

# Diatonic Common Chord Modulation

MODULATION IS THE PROCESS OF CHANGING TO A DIFFERENT KEY WITHIN A PIECE OF MUSIC.

THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS TO MODULATE; PERHAPS THE SIMPLEST IS THE **UNPREPARED MODULATION**, WHERE THE MUSIC PAUSES AND SUDDENLY CHANGES KEY, OFTEN UP A **HALF-STEP**.



COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD COMPOSERS, HOWEVER, PREFERRED A PARTICULAR TYPE OF MODULATION THAT REQUIRED A LITTLE MORE PLANNING: THE **DIATONIC COMMON CHORD MODULATION**. AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, THIS USES A CHORD WHICH IS **DIATONIC** IN BOTH THE **OUTGOING KEY** AND THE **NEW KEY**.



LET'S SAY WE'RE STARTING OFF IN **C MAJOR**... HERE IS A LIST OF ALL THE KEYS WHICH HAVE CHORDS IN **COMMON** WITH C MAJOR (THE SPECIFIC CHORDS ARE HIGHLIGHTED):

FOR INSTANCE, THE **I CHORD** IN **G MAJOR** IS **G-B-D**...

G: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

a: i ii° III iv V VI vii°

...WHICH IS THE **V CHORD** IN **C MAJOR**!

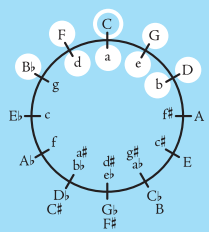
F: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

e: i ii° III iv V VI vii°

KEYS WHICH HAVE CHORDS IN COMMON LIKE THIS ARE CALLED **RELATED KEYS**.

C: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

NOTICE HOW THESE KEYS ARE ALL CLOSE TO ONE ANOTHER ON THE **CIRCLE OF FIFTHS**.



D: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

d: i ii° III iv V VI vii°

B♭: I ii iii IV V vi vii°

b: i ii° III iv V VI vii°

TO USE THIS TYPE OF MODULATION, A COMPOSER WOULD **PIVOT** THE HARMONY AROUND THE CHORD THAT FIT INTO BOTH KEYS. AS **THEORISTS**, WE SHOW THIS **PIVOT CHORD** BY ANALYZING THE CHORD IN **BOTH KEYS**.

C: I ii V I vi  
e: iv V VI iv V i

NOTE THAT THE **PIVOT CHORD** IS **ALWAYS** THE **LAST CHORD** THAT CAN BE ANALYZED IN THE **OLD KEY**... THE FIRST ACCIDENTALS WILL ALWAYS OCCUR IN THE CHORD **IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING** THE **PIVOT CHORD**!