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Chapter 3: Connection of Root-Position Triads

1. Introduction

The *connection* of chords is formed by the continuous progression of chords (harmonic progression). The connection of chords is carried out according to certain principles and rules formed in artistic practice. The basis of harmonic progression is *voice leading*, which is a synthesis of various forms of voice motion.

2. The Leading of Each Voice

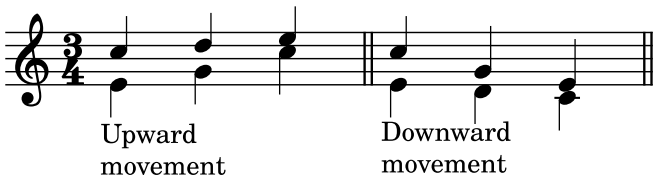
The leading of a single voice can be *smooth* or *leap*. A voice that moves by unison, second (stepwise), or third is called a *smooth progression*. They occupy a major position in artistic works, so they are also the rules that must be followed when first learning harmony. A voice that proceeds by a *fourth*, *fifth*, *sixth*, or larger interval is called a leap. In the initial stage of learning, leap is not allowed in each voice, but the bass is an exception. In the bass, since the roots of T—D and T—S are separated by a fourth or fifth, it is natural to make such a distance jump.

3. Simultaneous movement of several voices

The simultaneous movement of two voices can be divided into three types: *similar motion*, *contrary motion*, and *oblique motion*.

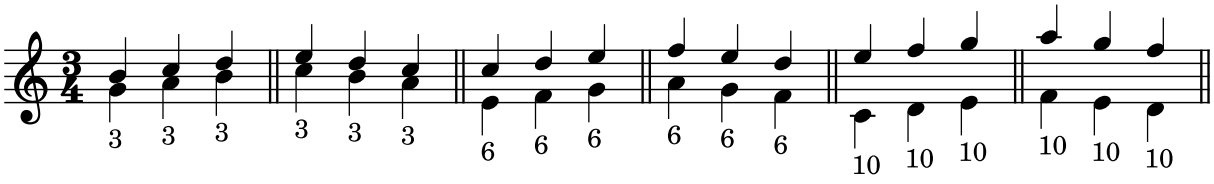
Similar motion occurs when two voices move in the same direction (up or down).

Example 3-42



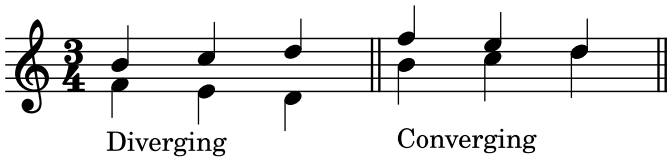
One important form of similar motion is *parallel motion*, in which the distance between the two voices remains the same (that is, the two voices move in the same interval, such as parallel third, parallel sixth, or parallel tenth, in the same direction):

Example 3-43



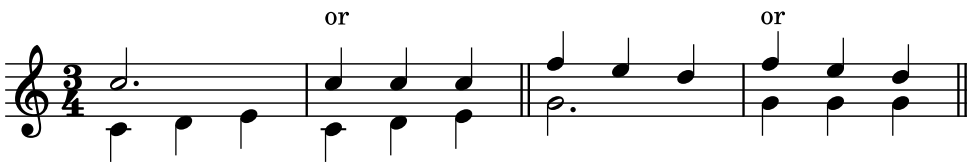
Contrary motion occurs when two voices move in converging or diverging directions.

Example 3-44



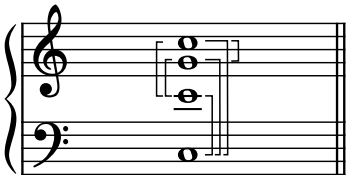
Oblique motion occurs when *one* voice moves up or down while the other voice remains stationary.

Example 3-45



The above lists all the possible situations that may occur in the simultaneous movement of two voices. In multiple voices, several pairs of simultaneous movement of two voices will be formed. For example, in four voices, six pairs will be formed.

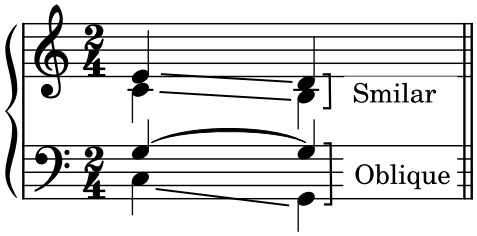
Example 3-46



In most correct chord connections, the voices simultaneously form similar, contrary, and oblique motion, achieving a balance between each other. The following different combinations may occur:

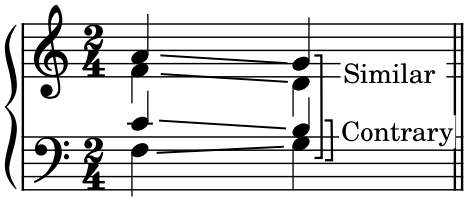
a. Similar (parallel) motion with oblique motion

Example 3-47



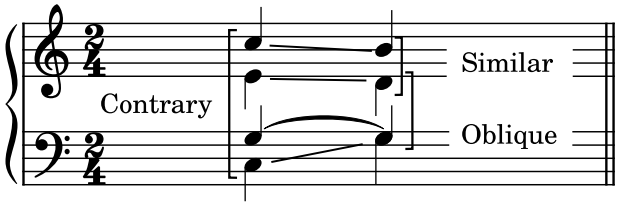
b. Similar (parallel) motion with contrary motion

Example 3-48



c. Similar motion, contrary motion, and oblique motion

Example 3-49

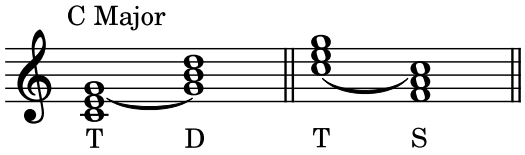


4. Chord relationships and common tones

The interval distance between the root notes of different chords (naturally, also the distance between the third or fifth tone) is the relationship between the chords. The relationships between chords include *fourth* and *fifth*, *third*, and *second*.

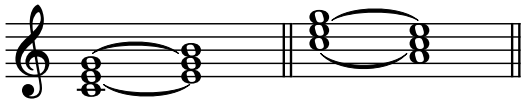
There is *one common tone* between the triad chords related by fourth and fifth. The relationships between the triad chords of T—D and T—S are of this type.

Example 3-50



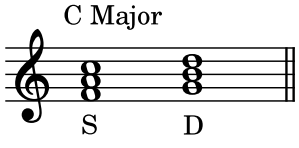
There are two common tones between the triad chords related by third.[①]

Example 3-51



There are no common tones between the triad chords related by second. The relationship between the triad chords of S and D is of this type.

