

Last Updated: Jan 29, 2024

Chapter 7: Leaps between the Thirds of Primary Triads

1. Leaps between the Thirds in the Soprano Voice

When the triads of the fourth or fifth relations (such as T–D, D–T, T–S, S–T) are connected harmonically, a leap of a third within the Soprano from one triad's third tone to another triad's third tone can occur. This upward or downward leap of a fourth or fifth is termed a *leap between thirds*.

The spacing changes when such leaps occur. The triad housing the higher tone in the leap should be in open spacing, while the triad housing the lower tone should be in close spacing:

Example 7-82

The musical notation for Example 7-82 is presented in two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating C Major. The notation shows a sequence of triads connected by leaps between their third tones. Above the upper staff, the triad type (T for Tonic, D for Dominant, S for Supertonic) is indicated for each triad. The leaps are marked with '3' above the notes, indicating a leap of a third. The spacing of the notes changes to reflect the leap: open spacing for the higher triad and close spacing for the lower triad.

Triad sequence: T D T T D T D T D D T S T T S T T S T S T D S T D

After a leap, the melody almost always tends to move in the *opposite direction* to the leap. Only in rare cases (when the subsequent note—S or D's third tone—requires a natural resolution) can the melody continue in the same direction after the leap. In a minor key, a leap from the tonic triad's third tone to the dominant triad's third tone can only *descend by a diminished fourth* because an *ascending augmented fifth* (along with all other augmented intervals) is not permitted (see Chapter 12, Section 4).

2. Leaps between the Thirds in the Tenor Voice

When triads of the same relations (T–D, D–T, T–S, S–T) are connected harmonically, leaps between third tones can also occur in the tenor voice. In these leaps, there is also a change in spacing, but in the opposite direction. When leaping upwards, the arrangement changes from open to close, and when leaping downwards, it changes from close to open.

Example 7-83

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A musical score for C Major triads in 3/4 time. The right hand plays triads with leaps between thirds, indicated by '3' and slurs. The left hand plays single notes. The notes are labeled T (Third), S (Second), and D (First) below the staff.

Note: Leaping by thirds is not employed in the alto voice, as it would create incorrect chord voicing.

Example 7-84

A musical score for 'Bad' triads in 3/4 time. The right hand plays triads with leaps between thirds, indicated by '3' and slurs. The left hand plays single notes. The notes are labeled T (Third), D (First), S (Second), and T (Third) below the staff.

3. Exercise Analysis

In addition to analyzing exercises as discussed earlier, it's important to identify which leaps constitute leaps of a third and the associated changes in spacing.

Example of Harmonization:

Example 7-85

A musical score for 'a minor' triads in 3/4 time. The right hand plays triads with leaps between thirds, indicated by '3' and slurs. The left hand plays single notes. The notes are labeled T (Third), S (Second), and D (First) below the staff.