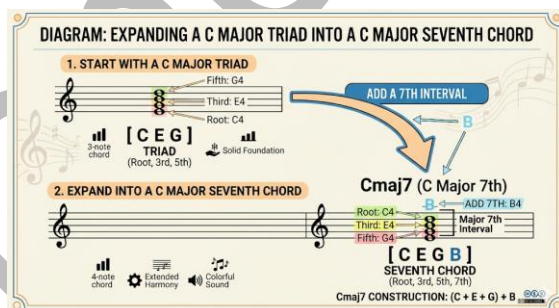


Figure 3.2 Building seventh chords from triads



3.2.2 Adding ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths

To build **ninth chords**, the ninth degree of the scale is added above the seventh chord. Similarly, **eleventh chords** include the eleventh degree, and **thirteenth chords** extend further by adding the thirteenth degree. These chords are often stacked in thirds, creating dense harmonies. While they add richness, they must be used carefully to avoid excessive dissonance. Composers often omit certain chord tones (such as the fifth) to maintain clarity.

Fill in the blank: A thirteenth chord is formed by adding the _____ degree of the scale above the seventh chord.

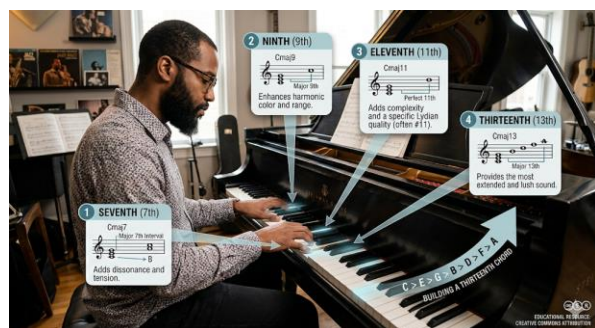


Plate 3.2 Adding ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths

3.2.3 Figured bass notation for extended chords

Figured bass is a shorthand system used in tonal harmony to indicate intervals above the bass note. For extended chords, specific figures are used to show the added notes. For example, a seventh chord may be indicated as “7” above the bass, while a ninth chord may be written as “9.” More complex chords, such as elevenths and thirteenths, use combinations of figures to show the intervals. Mastery of figured bass notation allows musicians to interpret and realise extended chords accurately in performance and composition.

Fill in the blank: In figured bass, a ninth chord is indicated by the number _____ above the bass note.

TABLE: FIGURED BASS SYMBOLS FOR EXTENDED CHORDS

CHORD TYPE	COMMON NAME	CONSTRUCTION (STACKED THIRDS)	EXAMPLE ON STAFF (ROOT POSITION)	FIGURED BASS SYMBOLS (ROOT POSITION & INVERSIONS)
SEVENTH CHORDS	Cmaj7	C-E-G-B		Root Position: '7' or '7/#' or '7/b'
	C7	C-E-G-B		1st Inv: '6/5'
	Cm7	C-Eb-G-Bb		2nd Inv: '4/3'
NINTH CHORDS	Cmaj9	C-E-G-B-D		3rd Inv: '4/2'
	C9	C-E-G-B-D		Root Position: '9' (if simplified)
				1st Inv: '6/5/4'
ELEVENTH CHORDS	Cmaj11	C-E-G-B-D-F		2nd Inv: '4/3/2'
				Root Position: '11' (if simplified)
				1st Inv: '6/5/4'
THIRTEENTH CHORDS	Cmaj13	C-E-G-B-D-F-A		2nd Inv: '4/3/2'
				Root Position: '13' (if simplified)
				1st Inv: '6/5/4'

FIGURES INDICATE INTERVALS ABOVE THE BASS NOTE. INVERSIONS ARE VERY COMPLEX, AND OFTEN SIMPLIFIED. 13th IS THE ULTIMATE EXTENSION. INVERSIONS ARE RARELY USED IN THIS FORM. OFTEN SIMPLIFIED TO '12'.

Box 3.2 Figured bass notation for extended chords



Pilot questions 3.2

1. How is a seventh chord built from a triad?
2. Which degree is added to form a ninth chord?
3. Why might composers omit certain tones in extended chords?
4. What does the figure “7” indicate in figured bass notation?
5. How are eleventh and thirteenth chords represented in figured bass?

3.3 Application of Extended Chords in Composition

3.3.1 Using extended chords in progressions

Extended chords are most effective when used within **progressions**, which are sequences of chords that create movement and direction in music. For example, a dominant seventh chord (V7) strongly resolves to the tonic (I), while a ninth chord can add colour to a pre-dominant function. Extended chords enrich progressions by introducing tension and release, making the harmonic journey more expressive. Composers often use them to highlight climactic points or to add variety to otherwise simple progressions.

Fill in the blank: A dominant seventh chord (V7) strongly resolves to the _____ chord.

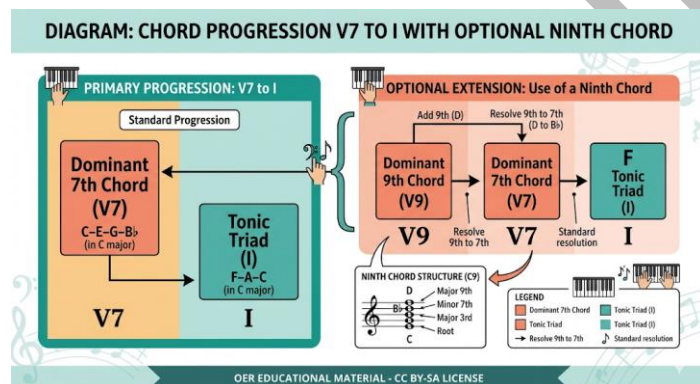


Figure 3.3 Extended chords in progressions

3.3.2 Expressive functions of extended chords

Extended chords serve important **expressive functions** in tonal harmony. A seventh chord can create anticipation, while a ninth chord adds richness and depth. Eleventh chords often introduce dissonance that resolves beautifully, and thirteenth chords provide lush sonorities that are common in jazz and Romantic music. These chords allow composers to convey emotions such as tension, longing, or grandeur. Their expressive power lies in the balance between dissonance and resolution, which gives music its dynamic character.



