

Music Theory for the Organist Online Training

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Levels 1-2

- What is a scale?
 - A stepwise arrangement of the tones contained in one octave, arranged alphabetically.
- Diatonic Scales
 - All seven basic notes present, plus the first note duplicated at the end



- Chromatic Scale
 - All the notes in an octave, plus the first note duplicated at the end (13 notes total)



- Church Modes
 - Basic scales starting on the different pitches. (for example, the C major scale below)

C D E F G A B C
D E F G A B C D
E F G A B C D E
F G A B C D E F
G A B C D E F G
A B C D E F G A
B C D E F G A B

IONIAN
DORIAN
PHRYGIAN
LYDIAN
MIXOLYDIAN
AEOLIAN
LOCRIAN

- You can identify the church mode by finding the key, then determining which note the scale begins on. If it begins on the keynote, it is Ionian, if it begins on the second note, Dorian, etc.

Levels 3-4

Harmonization

- Determine the tonality
- Choose an appropriate cadence
- Choose an appropriate harmonic rhythm
 - This is the frequency at which chords change
- Determine the basic harmonic structure of the phrase (look for notes that are emphasized by prolongation, contour, or rhythm)
- Select chords for notes that remain from the three possibilities for each (root note, third note, or fifth note)
- Write the bass
- Write alto and tenor
- Make adjustments as necessary

Secondary Substitutes

- You can substitute these chords for their secondary twins
 - I - vi
 - IV - ii
 - V - iii AND vii

Progression Rules: (Review)

- Roots that move DOWN in 5ths, UP in 2nds, DOWN in 3rds.
- May substitute primary chords (I, IV, V) for secondary chords (ii, iii, vi, vii°)
- Movement from a primary chord to its secondary chord is progression
- Movement from tonic to any other chord is progression
 - The opposite would be a retrogression, which has a stagnant, or weaker harmonic “feel”
 - Although retrogressions are weaker, variety between progression and retrogression is pleasant

Levels 5 -6

Seventh Chords:

- These are chords created by adding a third above an existing triad
- The Classification of a 7th is determined by the quality of the triad (major, minor, diminished, or augmented), and the quality of the interval between the root and the seventh (major, minor, or diminished)

Types of Seventh Chords:

1. Major-minor
2. Major - major (or simply major)

3. Minor-minor (or simply minor)
4. Minor-major
5. Diminished-minor
6. Diminished
7. Augmented-major

Other symbols used to identify seventh chords:

- Major-major = Bmaj7
- Major-minor = D7
- Minor-minor = Fmin7
- Diminished-minor = $\text{ii}^{\circ 7}$ also, Emin7b5
- Diminished = $\text{vii}^{\circ 7}$
- Augmented-major = III^{+7}

Seventh Chords in Inversion:

- Seventh Chords can be inverted like triads. Their figured bass symbols in inversion are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Root position: | I^7 , ii^7 , etc. |
| First inversion: | I_5^6 , ii_5^6 , etc. |
| Second inversion: | I_3^4 , ii_3^4 , etc. |
| Third inversion: | I_2^4 , ii_2^4 , etc. |