

Diminished vii6 triad - Leading Tone Triad in first inversion Quick Reference

Structure:

3 notes, separated by minor thirds. eg. BDF with the third in the bass (DFB or DBF) in both major and minor (the raised $\hat{7}$ is considered diatonic in minor).

Doubling:

Third is doubled, root and fifth are tendency tones so avoid doubling them.

Function:

Dominant substitution and as a linear embellishing chord. Although it substitutes for a V it is not stable enough for half cadence arrivals. This chord is much like a V in second inversion. Compare the following in the key of C:

V4/3 = GBDF with D in bass voice

vii6 = BDF with D in bass voice

Voice Leading:

The root (leading tone or $\hat{7}$) pushes up by half step to tonic and the fifth ($\hat{4}$, or what would be the minor seventh of a dominant 7 chord) can move up to the fifth or collapse down to the third. Most common is movement to the fifth (note the difference between this and the minor seventh in a V7 chord).

Here is an example in major: Key = C

(vii6) (I)

F --> up to G (fifth) or down to E (third)

B --> C (tonic)

D --> down to C (tonic) for root position or up to E (third) for first inversion

Here is an example in minor: Key = A

(vii6) (i)

D --> up to E (fifth) or down to C (third)

G# --> A (tonic)

B --> down to A (tonic) root position or up to C (third) first inversion

Hearing it:

Listen for the feel of a dominant that is more dissonant than a normal V. Try to identify the inversion by hearing its stepwise relationship to tonic. If the vii chord is in root position it will be just under the tonic by a half step, if it's in first inversion the bass note will be just above by a whole step.

Try not to confuse this chord with a root position ii chord. Again, listen for the dissonance. A ii chord will feel much more consonant than a vii6. The ii will most likely be in first inversion (ii6) and will almost always move to a V or some other dominant functioning chord.