Fill in the blank: Extended chords convey emotion by balancing dissonance and _____.



Plate 3.3 Expressive functions of extended chords

3.3.3 Exercises in composing with extended chords

Practical exercises help learners apply extended chords effectively. One exercise involves harmonising a simple melody using seventh chords, ensuring smooth voice leading. Another exercise introduces ninth and eleventh chords, encouraging experimentation with dissonance and resolution. A final exercise requires learners to compose short passages that employ thirteenth chords, focusing on their lush and layered sound. These exercises build confidence and demonstrate how extended chords can transform ordinary harmonies into expressive and sophisticated progressions.

Fill in the blank: Composing with thirteenth chords focuses on their lush and _____ sound.

Exercise	Extended Chords Focused On	Benefits
Seventh Chord Harmonisation	Seventh (7th)	Explores core extended tensions, improves modal understanding.
Ninth/Eleventh Experimentation	Ninth (9th), Eleventh (11th)	Introduces richer, more complex voicings; adds 'jazz' or 'ambient' textures.
Thirteenth Chord Composition	Thirteenth (13th)	Teaches full harmonic complexity, voice leading with all available tensions.
Rootless Voicings (Inspired by <IMAGE 0>)	9th, 11th, 13th	Focuses on essential chord tones and smooth movement .
Modal Chord Progressions	Various Extended Chords	Connects specific chord qualities to modal colors and feels .

Box 3.3 Sample exercises for extended chords

Pilot questions 3.3

1. Which chord progression demonstrates the strong resolution of a dominant seventh chord?
2. What expressive function does a ninth chord serve in tonal harmony?
3. How do eleventh chords contribute to musical expression?
4. Why are thirteenth chords often associated with jazz and Romantic music?
5. What is the purpose of exercises in composing with extended chords?



Series Summary

This Series has focused on the advanced study of seventh to thirteenth chords, which extend the harmonic possibilities beyond simple triads. We began by introducing extended chords, defining their types and explaining their role in tonal harmony. We then explored how these chords are constructed and notated, including their representation in figured bass. Finally, we examined their application in composition, looking at how they enrich progressions, serve expressive functions, and can be practised through targeted exercises.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to define and construct extended chords, apply figured bass notation, analyse their role in progressions, and compose short passages that employ them for expressive effect. These outcomes align directly with the Series Learning Objectives, equipping you with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills for advanced harmonic writing.

Glossary of Terms

- **Eleventh chord:** An extended chord that adds the eleventh degree of the scale above a seventh chord.
- **Extended chords:** Chords that go beyond the triad by adding notes such as sevenths, ninths, elevenths, or thirteenths.
- **Figured bass:** A shorthand notation system indicating intervals above the bass note.
- **Ninth chord:** An extended chord that adds the ninth degree of the scale above a seventh chord.
- **Seventh chord:** A chord formed by adding the seventh degree of the scale to a triad.
- **Thirteenth chord:** An extended chord that adds the thirteenth degree of the scale above a seventh chord.
- **Triad:** A chord consisting of three notes: root, third, and fifth.

Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

Objective questions

1. Which degree is added to a triad to form a seventh chord? (Linked to SLO 3.2)
2. What does the figure “9” indicate in figured bass notation? (Linked to SLO 3.3)
3. Which extended chord adds the thirteenth degree of the scale? (Linked to SLO 3.1)

Short-answer questions

4. Define extended chords in tonal harmony. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
5. Explain why composers sometimes omit chord tones in extended chords. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
6. Describe one expressive function of extended chords in composition. (Linked to SLO 3.4)



Long-answer questions

7. Analyse the construction of extended chords and explain how they expand the harmonic vocabulary. (Linked to SLO 3.2, SLO 3.3)
 - Basic response: Extended chords are built by stacking notes beyond the triad, adding sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how these chords are notated in figured bass and how omissions of certain tones maintain clarity.
8. Evaluate the role of extended chords in progressions and their expressive functions in tonal harmony. (Linked to SLO 3.4, SLO 3.5)
 - Basic response: Extended chords enrich progressions by adding tension, depth, and expressive possibilities.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explore how extended chords are used stylistically in jazz, Romantic music, and modern composition to convey emotion and grandeur.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 3]

- A seventh chord is formed by adding the seventh degree of the scale to a triad.
- Extended chords include ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords beyond the seventh.
- Extended chords enrich progressions by adding depth, tension, and expressive possibilities.
- The dominant seventh chord is important because it intensifies the pull towards resolution.
- Extended chords enrich harmonic progressions by balancing dissonance and resolution.
- A seventh chord is built by adding the seventh degree to a triad.
- A ninth chord is formed by adding the ninth degree.
- Composers omit certain tones in extended chords to avoid excessive dissonance and maintain clarity.
- The figure “7” in figured bass indicates a seventh chord.
- Eleventh and thirteenth chords are represented by their respective figures in figured bass notation.
- A dominant seventh chord resolves strongly to the tonic.
- A ninth chord adds richness and depth.
- Eleventh chords contribute dissonance that resolves expressively.
- Thirteenth chords are associated with lush sonorities in jazz and Romantic music.
- Exercises in composing with extended chords build confidence and demonstrate expressive applications.



References and Attributions [Series 3]

- Figure 3.1: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing stacked notes forming seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords above a triad.” Search string: “extended chords seventh ninth eleventh thirteenth diagram OER.”
- Plate 3.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a pianist playing extended chords on a keyboard, showing stacked harmonies.” Search string: “pianist playing extended chords keyboard harmony OER image.”
- Box 3.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords with roles in tonal harmony.” Search string: “extended chords seventh ninth eleventh thirteenth roles harmony OER table.”
- Figure 3.2: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a C major triad expanded into a C major seventh chord.” Search string: “seventh chord construction triad C major OER diagram.”
- Plate 3.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a pianist playing stacked extended chords including seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth.” Search string: “extended chords piano ninth eleventh thirteenth OER image.”
- Box 3.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing extended chords (seventh, ninth, eleventh, thirteenth) with figured bass symbols.” Search string: “figured bass extended chords seventh ninth eleventh thirteenth OER table.”
- Figure 3.3: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a chord progression from V7 to I, with a ninth chord included.” Search string: “extended chords progression V7 to I ninth chord OER diagram.”
- Plate 3.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of an orchestra performing a passage with extended chords, showing expressive intensity.” Search string: “orchestra extended chords expressive harmony OER image.”
- Box 3.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing exercises for composing with extended chords and their benefits.” Search string: “extended chords exercises seventh ninth eleventh thirteenth OER table.”



Course Code: MUS 222

Course Title: Tonal Harmony II

Course Credit Load: 2 Units

Series 1: Composing Melodies with Embellishments

Series 2: Harmonising Melodies for SATB Voices

Series 3: Advanced Study of Seventh to Thirteenth Chords

Series 4: Suspensions and Modulations in Homophonic Writing

Series 5: Employing and Interpreting Figured Bass

Proposed Outline for Series 4

Part 4.1 Understanding suspensions in homophonic writing

- 4.1.1 Definition and types of suspensions
- 4.1.2 Resolution of suspensions in tonal harmony

Part 4.2 Techniques of modulation in homophonic writing

- 4.2.1 Definition and types of modulation
- 4.2.2 Common chord and pivot techniques
- 4.2.3 Direct and sequential modulation

Part 4.3 Applying suspensions and modulations in composition

- 4.3.1 Exercises in writing suspensions
- 4.3.2 Exercises in modulation
- 4.3.3 Combining suspensions and modulations in homophonic passages



Introduction

In tonal harmony, suspensions and modulations are vital tools for creating expressive and dynamic music. Suspensions introduce temporary dissonance that resolves into consonance, adding tension and release. Modulations, on the other hand, shift the tonal centre, providing variety and expanding the expressive range of a composition. Together, they enrich homophonic writing, making it more engaging and stylistically authentic.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the knowledge and skills to use suspensions and modulations effectively in homophonic writing, both in theory and practice.

We shall commence this Series by exploring suspensions, defining their types and examining how they resolve within tonal harmony. Next, we will study modulation techniques, including common chord, pivot, direct, and sequential approaches. Finally, we will apply these concepts in practical exercises, combining suspensions and modulations to create expressive homophonic passages.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 4.1** define suspensions and explain their resolution in tonal harmony,
- **SLO 4.2** identify and describe different types of modulation in homophonic writing,
- **SLO 4.3** demonstrate modulation techniques such as common chord, pivot, direct, and sequential approaches,
- **SLO 4.4** apply suspensions in homophonic passages,
- **SLO 4.5** compose short homophonic passages that combine suspensions and modulations for expressive effect.



4.1 Understanding Suspensions in Homophonic Writing

4.1.1 Definition and types of suspensions

A **suspension** is a non-chord tone that creates temporary dissonance by holding a note from the previous harmony into the next, before resolving downwards by step to a consonant note. Suspensions are common in homophonic writing because they add tension and expressive interest while maintaining clarity of texture. The main types include the **4–3 suspension** (where the fourth above the bass resolves to a third), the **7–6 suspension** (where the seventh resolves to a sixth), and the **9–8 suspension** (where the ninth resolves to the octave). Each type follows the same principle: preparation, suspension, and resolution.

Fill in the blank: A suspension resolves by moving _____ by step to a consonant note.

Beat 1 Preparation Beat 2 Suspension Beat 3 Resolution

4–3 Suspension **7–6 Suspension** **9–8 Suspension**

Preparation Suspension Resolution

Preparation Suspension Resolution

Preparation Suspension Resolution

4–3

Key Characteristics of Homophonic Suspensions

- All voices move simultaneously (mostly)
- Dissonance is clearly prepared and resolved
- Creates harmonic tension and release

Figure 4.1 Types of suspensions in homophonic writing

4.1.2 Resolution of suspensions in tonal harmony

The **resolution** of a suspension is crucial for maintaining tonal stability. Suspensions must resolve downwards by step to a consonant note, usually within the same voice. This resolution provides a sense of release after the tension created by the dissonance. In homophonic writing, the resolution often coincides with the arrival of a new chord, ensuring smooth voice leading. Composers use suspensions to highlight important beats or words in vocal music, making them both functional and expressive.

Fill in the blank: The resolution of a suspension provides a sense of _____ after tension.



Plate 4.1 Resolution of suspensions in tonal harmony

THE THREE STEPS OF SUSPENSION IN TONAL HARMONY		
1. PREPARATION A consonant note (prepares the tension) is presented in one voice of a previous chord, on a weak beat. 	2. SUSPENSION The consonant note is held over (suspended) onto the strong beat of the next chord, becoming a dissonant tension. 	3. RESOLUTION The dissonant note is resolved down by step (usually) to a new consonant note, on the subsequent weak beat. 
KEY POINT: Suspension creates harmonic tension and release, driven by voice leading.		

Box 4.1 Steps in suspension resolution

Pilot questions 4.1

1. What is a suspension in tonal harmony?
2. Name two common types of suspensions.
3. How does a suspension resolve?
4. Why are suspensions important in homophonic writing?
5. What are the three steps involved in a suspension?

4.2 Techniques of Modulation in Homophonic Writing

4.2.1 Definition and types of modulation

Modulation is the process of changing from one key to another within a piece of music. In homophonic writing, modulation provides variety and expressive depth, preventing monotony. The most common types include **closely related modulation** (to keys that share many common tones, such as the dominant or relative minor), and **distant modulation** (to keys with fewer shared tones, often used for dramatic effect). Modulation can be temporary or permanent, depending on whether the new key is maintained or quickly returns to the original.

