

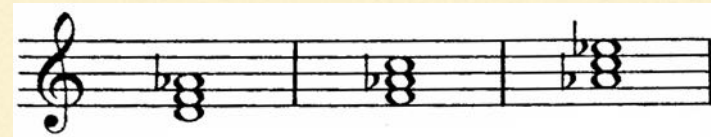
# GRADE 8 MUSIC THEORY

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Lesson 2: Borrowed Chords & Altered Chords

## Borrowed Chords

Borrowed chords are a special type of **chromatic chord** (i.e. a chord that has at least one note which doesn't belong to the diatonic scale):

- They occur mostly **in major keys** that 'borrow' chords from the **parallel minor** key (i.e. C major borrows chords from C minor).
- The most commonly borrowed chords are **ii°**, **iv** and **bVI**



C major: **ii°**                      **iv**                      **bVI**

- Minor keys already offer many possible chords (due to harmonic and melodic minor scales). It's *rare* that music in minor keys borrow chords from the parallel major (*tierce de Picardie* is an exception)

### 'Ich grolle nicht' from *Dichterliebe* by Schumann

Nicht zu schnell  
*mf*

Start Ich grol-le nicht, und wenn das Herz auch bricht,  
I'll not com-plain, e'en though my heart doth break,

C major: I IV<sup>6</sup> IV **ii°7** V<sup>b9</sup> |

### Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Mendelssohn

Start Allegro di molto  
*p* *pp*

E major: I V **iv** I

### 'Scherzo' from Piano Sonata D.845 by Schubert

(Allegro vivace)  
0:38  
*p* *p*

C major: I vi IV ii **bVI** V<sub>5</sub><sup>6</sup> I

### Opening from last movement of Mahler's 9th Symphony (B<sup>b</sup> written as A<sup>4</sup>)

(Sehr langsam)  
0:15  
*p* molto espress.

D<sup>b</sup> major: I iii<sup>6</sup> **bVI** I<sup>6</sup> IV V<sup>7</sup> I

10:17 Schubert, Piano Sonata in A, D.959 (4th mvt)

A major: I (pedal A)  $V_2^4/V$   $V^7$  I  $ii^\circ_4$   $V^7$  I  $V^7$  I

0:38 Beethoven, 'Moonlight Sonata' Op.27 No.2 (1st mvt)

E:  $I_6$   $V^7$  I  $i$   $V_4^3 / bVI$

## Modulation & Borrowed Chords

Borrowed chords can also be used for **modulation**, acting as a pivot chord which is chromatic in the first key, but diatonic in the second, or vice versa, or chromatic in both keys!

### First Movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 10 No.2

(Allegro)

D major:  $I_6$   $V^7$  I  $iv$   
F major:  $ii$

F major:  $V^7$  I

## Modulation & Borrowed Chords

### A German Requiem by Brahms

(Ziemlich langsam)

F major: I IV  $IV^6$   $V^7$   $bVI$   
D $\flat$  Major:  $i$

Some editions actually insert a double bar and a change of key signature given the length D $\flat$  major section follows this extract. Note also the top F note acts as melodic pivot (tonic in F major and mediant of D $\flat$  major)

## Extended Borrowings

Continuous borrowings from other keys can be explained more clearly if they are analysed in relation to the 'foreign' key rather than if you attempt a complicated analysis in the home key.

Allegro vivace Mendelssohn, Wedding March, Op.61

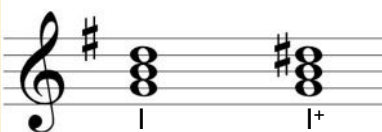
C major: I  
E minor:  $ii^\circ_5$   $V^7$   $i$   
C major:  $iii$   $ii^6$   $I_6$   $V^7$  I

## Altered Chords

In addition to borrowed chords, any triad can be altered by raising one of its pitches up or down by a semitone, making it a **chromatic foreign note** to the tonic.

- **Augmented Triad:** consists of two major 3rds to make up the triad. To make a major augmented, simply raise the 5th by a semitone.

G major

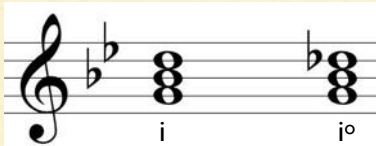


The image shows two musical staves in G major. The first staff shows the G major triad (I) with notes G, B, and D. The second staff shows the G major augmented triad (I+) with notes G, B, and D#. The notes are represented as black circles on a five-line staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

most common:  
I+, IV+, V+

- **Diminished Triad:** consists of two minor 3rds to make up the triad. To make a minor triad diminished, simply lower the 5th by a semitone.

G minor



The image shows two musical staves in G minor. The first staff shows the G minor triad (i) with notes G, Bb, and D. The second staff shows the G minor diminished triad (i°) with notes G, Bb, and Db. The notes are represented as black circles on a five-line staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb).