

Figured Bass Symbols

Figured bass symbols are discussed on the following pages in Burstein & Straus *Concise*, 2/e:¹

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|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Triads (Roman numerals and inversions) | p. 37 (Example 3.11), p. 37 |
| 2. Seventh Chords (Roman numerals and inversions) | pp. 40-41 (Examples 3.19 & 3.20) |
| 3. Realizing Figured Bass | pp. 51-53 |
| - Abbreviated Figures | p. 52 |
| - Accidentals in Figured Bass | p. 53 |
| 4. Figured Bass for Embellishing Tones ² | pp. 188-190 |

TRIADS

Intervals above the bass	Abbreviated figure [†]	Inline notation ³	Bass
5 3			Root
6 3	6	6	Third
6 4	$\frac{6}{4}$	6/4	Fifth

SEVENTH CHORDS

Intervals above the bass	Abbreviated figure [†]	Inline notation	Bass
7 5 3	7	7	Root
6 5 3	$\frac{6}{5}$	6/5	Third
6 4 3	$\frac{4}{3}$	4/3	Fifth
6 4 2	$\frac{4}{2}$	4/2	Seventh

† - These symbols are traditionally used with Roman numerals to indicate *bass positions*

Chromatic Alteration

Chromatic alteration refers to the raising or lowering a note above the bass by a half step with respect to the key signature. Any interval symbol may be altered. An accidental alone (e.g., #, b, or ♮) affects the third above the bass. Two common symbols associated with the leading tone in minor keys are: # (= #3) and \flat (= #6). For more information, see Shaffer, et al. 2014.

Reference

Shaffer, Kris, Bryn Hughes, and Brian Mosley. 2014. "Introduction to Thoroughbass." *Open Music Theory* (OMT). Available online at: <<http://openmusictheory.com/thoroughbassFigures.html>>.

¹ L. Poundie Burstein and Joseph N. Straus, *Concise Introduction to Tonal Harmony*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 2020).

² The six most common *embellishing tones* are summarized on p. 83.

³ For use in Blackboard quizzes, e-mail messages, and word processors (when a figured bass font is not available).