

The Leading Tone Triad in First Inversion

The Leading tone triad is a diminished quality built on the leading tone in major and minor keys. In a minor key, the subtonic scale degree must be raised to form the leading tone which is the root of the leading tone triad chord.



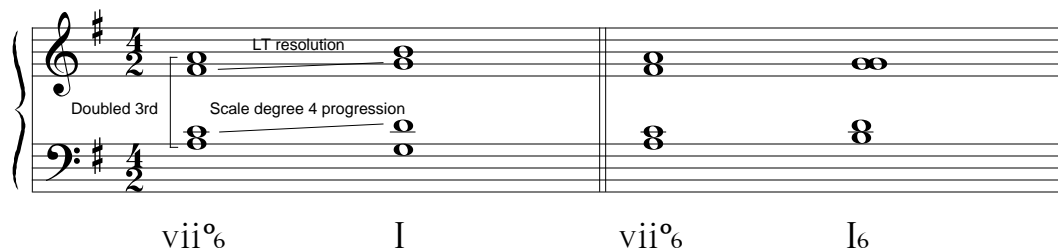
In order to suppress the diminished fifth that would appear between the bass and an upper voice when the chord is written in root position, the chord is normally used in first inversion. In first inversion, there are no dissonances between the bass and upper voices. The root position leading tone triad is mainly used in sequences.

The leading tone triad may freely be used as a substitute for V. In fact, it may be thought of as a "rootless" V. Because it has two notes in common with V and one of those tones is the leading tone, the leading tone triad participates in the dominant function. Like V, the leading tone triad contains scale degrees 2 and 7 making it a distant relation to I. Unlike V, it has no common tones with I. Therefore, contrary motion must be used when vii° resolves to I or I_6 and all voices should move stepwise. Scale degree 4 (the chord fifth) moves up by step.

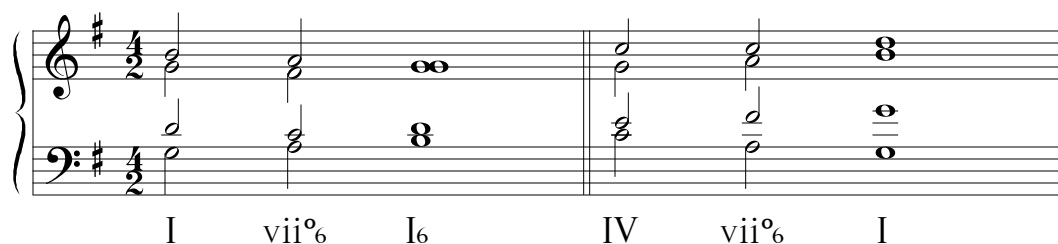
The leading tone triad either resolves to I or dissolves to V or V_7 . In the latter case, one of the doubled thirds should move to the root of the V chord. Unlike V, the leading tone triad does not resolve deceptively to vi (VI).

Doubling in four-voice textures: Double the third. Never double the leading tone. It is a tendency tone and must resolve up by step (free resolution of the leading tone is normally not used). If the fifth is in the soprano, it may be doubled.

Voice Leading



Two Frequent Progressions



vii° Dissolving to V_7