Example 3-52

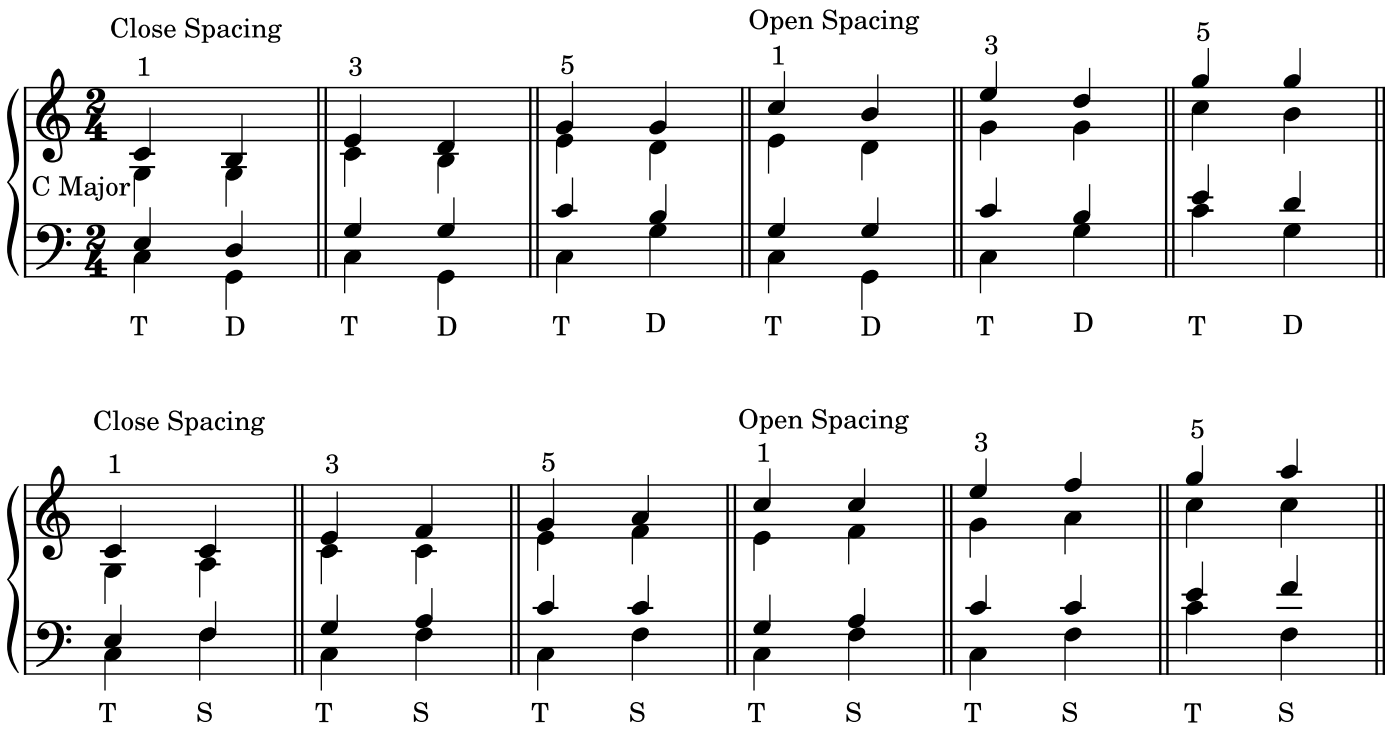


① This relationship will not appear before Chapter 18.

5. The connection of triads

Chords, including triads, has two connection methods: *harmonic* and *melodic*. When connecting chords, it is called harmonic connection method② to *keep* the common tone in the same voice. The harmonic connection method of triads with a fourth or fifth relationship is as follows: After forming the first chord, first determine the bass of the second chord, and then keep the common tone unchanged, and the other two voices will make parallel stepwise movement. If it is from the tonic chord to the subdominant chord, the movement should be upward; if it is from the tonic chord to the dominant chord, it is downward. The result of this connection should be to proceed to a chord with a repeated root and a correct position. At this time, the spacing of the second chord is the same as the previous chord, either close or open:

