

Summary of Harmonic Progressions

Only the V and vii° triad and seventh chords have exceptions to the basic harmonic progressions. From this, a simple saying to remember harmonic progressions can be used:

**"Up by 2nd, Down by 3rd, Up by 4th, Down by 5th
except V and vii°, which do not resolve to iii/III"**

As a confirmation of the exceptions, listen to them and notice how they don't seem to sound quite "right". This is because both V and vii° have a very strong tendency to resolve to a I/i chord. A iii/III chord is very close to a I/i chord, with only one note difference. Since our ears are more used to hearing a resolution to a tonic chord, this "different" note is more often heard as a mistake rather than an actual, intended progression.

Musical notation showing a progression in C major: I (C4-E4-G4), IV (F4-A4-C5), I(5/4) (C5-E5-G5), V7 (G4-B4-D5-F5), and iii (E4-G4-B4). The notes are written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The I(5/4) chord is a triad with a fifth that is a half step above the natural fifth.

C: I IV I(5/4) V⁷ iii

Musical notation showing a progression in C major: I (C4-E4-G4), IV (F4-A4-C5), vii°7 (Bb4-D5-F5-Ab5), and iii (E4-G4-B4). The notes are written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The vii°7 chord is a diminished seventh chord with a flat on the seventh degree.

C: I IV vii°⁷ iii