

# The Phrase Model

The harmonies in tonal music can be categorized by function:

	<b>Tonic (T)</b>	<b>Predominant (PD)</b>	<b>Dominant (D)</b>
Major	I, I <sup>6</sup>	iii, vi, IV, IV <sup>6</sup> , ii, ii <sup>6</sup>	V, V <sup>6</sup> , V <sup>7</sup> , V <sup>6</sup> <sub>5</sub> , V <sup>4</sup> <sub>3</sub> , V <sup>4</sup> <sub>2</sub> , vii <sup>o6</sup>
Minor	i, i <sup>6</sup>	VII, III, VI, iv, iv <sup>6</sup> , ii <sup>o6</sup> , ii <sup>o7</sup> , ii <sup>o6</sup> <sub>5</sub>	V, V <sup>6</sup> , V <sup>7</sup> , V <sup>6</sup> <sub>5</sub> , V <sup>4</sup> <sub>3</sub> , V <sup>4</sup> <sub>2</sub> , vii <sup>o6</sup>

Phrases move through the chart from left to right: T → PD → D → (T)

- Most phrases begin and end with a tonic chord
- You can only go forward through the chart, never backward
  - T can move to PD or to D
  - PD can only move to D
  - D can only move to T

Sometimes a phrase will spend include more than one chord in each area. This is called “expanding the [T, PD, or D] area.”

## Expanding the Tonic Area

- Often a phrase begins with a tonic expansion.
- Tonic expansions typically include alternating tonic and dominant chords, often in inversions.
- Common tonic expansions:
  - I V<sup>6</sup> I and I V<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub> I
  - I V<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub> I<sup>6</sup> and I<sup>6</sup> V<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub> I
  - I V<sup>4</sup><sub>2</sub> I<sup>6</sup>
  - I P<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> I<sup>6</sup> and I<sup>6</sup> P<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> I (the passing <sup>6</sup>/<sub>4</sub> can also be labeled “V<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>” but the P label gives more information about voice leading, specifically passing motion in the bass)

## Expanding the Predominant Area

- The most common way to expand the PD area is to combine more than one PD in a series.
- Always from weaker PDs to stronger PDs
  - PDs in the chart above are arranged from weak to strong, left to right
  - So, vi IV ii is a good series (starts weaker and moves to stronger)
  - IV iii ii vi is a bad series (mix of weak and strong)

### Expanding the Dominant Area

- The most common way to expand the D area is the cadential  $\overset{6}{4}$
- This is simply a V chord with two embellishing tones that resolve to a V triad
  - The note forming a 6<sup>th</sup> above the bass steps down to the 5<sup>th</sup> above the bass
  - The note forming a 4<sup>th</sup> above the bass steps down to the 3<sup>rd</sup> above the bass
  - This results in the figures  $V\overset{6}{4}=\overset{5}{3}$

### Contextual Analysis

- In addition to roman numerals, it is helpful to analyze progressions with T/PD/D labels. This is called contextual analysis.
- By adding these labels to your analysis it is easier to determine whether your roman numerals make sense.
- For instance, if you have a D moving to a PD or a PD moving to a T, this suggests that your labels are incorrect, or that you chose an incorrect harmonization for a melody.
- Often it helps to make a two-level contextual analysis
  - On the first level, every harmony receives its own T/PD/D label
  - On the second level, you show expansions. Label the first harmony of each area.

### Sample Progressions

#### Bad:

I V IV vi I V I  
T D PD<sup>a</sup> PD<sup>b</sup> T<sup>c</sup> D<sup>d</sup> T

<sup>a</sup>D to PD

<sup>b</sup>Strong PD to weak PD

<sup>c</sup>PD to T

<sup>d</sup>Strong cadence should have PD before final D

#### Good, with 2-level contextual analysis:

I  $V\overset{4}{3}$  I<sup>6</sup> vi IV ii  $V\overset{6}{4}=\overset{5}{3}$  I  
T D T PD PD PD D T  
T-----PD-----D-----T

For more information see *Musician's Guide* pp. 241–248 and 267–271.