

I₆ and V₆

The first inversions of tonic and dominant have two functions: to **extend** the root-position harmony and to **substitute** for the root-position harmony.

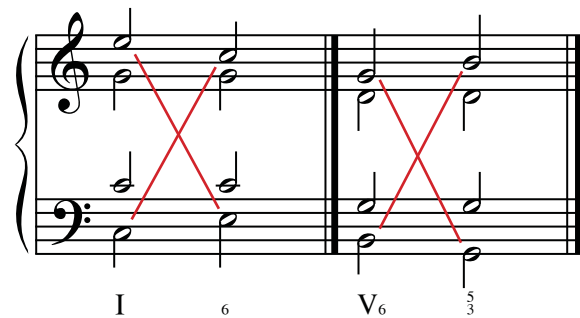
Extend

A nice way to add motion and variety to a longer tonic or dominant harmony is by using the first inversion as an extension of the root position. When this occurs, it is usually understood that the root-position chord, because it is more stable, is the main chord being used, with the inverted chord serving as an elaboration of the root-position chord.

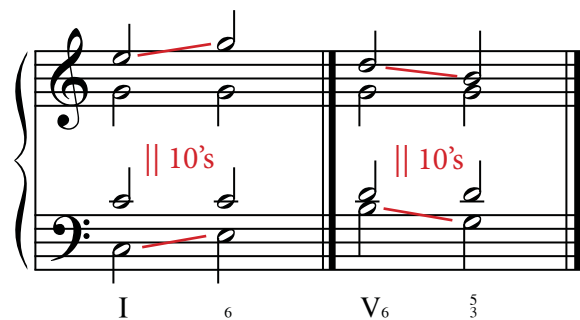
The chords may come in either order, though it is most standard and stable for root position to come first. (In some cases, when the inverted chord comes first, the inverted chord can actually be the main chord present, even though it is less stable. Keep an ear out for this – smooth voice-leading connections are often a clue when this happens.)

There are two very typical outer-voice patterns that are often used when root-position and first-inversion tonic and dominant chords are used consecutively. They are the **voice exchange** and **parallel tenths**. These two patterns are some of the most basic vocabulary of tonal music.

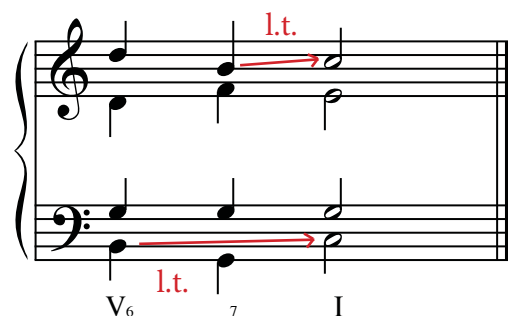
In the voice exchange, the soprano and the bass trade scale degrees.



In parallel tenths, soprano and bass move in parallel, maintaining the interval of a tenth. Both progressions may occur in either direction.



When using these patterns with the V chord, be careful to resolve all leading tones in the outer voices.



Substitute

As substitutes for the root position, first-inversion chords are especially effective in the middles of phrases.

Remember that cadences require the use of root position chords! (It is typical to extend V with the first inversion in a cadence as in some of the examples above; because the first inversion extends the root position, this counts as using a root-position dominant. The tonic chord is not usually extended in a cadence in this way.)

Before:

After:



Doubling

Double either the root or the fifth (especially important with the dominant, as the third is the leading tone). It is often effective to double whichever tone is in the soprano.

It is correct to infer that the third does not usually appear in the soprano in I_6 . This can be effective, but is often not. For now, avoid it.