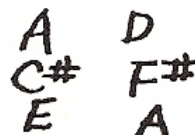


## Voice-Leading

(The connection of chords with *minimum movement*)

One of the smoothest ways to connect chords is by moving the individual voices as little as possible. The technique is as follows:

1. First you must know how to spell the "chords" involved; in the progressions you will work with at first, only diatonic chords will be used, so the spelling can be derived by using every other letter in the diatonic scale ( like an A chord is A, C#, E, a Bm chord is B, D, F#, etc. as in the diatonic chords you have already learned).
2. You write out the spelling of the chords you are trying to connect. Say you are on an A chord and you want to connect it to D – you would write:



3. You look for common tones (notes that are the same in both chords).



4. You connect the rest of the notes with a minimum of movement.



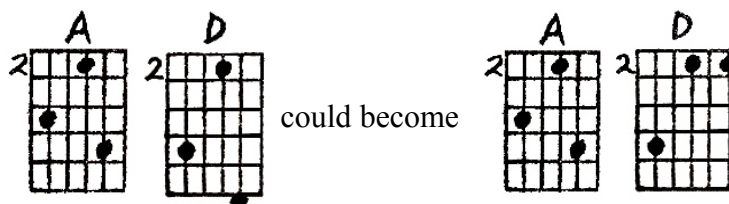
5. Notice in the example just given that while E is equally close to D & F#, C# is only close to D, not F#. So



An important exercise now is to take all your 3 note triads and play the following exercises, using good voice-leading: **I IV I | I V I | I IV (I) V I**

Also in minor: **i iv i | i V i | i iv i (V) I | i V (i) iv i**

Occasionally you might hit a fingering that is not too practical; in these cases you should switch strings. Example:

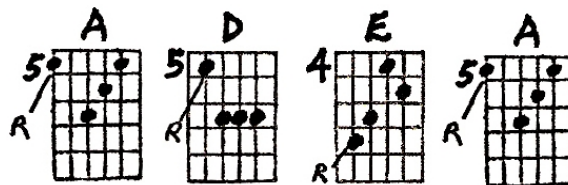


There are not many cases where this type of thing will be necessary, so generally everything just works out with the fingerings you normally arrive at.

## Voice-Leading with 4 Part Close Triads (Triads with 2 roots & the upper 3 voices as a close triad)

The principles are basically the same with this type of triad but because of the doubled root the following new guidelines are given:

1. Connect the top 3 voices as with 3 note triads.
2. The bass should sound only roots of the chords (for now) even if this seems to contradict the principles of voice-leading given so far, Example: I IV V I



Try the progressions listed above with all forms of the 4 part close triads.

## Classification of Chord Progressions Given By Root Movement

For ease of working with some principles to follow, chord progressions are classified in 3 ways:

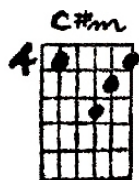
1. Chords can progress up or down an interval of a **4th**. Examples:  
A D (root up a 4th) | Bm E (root up a 4th) | A E (root down a 4th)
2. Chords can progress up or down an interval of a **3rd**. Examples:  
A C#m (root up a 3rd) | Bm D (root up a 3rd) | A F#m (root down a 3rd)
3. Chords can progress up or down an interval of a **2nd**. Examples:  
A Bm (root up a 2nd) | C#m D (root up a 2nd) | F#m E (root down a 2nd)

*Notice* that any progression in one direction equals its counterpart in the other direction if subtracted from 9. Examples: A F#m = down a **3rd** or up a **6th**. A E = down a **4th** or up a **5th**.

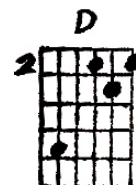
The following guidelines are commonly accepted as working with 4 part close triads:

1. If a chord progresses up or down the interval of a **3rd** or **4th**, the 2 guidelines given above alone should be used (top of this page "Voice-Leading with 4 Part Close Triads").
2. If a chord progresses up or down the interval of a **2nd** move the top 3 notes in contrary motion (to the nearest chord tones) to the bass. This principle may confuse you but it will be illustrated below.

Suppose you want to connect C#m to D. This progression is up a **2nd**. Starting with this form:

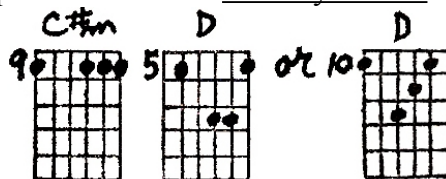


According to the last principle on the previous page you would get:

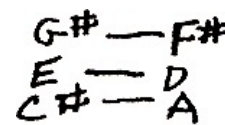


What has happened is that the top 3 notes have moved down, because the bass moved up – in other words, the top 3 notes went in contrary motion to the bass.

