

2.9 SATB Part Writing 5: Second Inversion Triads

Second inversion triads *double the bass* and almost always follow one of these *four patterns*:

1. Passing $\frac{6}{4}$

Bass moves by *step* up or down a *third*.

3 upper parts (any order):

1. *Voice exchange*: one voice has bass notes backwards
In the example, bass is C-D-E, tenor is E-D-C.
2. *Common tone*: repeated note
3. *Lower neighbor figure*: from *root* of outer harmony

note voice exchange (marked "X")!

C: I V₄⁶ I⁶ [OR] C: I⁶ V₄⁶ I

2. Pedal $\frac{6}{4}$

Bass has the *same note* three times.

3 upper parts (any order):

1. / 2. *Upper neighbor figure* (2 parts): step up, then step down
3. *Common tone*: repeated note

note upper neighbor pattern!

C: I IV₄⁶ I

3. Arpeggio $\frac{6}{4}$

Bass *leaps* from the root or third of the *same* harmony.

3 upper parts repeat *or* freely arpeggiate, following stylistic guidelines.

C: I I₄⁶ IV

Any harmonic progression that fits the stylistic progression guidelines is possible.

4. Cadential $\frac{6}{4}$

****Bass is always the dominant pitch of the key!****

Metrically stronger than the resolution chord:

1. **2-beat** measures: Beat 1 *only*, resolves on beat 2
2. **3-beat** measures: Beat 1 *or* beat 2 (must then resolve on beat 3)
3. **4-beat** measures: Beat 1 *or* beat 3 (must then resolve on beat 4)

Bass repeats the *dominant* pitch.

3 upper parts (any order):

1. The note a *sixth* above bass moves to a *perfect fifth* above bass (6-5).
2. The note a *fourth* above bass moves to a *major third* above bass (4-3).
3. *Common tone*: repeated note

C: cad₄⁶ V I

Summary: Tips for Identification

Cadential is the only type that is *metrically accented*.

Passing is the only type with *stepwise bass motion* up or down a third.

Pedal is *unaccented* and has a *repeated bass note*.

Arpeggio is *unaccented* and skips from the *same harmony*.

It should also be noted that rare exceptions and variations do occur, but these are the *usual* patterns.