

Theory & Practice II Handout: Six-Four Chords

Passing 6-4 Chord

Passing 6/4 = Passing Bassline

6/4 chord passes between 2 *different* notes *by step*. WEAK beat.

6
4

6
4

Examples:

I (V₄⁴) I⁶ I⁶ (V₄⁴) I

I Pas₄⁴ I Pas₄⁴ I

Pedal 6-4 Chord (a.k.a. "Neighboring 6-4")

Pedal 6/4 = Pedal Bassline

6/4 chord is in between 2 of the exact *same* notes. WEAK beat.

6
4

Example:

I (IV₄⁴) I

I Ped₄⁴ I

Arpeggiating 6-4 Chord

Arpeggiating 6/4

6/4 is an arpeggiation of the original chord in the bass. WEAK beat.

I I⁶ I₄⁶

Example:

I I⁶ I₄⁶
Arp₄⁶

I —————

Cadential 6-4 Chord

This 6-4 chord embellishes V or V7 at a cadence. It is always on a strong beat.

Cadential 6/4

6/4 with 5 in the bass (I₆/4). Only occurs *at the cadence before V* or V⁷. Always on a STRONG beat. Bass goes 5-5 (same note or 8ves).

6 4 6 4

Examples:

Cadential 6/4

V₄⁶⁻⁵ I V₄⁶⁻⁵ I V₄⁶⁻⁵ I

I₄⁶ V I₄⁶ V⁷

It's actually this, but write this.

Try it Out!

Remember the main points:

- Double the bass (5th of the chord) in the 6/4 chord.
- All of the voices should move by common tone or step. *No leaps!!*
- The Cadential 6-4 should have 3-2 and 1-7 in two of the voices. It should occur on the strong beat followed by V or V7.
 - Double check the RN notation (see p. 1). Don't write I6/4.

Passing 6-4

Musical notation for a Passing 6-4 chord progression. The key signature is A major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 3/4. The notation shows two measures. The first measure is for the A major chord (A:), and the second measure is for the G major chord (G:). The bass line in the first measure consists of three quarter notes: A2, C3, and E3. In the second measure, the bass line consists of three quarter notes: G2, B2, and D3. The treble clef is empty in both measures.

A:

G:

Pedal 6-4

Cadential 6-4

Musical notation for Pedal 6-4 and Cadential 6-4 chord progressions. The key signature is E major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#). The time signature is 3/4. The notation shows four measures. The first measure is for the E major chord (E:), and the second measure is for the F major chord (F:). The third measure is for the B major chord (B:), and the fourth measure is for the C# major chord (C#:). The bass line in the first measure consists of three quarter notes: E2, G2, and B2. In the second measure, the bass line consists of three quarter notes: F2, A2, and C3. In the third measure, the bass line consists of two quarter notes: B2 and D3. In the fourth measure, the bass line consists of two quarter notes: C#2 and E3. The treble clef is empty in all measures.

E:

F:

B:

C#: