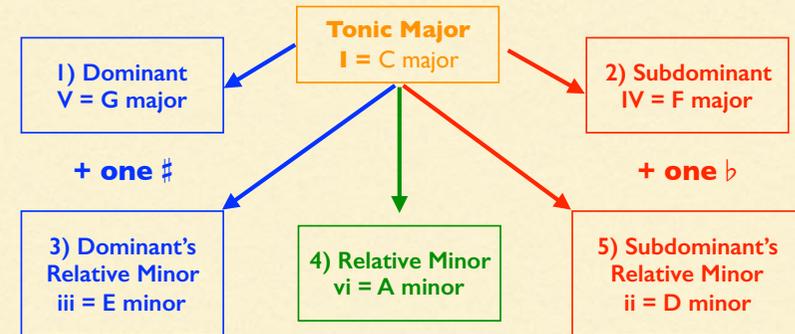


FUNDAMENTAL HARMONY

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Lesson 9: Basic Modulation

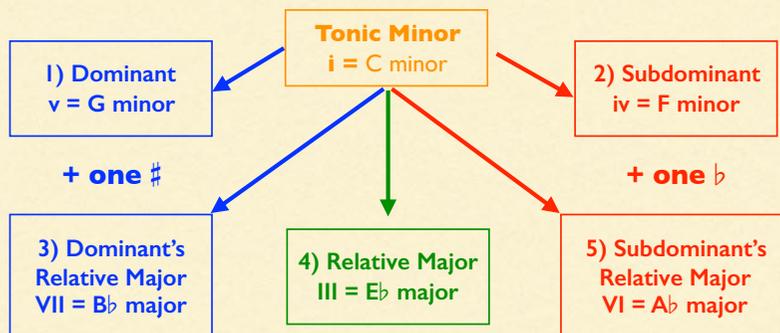
Modulation

1. When a piece of music changes key it's called a modulation. It makes the music more interesting by providing a contrast between different keys and can give structure to an entire piece (e.g. sonata form).
2. It is common to modulate within a piece of music from the tonic to one of its **five closely related keys**. Here's an example starting in the tonic key of C major:



Modulation

3. Here's another example starting in the tonic key of C minor:



3. Modulations are usually established by an **authentic cadence** in the new key (often using a V⁷ chord - sometimes also a vii^{o6} chord).
4. The **modulating chord** must contain a note which is foreign to the old key (a 'chromatic note'). This cancels the old tonality and introduces the new one.

Musical notation illustrating modulation from C major to F major:

- Left: C major (no modulation) showing chords I⁶, I, and IV.
- Right: C major to F major showing chords I⁶, V⁷ (circled in green), and I (circled in blue).

C major (no modulation)

C major to **F major**

Pivot Chord Modulation

1. The smoothest way to approach the modulating chord (with the chromatic note), is to use a chord which is found in both the old and new keys. This is called a **pivot chord**.
2. The pivot chord is reached in the context of the old key. It is then treated as belonging to the new key and leads immediately to the modulating chord. **Pivot Chord** **Modulating Chord**

Old Key **B \flat maj** New Key **C min**

$B\flat:I$ V^7 vi ii^6 $C:i^6$ vii^{06} i ii^0_5 V^7 i

3. For pivot chord modulations, you must know what chords are shared by the old and new keys. For example, if you want to modulate from C major to G major you can use the following chords as pivot chords:

CEG = Chord I in C major	Chord IV in G major
EGB = Chord iii in C major	Chord vi in G major
GBD = Chord V in C major	Chord I in G major
ACE = Chord vi in C major	Chord ii in G major

I **iii** **V⁶** **vi**

IV V I **vi V I** **I⁶ V I** **ii V I**

From major tonic to: Common chords for old and new key

Tonic's Relative Minor	I/III, ii/iv, IV/VI, vi/i, vii^o/ii^o
Dominant	I/IV, iii/vi, V/I, vi/ii
Dominant's Relative Minor	I/VI, iii/i, V/III, vi/iv
Subdominant	I/V, ii/vi, IV/I, vi/iii
Subdominant's Relative Minor	ii/i, IV/III

From minor tonic to: Common chords for old and new key

Tonic's Relative Major	i/vi, ii^o/vii^o, III/I, iv/ii, VI/IV
Dominant Key	i/iv, III/VI
Dominant's Relative Major	i/ii, III/IV
Subdominant Key	iv/i, VI/III
Subdominant's Relative Major	i/iii, III/V, iv/vi, VI/I

4. There can be more than one common chord connecting each key:

C: I IV V iii vi I

G: I vi ii V I

5. When doing pivot-chord modulations, try to delay V-I cadence using a deceptive progression, pre-dominants and/or a cadential 6-4!

G: I V I IV **G: I V I IV**

F: V I **F: V vi ii⁶ I₄ V⁷ I**

Doing Pivot Chord Modulations

1. Identify your tonic key and work out the five closely related keys: subdominant (IV) and its relative minor, the dominant (V) and its relative minor, and the tonic's relative minor.
2. Identify any accidentals and determine if they could be the leading notes of the new key or the 7ths of V⁷ in the new key.
3. Use a V - I or V⁷ - I cadence for the last two chords and work backwards, from the bottom (bass notes) up. Make sure if you're using a V⁷ chord that the 7th falls.
4. Decide on appropriate common chords of both keys, remembering to take into account the given soprano note and good voice leading.
5. Pivot chords usually occur before the first chord that is clearly in a new key (i.e. the modulating chord with the 'chromatic note').
6. The best pivot chords to use are chords ii, and IV of the new key (ii^o, and iv for minor keys).

Abrupt Modulation

1. The second way to approach the modulating chord (with the chromatic note) is by using a chord (usually a primary chord), which is not part of the new key. This is called an **abrupt modulation**.

Old Key
C min

New Key
F min

2. Given that the **approach chord** is not diatonic in the new key, one or more of its notes need to be chromatically altered in the **modulating chord**. This should happen in the **same voice part**.

3. If you do not make the chromatic alteration in the same voice part it will result in **false relation**. Try to avoid this!

Old Key C maj i⁶ V i New Key A min

Old Key C maj i⁶ V i New Key A min

3. If you do not make the chromatic alteration in the same voice part it will result in **false relation**. Try to avoid this!

Old Key G maj V V7 New Key C maj

Old Key G maj V V7 New Key C maj

