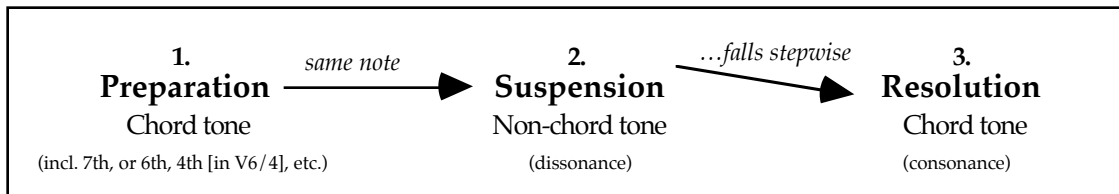


Suspensions are dissonances which are **accented** (relative to their resolutions), **prepared by a common note** from the previous chord (which may include dissonant chord tones, like 7ths, or the 6 or 4 of a cadential 6/4, but may *not* include NCTs), and **resolve downwards by step**.

A. All suspensions have three stages:



B. The **most common upper-voice suspensions** are 4-3 and 7-6. The most common *lower-voice suspension* is 2-3, which is the *inversion* of 7-6:

Stage: 1. 2. 3. 1. 2. 3. 1. 2. 3.

S: 4 - 3 S: 7 - 6 S: 2 - 3

The example below begins with a 4-3 suspension, followed by its *inversion*, a 5-6. The 5-6 suspension is a possible, but **less frequently-used lower-voice suspension**, because the first interval (the 5th) isn't always a clear dissonance, and suspensions need to be dissonant. However, in this case, the 5th (the C) is heard as a non-chord tone, since we are expecting the first-inversion dominant chord to which the C resolves. Play it to make sure you can hear this.

The 9-8 suspension (see below) is **infrequently-used** in two parts, because the resolution to a perfect consonance (the 8ve) sounds rather thin. Remember that *perfect* consonances (8ves, 5ths) sound thinner than *imperfect* ones (3rds, 6ths), and that there are restrictions concerning their use in 2-part textures:

Stage: 1. 2. 3. 1. 2. 3. 1. 2. 3.

S: 4 - 3 S: 5 - 6 S: 9 - 8

C. The suspension is *always accented relative to its resolution*.

• This means that, in 4/4 time, the suspension may occur:

- (i) On beat ONE (or THREE) resolving on beat TWO (or FOUR); or
- (ii) On **any** beat, including 'weak' ones, as long as it resolves on the *weak portion* of that beat (the 'and' of beats 1, 2, 3, or 4).

(iii) It is also possible for a suspension to occur as a half-note on beat one, resolving on beat three, since beat three is the weaker of the two beats. See the examples which follow.

All of the previous examples have demonstrated accentuation pattern (i); the next ones demonstrate patterns (ii) and (iii). In these and previous examples:

- > indicates accented portion of the suspension, and
- indicates unaccented portion (the resolution).

Beat: 3 4 + 1 3 (4) 1 (2) 3

D. Combination platters (I).

The next example uses all suspension types discussed so far, except the 9-8. Label the suspensions (s: 4 - 3, etc.); also label which accentuation pattern (i, ii, or iii) is used:

If you took away the suspensions and the PT from the previous example, you would be left with a simple "skeleton" of the above; how do you think it sounds?

All the thirds and sixths sound reasonably nice, but **activating the texture by adding suspensions can make a relatively simple progression more musical.**

E. DECORATING THE SUSPENSION

In all the previous examples, **the non-suspending voice is usually stable** (i.e. does not move) during stages 2 and 3 of the suspension.

•However, *one way of DECORATING a suspension to **change** the note of the non-suspending voice at stage 3.* This voice would jump to another chord note, usually another **imperfect consonance**, *at the point of resolution.* This tends to happen more with 7-6 and 2-3 suspensions than with 4-3. It can also occur in a 9-8 suspension. The following shows some previous examples which have been decorated in this way; play them and comment on them (are they related?):

S: 7-(6) 3! S: 7-(6) 3! S: 2-(3) 6! S: 9-(8) 6!

F. A *second* way to embellish suspensions is to **decorate the approach to the note of resolution**. This is usually done in one of the following ways; the first two are most common (play and then label each example below):

- (i) Inserting an **ANT** between the suspension and the resolution.
- (ii) Inserting a pair of 16th notes between the suspension and the resolution; the first anticipates the resolution, while the second is a LN to it.
- (iii) Inserting an **APP** between the suspension and the resolution.
- (iv) Inserting an **ESC** between the suspension and the resolution.

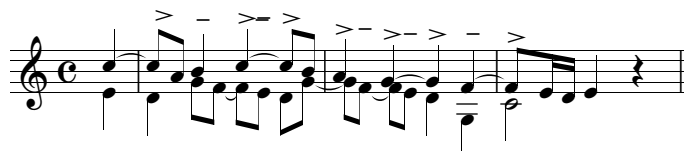


G. **Combination platters (II).**

Embellishment **E** (*change of non-suspended voice*) may be simultaneously combined with **F** (*decoration of resolution*) to *doubly* decorate suspensions! Sing, play, analyse, and work out a clever choreography for the following:



The final example is similar to *D (i)*, but also contains some E- and F-type embellishments. Sing, play, analyse, comment, and meditate on the following:



H. **Ties rule.**

All the previous examples are possible with or without ties to the suspended note; the ties make no difference to the guidelines for the use of suspensions. However, if you do use a tie, follow the following guideline:

- **Don't tie to a longer note value, only to an equal or shorter (by $\frac{1}{2}$) note value.**

Occasional exceptions may be found, but for the most part:

