

CHAPTER 8 - NON-CHORD TONES AN INTRODUCTION

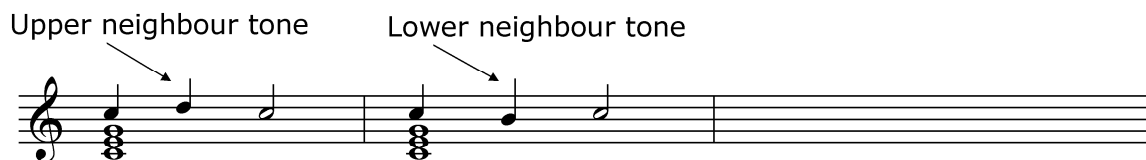
The proper handling of non-chord tones is essential to provide clarity to the harmony and to create good melodies. This chapter provides an introduction to their principles and presents the most basic sorts of non-chord tones.

1. DEFINITION AND BASIC CONCEPTS

- A "non-chord tone" is any note that does not belong to the harmony at a given moment. The notes that do belong to the harmony are known as "chord tones".
- The proper handling of non-chord is very important, as they represent a large number of the sounds that appear in music, especially in the melodies of the compositions.
- Misuse of non-chord tones has the effect of blurring or distorting the harmony. For this reason, and in order to avoid this bad effect, they must be used **EXCLUSIVELY** in accordance with the procedures which we can observe in tonal music. The most basic types of non-chord tones are described below.

2. NEIGHBOUR TONES

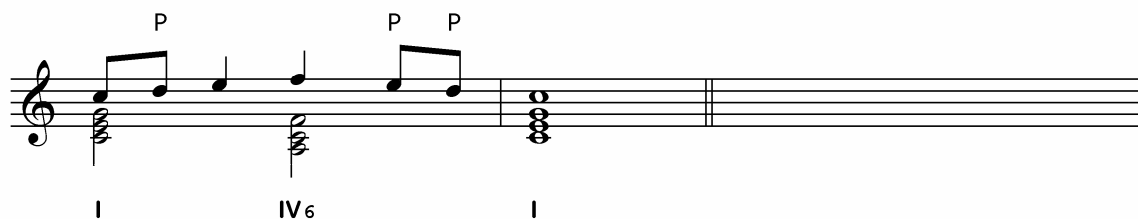
- A neighbour tone is a non-chord tone that follows a chord tone, by stepwise motion (major or minor second), and returns to the same chord tone. As you can see in the example, it can be upper or lower.



Im. 8-2

3. PASSING TONES

- Passing tones are non-chord tones that move by stepwise motion and in a single direction between two chord tones.



Im. 8-3

4. ANTICIPATION

- The anticipation is a non-chord tone that anticipates a note of the following harmony. They are usually of short duration.

Im. 8-4

5. APPOGGIATURA

- The appoggiatura is a non-chord tone with the following characteristics:

- It appears, at a distance of 2nd, before a chord tone which we will call the "resolution of the appoggiatura".
- It is approached by leap, usually by contrary motion with respect to that of the resolution.
- It falls on a relatively strong beat, and it can have a long duration, even longer than the resolution.

- Appoggiaturas are called Ascending if they resolve upwards, and Descending if they resolve downwards.

Im. 8-5

6. APPLICATION OF NON-CHORD TONES IN PIECES AND EXERCISES

- There are other types of non-chord tones: suspensions, escape tones and pedal tones, which will be studied later. In any case, the vast majority of non-chord tones that appear in tonal music are passing and neighbour tones.

- Let us insist that the notes used, from this point on, must be either chord tones, or non-chord tones belonging to one of the types presented above.

- Most often, with the exception of the appoggiatura, non-chord tones are of short duration and are placed on weak beats or on the off-beat (relatively weak metrical moments). However, composers sometimes use neighbour or passing tones on strong metrical moments, creating dissonances that can be very interesting. Listen to the example below, and then try it out in your own exercises or pieces.

N
P
N
P

I
V+6
I
V+6

Im. 8-6

7. SUGGESTED EXERCISES

1. Add non-chord tones to the following melody, so that:

- It is enriched and musically improved.
- The motivic coherence and cadential moments are respected.
- All the notes in the melody are either chord tones or non-chord tones of one of the types discussed in this chapter.

I
V₆/₅
I
II6
V
I6
V+6/II

II
V+6
I
V+6/IV
IV
II6
V₇⁺
I

2. Continue the music fragment below according to the following indications:

A - Complete the harmonic structure with the following characteristics:

- Form: 2 Phrases of 8 measures (16 measures in total)
- Cadences at the end of the phrase: Half Cadence and Perfect Cadence.
- Harmonic rhythm: dotted half notes, with an acceleration before the cadences.
- Include at least 2 secondary dominants.

B - Complete the melody, making sure it is coherent with the starting motive. Include all the types of non-chord tones discussed in this chapter.

The image shows a musical score for a 6/8 piece in B-flat major. The score consists of a melody line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment is a simple harmonic structure of dotted half notes. The melody line features a sequence of notes: B-flat, C, D, E, F, G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F, G, A, B-flat. The piano accompaniment consists of four measures: I, IV6, V7+, and I. The time signature is 6/8.

3. Write a harmonic structure and a melody with the following features:

- Key: D major
 - Time signature: 6/8
 - Form: 3 phrases of 6 measures (18 measures in total)
 - Cadences (at the end of each phrase): Imperfect, Half, Perfect
 - Harmonic rhythm: Dotted half notes, with an acceleration before the cadences.
 - Include, at least, 2 secondary dominants
- Add a free melody, which is motivically coherent, and which includes all the non-chord tones discussed in this chapter.