Some of the Most Common Chord Progressions in Baroque Major Harmony
(Speak about minor also)
Ted Greene – 1974-06-12

1) All combinations of the three primary triads (I, IV, and V) such as:
   a) I IV V  
   b) I V I  
   c) I IV V I  
   d) I IV I V I  
   e) I V (I) IV I  

A generous use of I, IV and V chords in a piece of music creates a strong feeling of a “key” or “tonal center”; an over-use of them creates monotony. The secondary triads (ii, iii, vi, [vii°]) are used to balance out the sound and create more interest. Some of the most common progressions using them are:

2) I vi ii V (I)  
3) I vi IV V (I)  
4) iii vi i V (I)  
5) i iii IV (V) I  
6) ii (iii) IV I (scalular)  
7) IV iii ii I (scalular)  
8) vi i iii IV I  
9) ii vi IV I  
10) (I) IV vii° iii vi i V I etc.  
11) ii V i iii vi  
   Roots up a 5th 
   Roots up a 5th 
   Roots up a 5th

As stated above, more or less, the I, IV, and V are the three main pillars of a major key. It’s commonly accepted that iii and vi are substitutes for I, ii for IV, and vii° for V.

This is usually stated:
Tonics: I, iii, vi | Sub-Dominants: ii, IV | Dominants: V, vii° (sometimes iii is used as a dominant also).

These chords are said to be functioning in the above ways.

Practice all above progressions in 3- and 4-note triads using good voice-leading. Do eventually in all keys. Also do comparable versions in minor keys using both v and V, ii° for ii° where it sounds better (also try ii) — other than these suggestions, stick to the natural minor chords.

Cadences

Much of the earliest known music was vocal, not instrumental; naturally, the singers had to have little pauses to breathe, so music came to be divided up into what are known as Phrases. The closing points of these phrases are called Cadences; even today most music is still regulated by phrases and cadences. Most cadences have used combinations of the three primary triads (or their substitutes).

Cadences are classified in two ways:
1) by which of the three primary chords are used at the end. (When Tonic and Dominant are used it is called an Authentic Cadence; when Tonic and Sub-Dominant are used it is known as a Plagal Cadence.)
2) by how final the cadence sounds. The terms perfect and imperfect identify cadences that end with the tonic triad. The Perfect Authentic Cadence uses the progression V - I or V7 - I (and comparable in minor), in which the V chord has its root in the bass and the I has its root in both the bass and soprano.
Perfect Authentic:

The **Imperfect Authentic** [Cadence] uses the V - I progression also but the I chord has its 3rd or 5th in the bass and/or the soprano, or the V has its 3rd or 5th in the bass. They sound less final.

The **Authentic Half** [Cadence] uses the progression I - V; (if a chord other than I is used to precede V, it is still called a half cadence).

Half cadences give the impression of more to come.

The **Plagal Cadences** are exact counterparts to the Authentic ones in terms of the types and rules. The **Perfect Plagal** [Cadence] uses the progression IV - I in which the IV chord has its root in the bass and the I has its root in bass and soprano.

The **Imperfect Plagal** [Cadence] uses IV - I, and I has either its 3rd or 5th in bass and/or soprano, or IV has its 3rd or 5th in the bass.

The **Plagal Half Cadence** uses the progression I - IV (or sometimes V - IV, vi - IV, etc.). Examples:

Perfect Plagal

Imperfect Plagal

Take some songs and analyze the cadences.

[Ted’s note to himself:] Include Deceptive and all cadences in minor keys too.
SOME OF THE MOST COMMON CHORD PROGRESSIONS IN DIASPORA HARMONY

1. All combinations of the 3 primary triads (I, IV, V) such as:
   a) I IV V
   b) I V IV
   c) I V I
   d) I IV V I
   e) I IV V I V
   A generous use of I, IV, V chords in a piece of music creates a strong feeling of a "key" or "tonal center"; an over-use of them creates monotony.
   The secondary triads (ii, iii, vi, vii°) are used to balance out the sound and create more interest. Some of the most common progressions using these are:
   ② I vi ii V (I)
   ③ I vi IV I (I)
   ④ ii V i ii V (I)
   ⑤ ii V i
   ⑥ ii V i

   As stated above, more or less, the I, IV, V are the 3 MAIN pillars of a major key.
   It is commonly accepted that ii, vi are substitutes for I, ii for IV, V for V, vii° for V.
   This is usually stated: TONE'S: I, iii, vi | SUB-DOMINANTS: ii, IV | DOMINANTS: I, vii° (sometimes ii)

   These chords are said to be FUNCTIONING in the above ways.
   They are in all keys. Also, do comparable exercises in minor keys using both V + I, i + vii° where it sounds better (also try ii) other than these suggestions, stick to the material minor chords.

   CADENCES

   Much of the earliest known music was vocal not instrumental, naturally the singers had to SING the complete phrase of music come to be divided up into what are known as PHRASES. The closing points of these phrases are called CADENCES; even today most music is still regulated by phrases & cadences. Most cadences have used combinations of the 3 primary TRIADS (or their substitutes).

   Cadences are classified in two ways: 1) by which of the 3 primary chords are used at the end (TONE + DOMINANT are used, it is called an AUTHENTIC CADEANCE; when TONE + SUB-DOMINANT are used, it is known a PLAGAL CADEANCE), and 2) by how / where the cadence sounds, the same perfect & imperfect identify cadences that end with the tonic chord. The perfect authentic cadence uses the progression I - V - I or V - I (and comparable in minor, in which do I chord has its root in the bass, and the I has the root in both the bass & soprano). →

   The imperfect authentic uses the but the I chord has its 3rd or 5th in the bass, or the I has its 3rd or 5th in the bass. The authentically
   3rd or 5th in the bass, the imperfectly, 3rd or 5th in the bass. The imperfectly give the impression of more to come.

   The plagal cadences are exact counterparts to the authentic ones in terms of types and rules. The perfect plagal uses the progression IV - V in which the IV chord has its root in the bass, the I has the root in bass & soprano, the imperfect plagal uses IV - I and I has its root in the bass & soprano or IV has the root in the bass, the plagal half cadence uses the progression I - IV (or sometimes V - IV, vi - iv, etc.).

   Examples:

   Take some songs and analyze the cadences;

   Include Deceptive & All Cadences in Minor Keys Too.