Another example:



Chord progressions of 2nds open up the possibility of **DIATONIC PASSING TONES**, notice in the first example above that the top 3 voices move as follows:



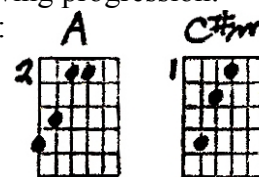
while the top 2 voices are moving right along the diatonic scale, the C# is leaping to A, skipping the B note. This B could be added after the C#m chord (while it still is ringing) and is called a **DIATONIC PASSING TONE**. So it can be said that passing tones are used to fill in a melodic leap in any voice (if desired).

For those who read here is an example of what all this looks like:

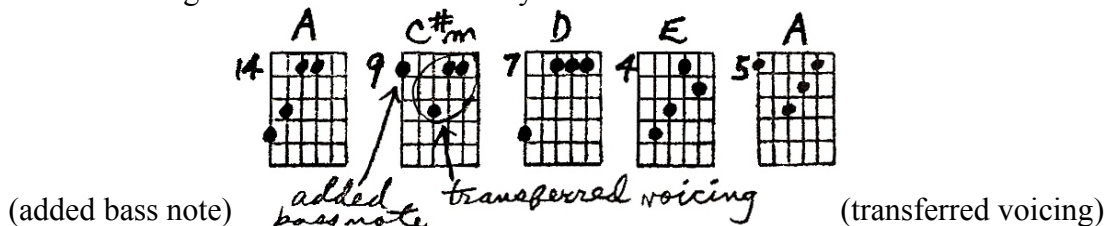


Sometimes in a progression, there is no bass that can be added, after you have voice-led the top 3 notes: this can pose problems; for instance if you tried to play the following progression:

I(A) iii(C#m) IV(D) V(E) I(A), starting with this form you couldn't do it:

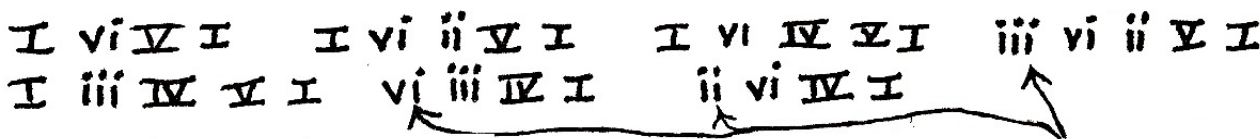


A possible solution is first to start an octave higher and then transfer the C#m to its same voicing on another set of strings which will then enable you to add a bass note and continue on:

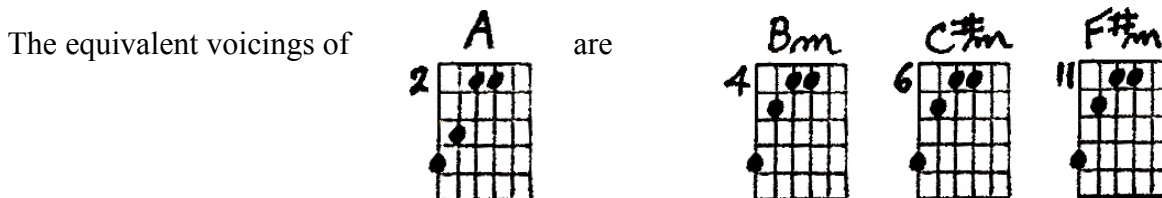


This may seem like a lot of jumping around, but sometimes that's the only way to get the good sounds out of the guitar.

Practice the following progressions using all forms of the 4-part close triads:



To get the 1st chord of progressions starting on minor chords, you use the equivalent voicing of your major 4-part triads, examples:



A separate list of progressions in minor will follow on a later page.

## VOICE LEADING (the connection of chords with MINIMUM MOVEMENT)

One of the smoothest ways to connect chords is by moving the individual voices as little as possible. The technique is as follows:

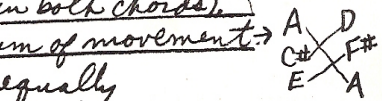
- ① First, you must know how to "spell" the chords involved; in the progressions you will work with at first, only diatonic chords will be used, so the spelling can be derived by using every other letter in the diatonic scale (like an A chord is A C# E, a Bm chord is B D F# etc. as in the diatonic chords you have already learned).
- ② You write out the spelling of the chords you are trying to connect (say you are on an A chord and want to connect it to D - you would write:

A D  
C# F#  
E A



- ③ You look for common tones (notes that are the same in both chords).
- ④ You connect the rest of the notes with a minimum of movement.

Notice in the example just given that while E is equally close to D + F#, C# is only close to D, not F#; so

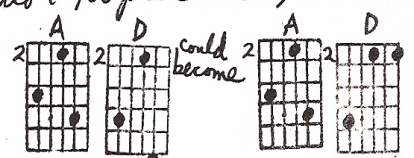


Also in minor:  $i \text{ } \bar{i} \text{ } \bar{v} \text{ } \bar{i}$   $i \text{ } \bar{v} \text{ } \bar{i}$   $i \text{ } \bar{v} \text{ } \bar{i}$   $i \text{ } \bar{v} \text{ } \bar{i}$

An important exercise now is to take all your 3 note triads and play the following exercises, using good voice-leading:

**I IV I I V I I V (II) VI IV (I) VI**

Occasionally you might hit a fingering that is not too practical; in these cases you should switch strings. Example: There are not many cases where this type of thing will be necessary, so generally, everything just works out with the fingerings you normally arrive at.

