

The Supertonic 7th Chord

Quality:

In a major key it is minor-minor.

In a minor key it is half diminished.

Figured bass:

Identical for all 7th chords. Use the figured bass symbols of the inverted V7s.

Progression:

The 7th of the ii (scale degree 1) is often approached by unison forming a suspension figure. This is because the chords that normally precede ii are I, IV, and vi, all of which contain the tonic pitch. The suspended figure resolves when ii progresses to V.

The only note that requires resolution in the ii7 is the chords 7th.

Position:

Root: OK

1st inversion: ii7 may appear in any inversion but 1st is by far the most common. The 6/5 position produces a much more satisfactory approach to V than IV or ii because of the scale degrees 4-5 bass motion as well as the dissonance created by the chords 7th.

2nd inversion: Infrequent.

3rd inversion: Especially effective because the bass may be held over from the previous tonic chord and then resolved down by step to the 3rd of the V (I-ii4/2-V6).

A common progression is IV6-I6/4-ii6/5.