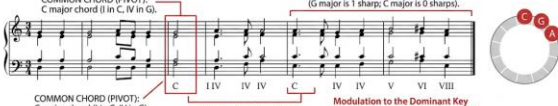
Fill in the blank: Modulation is the process of changing from one _____ to another within a piece of music.

TYPES OF MODULATION IN HOMOPHONIC WRITING: CLOSELY RELATED VS. DISTANT

MODULATION FROM C MAJOR TO G MAJOR (CLOSELY RELATED)

COMMON CHORD (PIVOT): C major chord (C in C, F in G).

Modulation to the Dominant Key (G major is 1 sharp; C major is 0 sharps).



COMMON CHORD (PIVOT): C major chord (C in C, F in G).

SEAMLESS MODULATION

Modulation to the Dominant Key (G major is 1 sharp; C major is 0 sharps).

MODULATION FROM C MAJOR TO E MAJOR (DISTANT)

CHROMATIC MODULATION: No common diatonic chords.

Key-altering chromatic note (D#) and new accidentals to establish the distant key of E major.



CHROMATIC MODULATION: No common diatonic chords.

SUDDEN SHIFT IN TONAL CENTER

Modulation to a Mediant Key (E major is 4 sharps; C major is 0 sharps).



Figure 4.2 Types of modulation in homophonic writing

4.2.2 Common chord and pivot techniques

The **common chord modulation** uses a chord that belongs to both the original and the new key, serving as a smooth bridge between them. For example, the chord Am can function in both C major and G major. The **pivot chord modulation** is similar, but the chosen chord acts as a pivot point, reinterpreted in the new key. These techniques are widely used because they make the transition seamless and natural, maintaining coherence in homophonic writing.

Fill in the blank: A common chord modulation uses a chord that belongs to both the original and the _____ key.

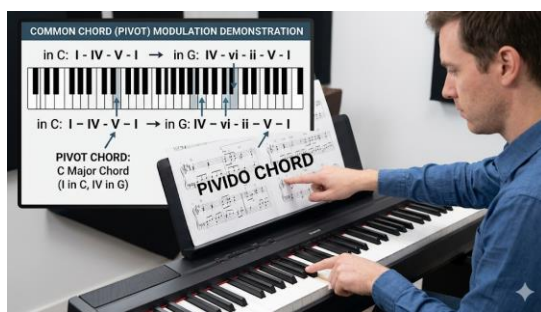


Plate 4.2 Common chord and pivot modulation techniques

4.2.3 Direct and sequential modulation

Direct modulation occurs when the music shifts abruptly to a new key without preparation, often for dramatic effect. This technique is common in vocal music, where a sudden rise in key can heighten emotional intensity. **Sequential modulation** involves repeating a musical idea at different pitch levels, gradually moving into a new key. This technique is effective in homophonic writing because it creates a sense of progression and inevitability. Both direct and sequential modulation add variety and expressive power to compositions.

Fill in the blank: Sequential modulation involves repeating a musical idea at different _____ levels.



MODULATION TECHNIQUES IN TONAL HARMONY			
Technique	Description	Common Key Relationship	Example (Keys and Chords)
COMMON CHORD MODULATION	Modulation via a chord found in both original and new keys (<O>)	C Maj to G Maj	C (I/IV), G (V/I), D (V of G)
PIVOT CHORD MODULATION	Often used interchangeably with common chord, but specifically can involve chromatic alteration within the pivot itself or multiple common chords (<IMAGE 0>)	A min to C Maj	Am (i/vi), C (III/II), G7 (V7 of C)
DIRECT MODULATION (Abrupt)	Key changes immediately without common chords, often between phrases (<IMAGE 1>, <IMAGE 2>)	C Maj to Eb Maj	C Maj phrase ends, Eb Maj phrase begins
SEQUENTIAL MODULATION	A melodic or harmonic sequence is transposed up or down into the new key (<IMAGE 3>, <IMAGE 4>)	C Maj to D Maj	sequence of chords moves by step

Box 4.2 Techniques of modulation

Pilot questions 4.2

1. What is modulation in tonal harmony?
2. Name two types of modulation.
3. How does a common chord modulation work?
4. What is the difference between direct and sequential modulation?
5. Why are modulation techniques important in homophonic writing?

4.3 Applying Suspensions and Modulations in Composition

4.3.1 Exercises in writing suspensions

Suspensions are best understood through practice. A useful exercise is to write short homophonic passages where one voice sustains a note into the next harmony, creating dissonance before resolving. Begin with simple 4–3 suspensions, then experiment with 7–6 and 9–8 suspensions. Pay attention to the preparation, the moment of dissonance, and the resolution, ensuring smooth voice leading. These exercises help you internalise the expressive tension and release that suspensions provide.

Fill in the blank: A suspension exercise should always include preparation, dissonance, and _____.

4–3 Suspension OER

C Major

Interval perfect 4th above major 3rd

4–3 4–3

1. PREPARATION
G in Alto chord on weak beat 1

2. SUSPENSION
<IMAGE 1, 1, 2>, <IMAGE 2>, a perfect 4th above Bass D

3. RESOLUTION
Resolution on weak beat 2, a major 3rd above Bass



Figure 4.3 Exercise in writing suspensions

4.3.2 Exercises in modulation

Modulation exercises train you to move smoothly between keys. Start by writing progressions that use common chord modulation, such as moving from C major to G major through the chord Am. Then practise pivot chord modulation, reinterpreting a chord in two different tonal contexts. Finally, experiment with direct modulation for dramatic effect, and sequential modulation to create a sense of inevitability. These exercises strengthen your ability to control tonal direction in homophonic writing.

Fill in the blank: A pivot chord modulation reinterprets a chord in two different _____ contexts.