Example 3-53



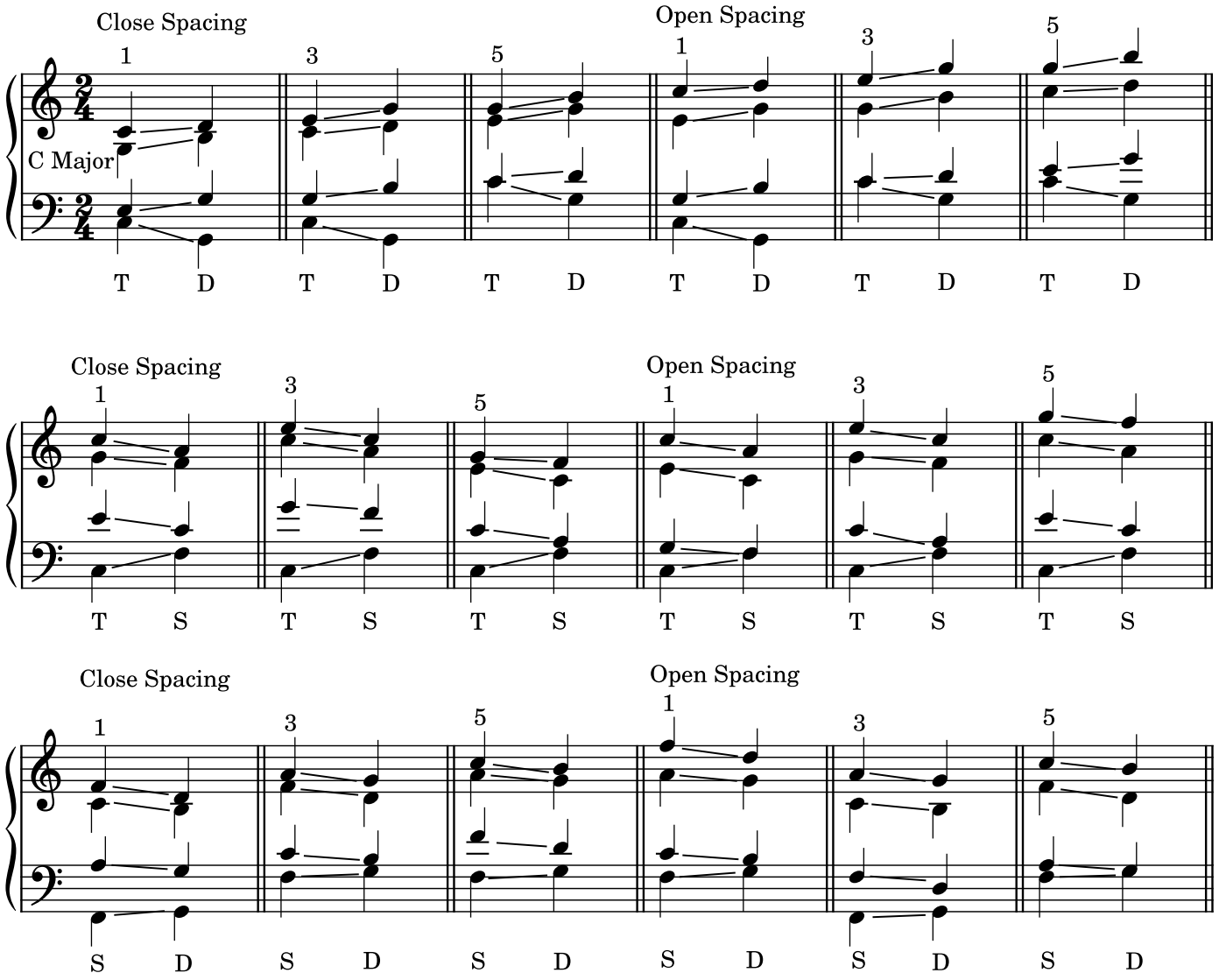
If the chords are connected *without any voice remaining stationary*, even in the presence of common tones, this is the *melodic connection method*.

Here are the methods for connecting triads with a fourth or fifth relationship and a second relationship using melodic connection: The bass progresses no more than fourth, that is, in the connection of T—D, D—T, T—S, and S—T, the bass should progress by a fourth instead of a fifth. In the connection of S—D, the bass should progress by a second instead of a seventh; The three upper voices move in the opposite direction to the lower voice to the nearest tone in

② In the harmonic connection method of triads with a third relationship, generally two tones need to be kept stationary.

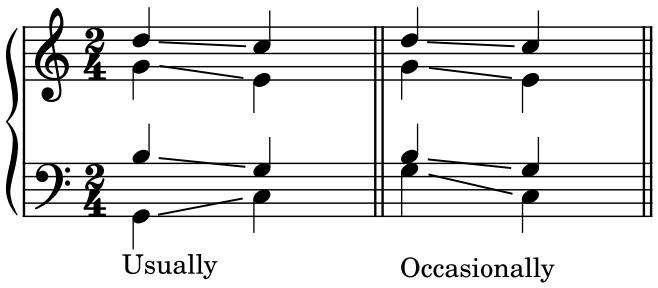
the next chord without leaping. This results in a chord with a repeated root and a correct position. At this time, the spacing does not change, the same as the case when connecting with harmonic connection:

Example 3-54



Note: In the connection of triads with a relationship by fourth or fifth (T—D, D—T, T—S, S—T), there are instances where the bass may progress by a fifth instead of a fourth. At this time, the other three voices follow the same direction as in a fourth progression by the bass, eliminating the need for leaps.

Example 3-55



Note: (See example 111) This is a special case that can only be used in extreme cases. It is best not to use this practice of all four voices moving in the same direction (that is, all in similar motion).