

Figured Bass Symbols

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

1. Triads (Roman numerals and inversions) p. 37 (see Example 3.11)
2. Seventh Chords (Roman numerals and inversions) pp. 40-41 (see Examples 3.19 & 3.20)
3. Realizing Figured Bass
 - Abbreviated Figures p. 51-53
 - Accidentals in Figured Bass p. 52
 - Accidentals in Figured Bass p. 53
4. Figured Bass for Embellishing Tones² pp. 188-190

TRIADS

Intervals above the bass	Abbreviated figure [†]	Inline notation [‡]	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*
[‡] - We will use inline notation whenever a figured bass font is not available (e.g., in Blackboard)

Chromatic Alteration

Chromatic alteration refers to raising or lowering a note above the bass by a half step with respect to the key signature. Any figured bass 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 6 (= #6). For more information, see Accidentals in Figure Bass (p. 53) and Figured Bass for Embellishing tones (pp. 188-190).

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

² The six common *embellishing tones* (PT, NT, SUS, IN, ANT & RET) are summarized on *Concise 2/e*, p. 83.