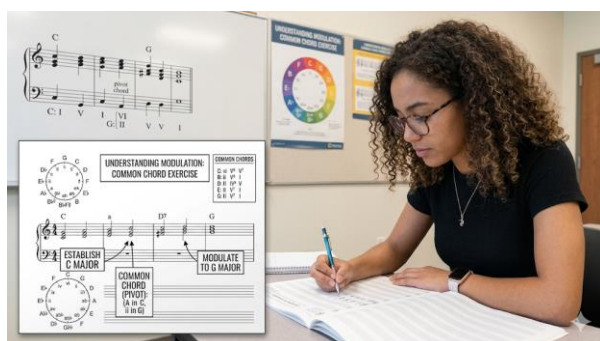


Plate 4.3 Exercise in modulation

4.3.3 Combining suspensions and modulations in homophonic passages

The most advanced application is to combine suspensions and modulations in a single passage. For example, a suspension may create tension that resolves just as the music modulates to a new key, enhancing the expressive effect. Exercises in combining these techniques encourage creativity and demonstrate how suspensions and modulations work together to enrich homophonic writing. This integration is particularly effective in vocal and choral music, where text and harmony interact closely.

Fill in the blank: Combining suspensions with modulations enhances the expressive effect of _____ writing.

EXERCISES COMBINING SUSPENSIONS & MODULATIONS: HARMONIC & EXPRESSIVE FOCUS.			
Exercise Name/Focus	Harmonic Technique	Homophonic Writing Application	Expressive Benefits/Notes
Pivot-Chord Modulation with 4-3 Suspension	modulation to closely related keys	Creating tension before new key is established	Adds smooth transition, 'yearning' quality to the shift
Chromatic Modulation (e.g., C to C#) via 9-8 Suspension sequence	modulating by step or third	Repeating a short homophonic phrase	Creates surprise, intense intense directional drive, a 'journey' effect
Modulating to distant keys via 7-6/4-3 suspensions	distant modulations	Using chain suspensions over a pivot	Creates long lines of tension and dramatic release, a 'pathos' effect
Modulating phrase ending with a suspension	final cadence in a new key	homophonic chorale style	Solidifies the key change, provides a conclusive yet emotionally rich close



Box 4.3 Sample exercises combining suspensions and modulations

Pilot questions 4.3

1. What are the three steps in a suspension exercise?
2. How does a common chord modulation work in practice?
3. What is the purpose of pivot chord modulation?
4. Why might a composer use direct modulation?
5. How can suspensions and modulations be combined in homophonic writing?

Series Summary

This Series has examined suspensions and modulations in homophonic writing, two essential techniques for adding tension, release, and expressive variety to tonal harmony. We began by defining suspensions, exploring their types and the importance of resolution in maintaining tonal stability. We then studied modulation techniques, including common chord, pivot, direct, and sequential approaches, highlighting how they provide smooth or dramatic shifts between keys. Finally, we applied these concepts in practical exercises, combining suspensions and modulations to enrich homophonic passages.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to define and apply suspensions, identify and demonstrate modulation techniques, and compose homophonic passages that integrate both for expressive effect. These outcomes align directly with the Series Learning Objectives, equipping you with practical skills to enhance tonal writing with clarity and creativity.

Glossary of Terms

- **Common chord modulation:** A modulation that uses a chord belonging to both the original and new key.
- **Direct modulation:** A sudden change to a new key without preparation.
- **Homophonic writing:** A texture where one main melody is supported by chords.
- **Modulation:** The process of changing from one key to another within a piece of music.
- **Pivot chord modulation:** A modulation where a chord is reinterpreted in two different tonal contexts.
- **Resolution:** The downward step movement of a suspension into a consonant note.
- **Sequential modulation:** A modulation achieved by repeating a musical idea at different pitch levels.
- **Suspension:** A non-chord tone held from the previous harmony into the next, creating dissonance before resolving.



Concept Check Questions [Series 4]

Objective questions

1. Which three steps are involved in a suspension? (Linked to SLO 4.1)
2. What does a common chord modulation use to connect two keys? (Linked to SLO 4.3)
3. Which modulation technique involves repeating a musical idea at different pitch levels? (Linked to SLO 4.3)

Short-answer questions

4. Define a suspension in tonal harmony. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
5. Explain why resolution is important in suspensions. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
6. Describe the difference between direct and pivot chord modulation. (Linked to SLO 4.2, SLO 4.3)

Long-answer questions

7. Analyse the role of suspensions in homophonic writing and explain how they contribute to expressive tension and release. (Linked to SLO 4.1, SLO 4.4)
 - Basic response: Suspensions create dissonance that resolves into consonance, adding tension and release.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how suspensions highlight important beats or words in vocal music, enhancing text expression.
8. Evaluate modulation techniques in homophonic writing, considering their expressive functions and practical applications. (Linked to SLO 4.2, SLO 4.3, SLO 4.5)
 - Basic response: Modulation provides variety and expressive depth, using techniques such as common chord, pivot, direct, and sequential.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explore how modulation styles differ across genres, such as classical, jazz, and popular music, and how they shape listener perception.

Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 4]

- A suspension is a non-chord tone held into the next harmony before resolving.
- Common types of suspensions include 4–3, 7–6, and 9–8.
- A suspension resolves by step into a consonant note.
- Suspensions are important because they add tension and expressive interest in homophonic writing.
- The three steps are preparation, suspension, and resolution.
- Modulation is the process of changing from one key to another.
- Two types of modulation are closely related and distant.
- A common chord modulation works by using a chord shared by both keys.
- Direct modulation shifts abruptly, while sequential modulation repeats ideas at different pitch levels.



- Modulation techniques are important because they provide variety and expressive depth in homophonic writing.
- Suspension exercises involve preparation, dissonance, and resolution.
- A common chord modulation works by bridging two keys with a shared chord.
- A pivot chord modulation reinterprets a chord in two tonal contexts.
- Direct modulation is used for dramatic effect.
- Suspensions and modulations can be combined to enrich homophonic writing with tension, release, and tonal variety.

References and Attributions [Series 4]

- Figure 4.1: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing 4–3, 7–6, and 9–8 suspensions in homophonic texture.” Search string: “suspensions 4-3 7-6 9-8 homophonic writing diagram OER.”
- Plate 4.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir performing a passage with suspensions resolving into consonance.” Search string: “choir suspension resolution tonal harmony OER image.”
- Box 4.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table outlining the three steps of suspension: preparation, suspension, resolution.” Search string: “suspension preparation resolution tonal harmony OER table.”
- Figure 4.2: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing modulation from C major to G major and from C major to E major.” Search string: “modulation types closely related distant homophonic writing diagram OER.”
- Plate 4.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a pianist demonstrating common chord modulation on a keyboard.” Search string: “common chord pivot modulation piano OER image.”
- Box 4.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table summarising modulation techniques: common chord, pivot, direct, sequential.” Search string: “modulation techniques common chord pivot direct sequential OER table.”
- Figure 4.3: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a short homophonic passage with a 4–3 suspension resolving.” Search string: “suspension exercise 4-3 homophonic passage diagram OER.”
- Plate 4.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a student writing a progression that modulates from C major to G major using a common chord.” Search string: “student modulation exercise common chord C major to G major OER image.”
- Box 4.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing exercises combining suspensions and modulations with expressive benefits.” Search string: “suspensions modulations exercises homophonic writing OER table.”



Course Code: MUS 222

Course Title: Tonal Harmony II

Course Credit Load: 2 Units

Series 1: Composing Melodies with Embellishments

Series 2: Harmonising Melodies for SATB Voices

Series 3: Advanced Study of Seventh to Thirteenth Chords

Series 4: Suspensions and Modulations in Homophonic Writing

Series 5: Employing and Interpreting Figured Bass

Proposed Outline for Series 5

Part 5.1 Introduction to figured bass

- 5.1.1 Definition and historical background
- 5.1.2 Role of figured bass in tonal harmony

Part 5.2 Reading and interpreting figured bass symbols

- 5.2.1 Common figures and their meanings
- 5.2.2 Complex figures and alterations
- 5.2.3 Practical exercises in interpretation

Part 5.3 Employing figured bass in composition and performance

- 5.3.1 Realising figured bass at the keyboard
- 5.3.2 Using figured bass in homophonic writing
- 5.3.3 Exercises in harmonisation with figured bass



Introduction

In tonal harmony, figured bass is a shorthand notation system that indicates intervals above the bass note. Widely used in Baroque music, it remains an essential tool for understanding and realising harmony. Figured bass allows performers and composers to interpret chordal structures quickly, making it a practical skill for both historical study and modern application.

The aim of this Series is to introduce you to the principles of figured bass, to equip you with the ability to read and interpret its symbols, and to apply it effectively in composition and performance.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the definition and historical background of figured bass, as well as its role in tonal harmony. Next, we will study how to read and interpret figured bass symbols, beginning with common figures before moving on to complex alterations and practical exercises. Finally, we will apply these skills by realising figured bass at the keyboard, using it in homophonic writing, and practising harmonisation exercises.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** define figured bass and explain its historical role in tonal harmony,
- **SLO 5.2** identify and interpret common figured bass symbols,
- **SLO 5.3** analyse complex figures and alterations in figured bass notation,
- **SLO 5.4** demonstrate how to realise figured bass at the keyboard,
- **SLO 5.5** apply figured bass in homophonic writing and harmonisation exercises.



5.1 Introduction to Figured Bass

5.1.1 Definition and historical background

Figured bass is a shorthand system of notation used in tonal harmony, particularly during the Baroque period. It indicates intervals above a written bass note using numbers, allowing performers to realise harmonies quickly. For example, the figure “6” above a bass note suggests that a sixth should be played above it, forming a chord. Figured bass was widely used in continuo playing, where keyboard or lute players improvised harmonies based on the figures provided.

Fill in the blank: Figured bass indicates intervals above a written _____ note using numbers.

UNDERSTANDING FIGURED BASS: BASS LINE WITH FIGURES 5, 6, 7

I. CLEAF LINE IN C MAJOR

IMPLIED HARMONIES

BAROQUE CONTINUO PERFORMANCE (REALIZATION)

1. Bass line played by cello or bassoon.
2. Figures interpreted and realized by harpsichordist or organist.

Figure 5.1 Example of figured bass notation

5.1.2 Role of figured bass in tonal harmony

The role of figured bass is both practical and theoretical. Practically, it enables performers to realise harmonies without needing a fully written score, encouraging improvisation and flexibility. Theoretically, it provides insight into how chords were understood and constructed historically, showing the relationship between bass notes and intervals. In modern study, figured bass helps learners grasp chordal structures, inversions, and progressions more efficiently. It remains a valuable tool for understanding harmony and for connecting historical practice with contemporary analysis.

Fill in the blank: Figured bass helps learners grasp chordal structures, _____, and progressions more efficiently.





Plate 5.1 Figured bass in performance practice

FUNCTIONS OF FIGURED BASS IN TONAL HARMONY

Function	Description	Baroque/Historical Context	Modern Educational Context
 SHORTHAND NOTATION	Concise way to write chords using numbers and symbols below the bass line.	Efficient way for composers to create and distribute continuo parts <O>.	Quick way to analyze and communicate harmonic progression.
 IMPROVISATION AID	A framework for a keyboard or other chordal player to extemporize harmonies and textures.	Central skill for continuo players in opera and chamber music.	Tools and exercises for developing realization and jazz/pop chord voicing skills <IMAGE 1>.
 THEORETICAL INSIGHT	Illuminates the relationship between harmony, counterpoint, and voice	Foundation for understanding voice leading and dissonance treatment.	Integral part of learning classical music theory, composition, and analysis.
 MODERN LEARNING TOOL	A practical method for students to internalize harmonic principles and keyboard skills.	Less common as a standalone method, learned primarily in context.	Digital apps, interactive software, and textbooks use it to teach chord recognition and smooth voice leading.

