

Non-chord tones

(Part One)

Non-chord tones

- A non-chord tone is a note that does not belong to the current chord
 - In other words, they are *dissonances*
- These notes are not taken into account when we figure out the roman numeral for a chord
- In analysis, we usually circle non-chord tones (or put them in parentheses) to indicate their embellishing quality
- We can also label them by type (passing tone, neighbor tone, suspension, etc.)

Passing tones

- The two most common types of non-chord tones are *passing tones* and *neighbor tones*
- Passing tones pass through by step from one chord tone to another—there are no leaps



passing tone (P)

Neighbor tones

- Neighbor tones step away in a neighboring motion and step back home—again, no leaps



neighbor tone (N)

Accented non-chord tones

- Passing tones and neighbor tones can be *accented* (on the beat) or *unaccented* (between beats)—as in the previous examples
- Here are some accented non-chord tones



Suspensions

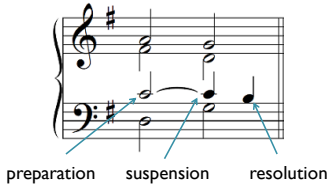
- Like the passing tone and the neighbor tone, the *suspension* resolves by step—unlike these non-chord tones, it is approached by the *same note* (and is often tied to the previous note)



v7 I
suspension (S)

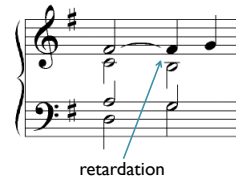
Suspensions

- There are three parts to the suspension: the *preparation*, the *suspension*, and the *resolution*
- The preparation and resolution are *consonant*
- The *dissonant* suspension is always accented



Retardations

- The suspension always resolves **down** by step
- By contrast, the *retardation* resolves **up** by step
- In other ways, retardations and suspensions are similar (with the resolution arriving too late)



Types of suspensions

- There are four different kinds of suspensions: the 7-6, the 4-3, the 9-8, and the 2-3 suspension
 - dissonant 7s, 4s and 9s resolve down to 6s, 3s, and 8s
- These numbers are calculated between the suspended voice and the *bass*
- Any suspension in the bass voice itself is a 2-3



Special treatment of suspensions

- Suspensions can be tied or re-articulated on the beat
- Suspensions can be *decorated* before resolving
- Suspensions can occur in chains, with the resolution of one suspension becoming the preparation for the next
- There can be a *change of bass* at the resolution

