Part-Writing: Using Inversions



WHEN COMMON PRACTICE COMPOSERS USED INVERTED CHORDS IN FOUR-VOICE WRITING, THEY FOLLOWED SOME GENERAL PATTERNS REGARDING WHICH NOTE OF THE CHORD SHOULD BE DOUBLED.

ROOT POSITION

FIRST INVERSION

SECOND INVERSION

IN **ROOT POSITION** TRIADS,

COMPOSERS USUALLY

POUBLED THE ROOT,

WHICH IS IN THE

BASS

OF THE CHORD



THE DOUBLING OF FIRST INVERSION TRIADS DEPENDS ON THE TYPE OF THE CHORD BEING WRITTEN.

IN MAJOR FIRST INVERSION TRIADS, COMPOSERS DOUBLED THE

SOPRANO

OF THE CHORD.

IN MINOR FIRST INVERSION TRIADS, COMPOSERS DOUBLED THE

BASS

IN **DIMINISHED**FIRST INVERSION
TRIADS, THEY
DOUBLED THE

BASS

SOPRANO OF THE CHORD.

OF THE CHORD.







IN SECOND
INVERSION TRIADS,
COMPOSERS USUALLY
DOUBLED THE FIFTH,
WHICH IS IN THE

BASS

OF THE CHORD.



HERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO THINK OF IT: THE ONLY TIME YOU CAN'T DOUBLE THE BASS IS IN FIRST INVERSION MAJOR TRIADS, WHERE YOU SHOULD DOUBLE THE SOPRANO INSTEAD.

OKAY, WE KNOW HOW TO USE INVERSIONS IN FOUR-PART WRITING ... BUT WHEN CAN WE USE THEM?

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THE ONLY "RULE" REGARDING
ROOT POSITION TRIADS
AND FIRST INVERSION TRIADS
IS THAT DIMINISHED TRIADS ARE
ALWAYS PLACED IN FIRST INVERSION.

OTHER THAN THAT, YOU CAN USE ROOT POSITION AND FIRST INVERSION ESSENTIALLY WHENEVER YOU WANT!

IT'S SECOND INVERSION TRIADS THAT HAVE THE BIG RESTRICTIONS.

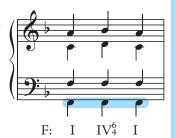
THE CAPENTIAL 4 CHORD
IS A TONIC TRIAD IN
SECOND INVERSION
FOLLOWED BY A
ROOT-POSITION
DOMINANT CHORD
AT A CAPENCE.



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THE PASSING 4 CHORD
IS A CHORD PLACED IN
SECOND INVERSION
WHERE THE BASS IS
TREATED LIKE A
PASSING TONE:
THE MIDDLE NOTE OF
A STEPWISE LINE
MOVING UP OR DOWN.

THE PEDAL 4 CHORD
IS A SECOND INVERSION
CHORD WHERE THE
BASS IS TREATED LIKE
A PEDAL TONE:
A NOTE PRECEDED AND
FOLLOWED BY THE
SAME NOTE.



IF YOU WRITE A

SECOND INVERSION TRIAD AND

IT'S NOT ONE OF THESE THREE SITUATIONS,

THEN YOU ARE NOT WRITING IN THE COMMON

PRACTICE PERIOD STYLE! THE COMPOSERS OF

THE STYLE JUST DIDN'T USE THESE CHORDS

WILLY-NILLY.