Box 5.1 Functions of figured bass

Pilot questions 5.1

1. What is figured bass in tonal harmony?
2. Which historical period made extensive use of figured bass?
3. How does figured bass indicate harmonies?
4. Why was figured bass important for continuo players?
5. What are two modern uses of figured bass in music study?

5.2 Reading and Interpreting Figured Bass Symbols

5.2.1 Common figures and their meanings

Figures are numbers written below a bass note to indicate the intervals that should be played above it. For example, “5–3” implies a root position triad, while “6” indicates a first inversion chord. These figures provide performers with a quick shorthand for constructing harmonies. In homophonic writing, common figures such as 5–3, 6, and 6–4 are frequently encountered, and learning to interpret them correctly is essential for accurate realisation.



Fill in the blank: The figure “6” indicates a chord in _____ inversion.

COMMON FIGURED BASS SYMBOLS: 5-3, 6, AND 6-4 WITH CORRESPONDING CHORDS

BASS LINE WITH FIGURES

IMPLIED & REPRESENTED CHORDS

CREATES A ROOT POSITION TRIAD
ROOT - C
3RD - E
5TH - G

CREATES A FIRST INVERSION
3RD - E
ROOT - G
5TH - B

CREATES A SECOND INVERSION
3RD - G
ROOT - C
5TH - E

Figure 5.2 Common figured bass symbols and their meanings

5.2.2 Complex figures and alterations

Beyond the common figures, **complex figures** include numbers with accidentals or combinations that indicate altered intervals. For instance, “#6” means a raised sixth above the bass, while “4-2” indicates a third inversion seventh chord. These symbols require careful interpretation, as they often signal chromaticism or dissonance. Understanding complex figures allows performers to realise more sophisticated harmonies and provides insight into advanced compositional techniques.

Fill in the blank: The figure “4-2” indicates a _____ inversion seventh chord.



Plate 5.2 Interpreting complex figured bass symbols

5.2.3 Practical exercises in interpretation

Exercises in interpreting figured bass help learners apply theoretical knowledge in practice. A typical exercise involves writing out the chords implied by a given bass line with figures, ensuring correct voice leading. Another exercise is to realise figured bass at the keyboard, playing the harmonies indicated by the figures. These activities strengthen the ability to read symbols fluently and connect them to harmonic structures.

Fill in the blank: Realising figured bass at the keyboard involves playing the _____ indicated by the figures.



Exercise Type	Description	Focus/Skill Developed	Example/Notation
WRITING CHORDS FROM FIGURES	Write out the full chord progression on a staff from the given bass line and figures (♯ ♮ ♯).	Accurate interval recognition and chord spelling	Given bass/figures and student's 'correct' realization)
KEYBOARD REALISATION	Play a given figured bass line at-piano, improvising appropriate right-hand harmonies in real-time.	Keyboard harmony, realization, and fluency	
ANALYSING PROGRESSIONS	Given a complete musical passage, identify and label the figures and implied Roman numerals.	Harmonic analysis and understanding context	
VOICE LEADING EXERCISES	Connect chords from figures smoothly, following rules of voice leading.	Counterpoint and good part-writing	

Pilot questions 5.2

1. What does the figure “5–3” indicate?
2. Which inversion is represented by the figure “6”?
3. What does the figure “#6” mean in figured bass?
4. How is a third inversion seventh chord represented in figured bass?
5. Why are practical exercises important in interpreting figured bass?

5.3.1 Realising figured bass at the keyboard

Realisation is the process of turning figured bass symbols into full harmonies at the keyboard. The performer reads the bass note and the figures, then supplies the appropriate intervals above the bass. For example, a bass note C with the figure “6” would be realised as an A above C, forming a first inversion chord. Realisation requires fluency in chord structures and inversions, as well as sensitivity to voice leading. It was a central skill for continuo players in the Baroque period and remains a valuable exercise for learners today.

Fill in the blank: Realisation involves turning figured bass symbols into full _____ at the keyboard.



FIGURED BASS REALISATION AT THE KEYBOARD: FROM SYMBOLS TO CHORDS

INPUT: GIVEN BASS & FIGURES

C Major
Figures below bass: 6 4-3

BASS NOTE (G) WITH FIGURES
(Intervals above the bass note)

OUTPUT: KEYBOARD REALISATION

KEYBOARD FINGERING HINTS
Common right-hand shapes for each realization for each right shapes

Figure 6 implies:
G major triad in 1st inversion
(G-B-D; D in bass)

Figures 4-3 imply:
G major triad in root p
(G-C-D → G-B-D; in)

Basso Continuo player (Continuo)
interprets figures, realizes full harmonies,
and extemporizes smooth textures.

Figure 5.3 Realising figured bass at the keyboard

5.3.2 Using figured bass in homophonic writing

In **homophonic writing**, figured bass provides a foundation for harmonisation. The bass line anchors the texture, while the figures guide the construction of chords above it. This ensures clarity and coherence in the harmony, even when the melody dominates. Composers use figured bass to sketch progressions quickly, and performers use it to improvise harmonies that support the main voice. In modern study, applying figured bass in homophonic writing helps learners connect theoretical knowledge with practical composition.

Fill in the blank: In homophonic writing, the bass line anchors the texture while the _____ guide chord construction.

Choir with Figured Bass Accompaniment

Figured Bass Notation

Bass Line with Figures

6 = Play a Sixth Above
4 3 = Play a Fourth and a Third
7 = Play a Seventh Above

Realized Chords

C F G7 C

Choral Melody
Harmonic Support

Keyboard Player
Realizing the Harmonies

Interpreting the Symbols to Create Harmonies

Plate 5.3 Using figured bass in homophonic writing

5.3.3 Exercises in harmonisation with figured bass

Practical exercises consolidate the skill of employing figured bass. One exercise is to harmonise a given bass line with figures, ensuring smooth voice leading. Another is to improvise harmonies at the keyboard, following the figures while maintaining stylistic accuracy. A more advanced exercise involves composing short homophonic passages where figured bass guides the harmonic framework. These activities strengthen confidence and demonstrate how figured bass can be both a theoretical tool and a practical aid in composition and performance.