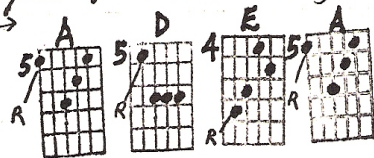


### VOICE LEADING WITH 4 PART CLOSE TRIADS (TRIADS WITH 2 ROOTS + the upper 3 VOICES as a CLOSE TRIAD)

The principles are basically the same with this type of triad but because of the doubled root the following new guidelines are given:

- ① Connect the top 3 VOICES as with 3 note triads.
- ② The bass should sound only roots of the chords (for now), even if this seems to contradict the principles of voice-leading given so far.

Example: I IV V I →



Try the progressions listed above with all forms of the 4 part close triads.

### CLASSIFICATION OF CHORD PROGRESSIONS BY ROOT MOVEMENT

For ease of working with some principles to follow, chord progressions are classified in 3 ways:

- ① Chords can progress up or down the interval of a 4th. Examples: A D (root up a 4th) | Bm E (root up a 4th) | A E (root down a 4th)
- ② Chords can progress up or down the interval of a 3rd. Examples: A C#m (root up a 3rd) | Bm D (root up a 3rd) | A F#m (root down a 3rd)
- ③ Chords can progress up or down the interval of a 2nd. Examples: A Bm (root up a 2nd) | C#m D (root up a 2nd) | F#m E (root down a 2nd)


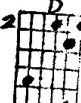
Notice that any progression in one direction equals its counterpart in the other direction if subtracted from 9. EXAMPLES: A F#m = down a 3rd or up a 6th. A E = down a 4th or up a 5th

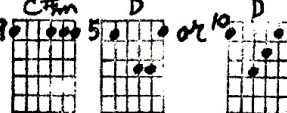
The following guidelines are commonly accepted for working with 4 part close triads:

- ① If a chord progresses up or down the interval of a 3rd or 4th, the 2 guidelines given above should be used.
- ② If a chord progresses up or down the interval of a 2nd, move the top 3 notes in contrary motion (to the nearest chord tones) to the bass. This principle may confuse you but it will be illustrated on the next page.

VOICE LEADING (page 2)

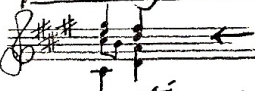
1875

Suppose you want to connect C#m D. this progression is up a 2nd, starting with this form:  according to the last principle on the previous page, you would get . What has happened is that the top 3 notes moved down because the bass moved up - in other words, the top 3 notes went in contrary motion to the bass.

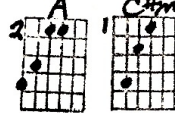
Another example: 

Chord progressions of 2nds open up the possibility of DIATONIC PASSING TONES. Notice in the first example above

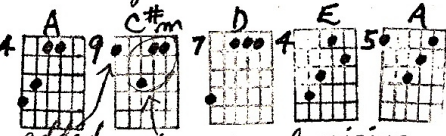
that the top 3 voices move as follows  $\begin{matrix} G^\# & - & F^\# \\ E^\# & - & D \\ C^\# & - & A \end{matrix}$  While the top 2 voices are moving right along the diatonic scale, the C# is leaping to A, skipping the B note. This B note could be added after the C#m chord (while it still is ringing) and is called a DIATONIC PASSING TONE. So it can be said that passing tones are used to fill in a melodic leap in any voice (if desired).

 For those who read, here is an example of what all this looks like.

Sometimes in a progression there is no bass that can be added, after you have voice-led the top 3 notes:

for instance, if you tried to play starting with this form 

This can pose problems; the progression I iii IV V I you couldn't do it. A possible solution is to first start an octave higher and then transfer the C#m to its same voicing on another set of strings which will then enable you to add a bass note and continue on:

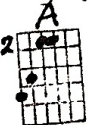
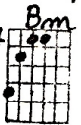

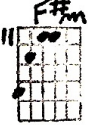
  
added bass note transferred voicing

This may seem like a lot of jumping around, but sometimes that's the only way to get the good sounds out of the guitar.

Practice the following progressions using all forms of the 4 part close triads:

I vi V I    I vi ii V I    I vi IV V I    iii vi ii V I  
I iii IV V I    vi iii IV I    ii vi IV I

To get the 1st chords of progressions starting on minor chords, you use the equivalent voicing of your major 4 part triads → EXAMPLES:

The equivalent voicings of  are   

A separate list of progressions in minor keys will follow on a later page.