Enharmonics

Enharmonic spellings

- Composers sometimes use enharmonic spellings of pitches or chords—these can be tricky to analyze unless you enharmonically respell some of the pitches
- One reason for spelling a pitch enharmonically is to show more clearly the direction it is moving



Enharmonic spellings

 Another reason for using enharmonic spellings is to make something easier for the performer



Enharmonic spellings

 Enharmonic keys might be chosen in order to avoid keys with lots of accidentals



Enharmonic reinterpretation

- Some chords can be harmonically reinterpreted in a different key, resolving differently than expected
- For example, the dominant seventh chord can be enharmonically reinterpreted as a Ger+6 (since they have the same sound)



Enharmonic modulation

- When enharmonic reinterpretation is used to modulate to an new key, the result is an enharmonic modulation
- ▶ The V7/IV is often reinterpreted as a Ger+6



Fully-diminished sevenths

- ► The fully diminished seventh chord is a *symmetrical chord* (with a minor third between each pitch)
- It can be enharmonically respelled in four different ways, allowing for *four different possible resolutions*!



Each respelling of the diminished seventh chord implies a different inversion in a different key!

Fully-diminished sevenths

Each of the four pitches of the diminished seventh chord can act as a leading tone to the tonic of a new key, so when you find a °7, beware of those other options





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