Fill in the blank: Harmonisation exercises with figured bass should always ensure smooth _____ leading.

Figured Bass Harmonization Exercises		
Exercise	Description	Objectives
Choral Melody	• Harmonize Given Bass Lines	• Practice Realizing Chords
Harmonic Support	• Improvise over Figured Bass	• Develop Creative Skills
Keyboard Player	• Compose Short Passages	• Enhance Musical Writing

Box 5.3 Sample harmonisation exercises with figured bass

Pilot questions 5.3

1. What does realisation of figured bass involve?
2. How does figured bass support homophonic writing?
3. Why is voice leading important in harmonisation exercises?
4. What role did figured bass play for continuo players?
5. How can learners apply figured bass in modern composition practice?

Series Summary

This Series has focused on employing and interpreting figured bass, a vital shorthand system in tonal harmony. We began by introducing figured bass, defining its meaning, exploring its historical background, and highlighting its role in tonal practice. We then moved on to reading and interpreting figured bass symbols, starting with common figures before progressing to complex alterations and practical exercises. Finally, we applied these skills in composition and performance, learning how to realise figured bass at the keyboard, use it in homophonic writing, and practise harmonisation exercises.

By completing this Series, you should now be able to define figured bass, interpret both common and complex symbols, realise harmonies at the keyboard, and apply figured bass effectively in homophonic writing and harmonisation. These achievements align directly with the Series Learning Outcomes, equipping you with both theoretical understanding and practical skills for advanced harmonic study.



Glossary of Terms

- **Alteration:** A change to an interval indicated in figured bass, often shown with accidentals.
- **Continuo:** A Baroque practice where keyboard or lute players improvised harmonies from figured bass.
- **Figured bass:** A shorthand notation system using numbers to indicate intervals above a bass note.
- **First inversion:** A chord inversion where the third of the chord is in the bass.
- **Homophonic writing:** A musical texture where one main melody is supported by chords.
- **Realisation:** The process of turning figured bass symbols into full harmonies at the keyboard.
- **Root position:** A chord inversion where the root of the chord is in the bass.
- **Seventh chord inversion:** A chord inversion indicated by figures such as 4–2, showing the position of the seventh.

Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

Objective questions

1. What does the figure “5–3” indicate in figured bass? (Linked to SLO 5.2)
2. Which inversion is represented by the figure “6”? (Linked to SLO 5.2)
3. What does the figure “4–2” represent? (Linked to SLO 5.3)

Short-answer questions

4. Define figured bass and explain its purpose. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
5. Explain the meaning of the figure “#6” in figured bass. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
6. Describe how figured bass supports homophonic writing. (Linked to SLO 5.5)

Long-answer questions

7. Analyse the historical role of figured bass and explain why it was important for continuo players. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
 - Basic response: Figured bass was a shorthand system used in the Baroque period to guide harmony.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may discuss how figured bass encouraged improvisation and shaped performance practice.
8. Evaluate the importance of practical exercises in interpreting and employing figured bass. (Linked to SLO 5.2, SLO 5.4, SLO 5.5)
 - Basic response: Exercises help learners connect symbols to harmonies and practise realisation.
 - Value-added response: Outstanding learners may explore how these exercises develop improvisational skills and stylistic awareness in composition.



Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 5]

- Figured bass is a shorthand notation system indicating intervals above a bass note.
- The Baroque period made extensive use of figured bass.
- Figured bass indicates harmonies using numbers written below the bass note.
- It was important for continuo players because it allowed them to improvise harmonies.
- Modern uses include learning chord structures and analysing progressions.
- The figure “5–3” indicates a root position triad.
- The figure “6” represents a first inversion chord.
- The figure “#6” means a raised sixth above the bass.
- A third inversion seventh chord is represented by “4–2.”
- Practical exercises are important because they strengthen fluency in interpreting symbols.
- Realisation involves turning figured bass symbols into harmonies at the keyboard.
- Figured bass supports homophonic writing by guiding chord construction above the bass line.
- Voice leading ensures smooth harmonic progressions in harmonisation exercises.
- Figured bass was central to continuo players, guiding improvisation.
- Learners can apply figured bass in modern composition by harmonising, improvising, and analysing progressions.

References and Attributions [Series 5]

- Figure 5.1: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a bass line with figures 5, 6, 7 written below to illustrate figured bass.” Search string: “figured bass notation example Baroque continuo OER diagram.”
- Plate 5.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a harpsichordist performing continuo using figured bass notation.” Search string: “harpsichord continuo figured bass performance OER image.”
- Box 5.1: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table summarising the functions of figured bass in tonal harmony.” Search string: “functions of figured bass harmony OER table.”
- Figure 5.2: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a bass line with figures 5–3, 6, and 6–4 with corresponding chords.” Search string: “common figured bass symbols 5-3 6 6-4 OER diagram.”
- Plate 5.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a musician analysing a score with complex figured bass symbols like #6 and 4–2.” Search string: “complex figured bass symbols analysis OER image.”
- Box 5.2: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing exercises for interpreting figured bass with writing, keyboard realisation, and analysis.” Search string: “figured bass exercises interpretation writing keyboard OER table.”
- Figure 5.3: Suggested AI prompt “Create a diagram showing a bass note with figures and the chord realised at the keyboard.” Search string: “figured bass realisation keyboard chord OER diagram.”



- Plate 5.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate an image of a choir singing with keyboard accompaniment based on figured bass notation.” Search string: “choir keyboard accompaniment figured bass homophonic writing OER image.”
- Box 5.3: Suggested AI prompt “Generate a table listing harmonisation exercises with figured bass including bass line harmonisation, improvisation, and composition.” Search string: “figured bass harmonisation exercises OER table.”

