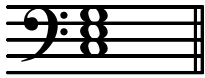


OK, here's the deal with figured bass. There's a bunch of bass notes with numbers underneath (or not). This is all secret code invented by lazy composers hundreds of years ago. And we're still using it....for theory class...not for anything else really. But I digress. The code is simple. I will now reveal its secrets.

Our basic unit is the triad.



We could look at it as built with the interval of a third:



3

and a 5th.



5

So we could indicate that by putting both numbers beneath the bass note.



5
3

And that's exactly what we do. Each number represents an interval above the bass note. There are a few other things to know, however.

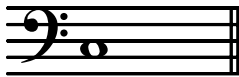


A bass note with nothing underneath indicates a root position triad.



6

A 6 underneath indicates a 1st inversion triad. The "3" is omitted to save time.



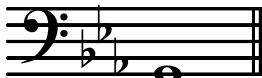
6
4

This indicates a 2nd inversion triad.



3

A slash through a number means to raise the pitch indicated.



3

An accidental beneath a number means to alter the third above the bass.




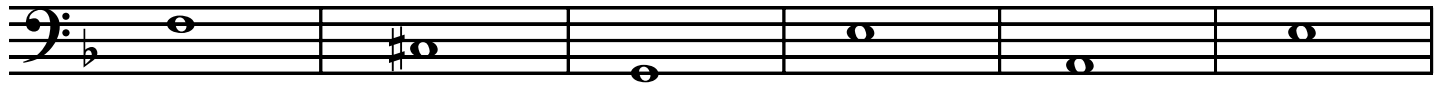
8 - 7
3

A dash between numbers means to move that voice part as indicated.

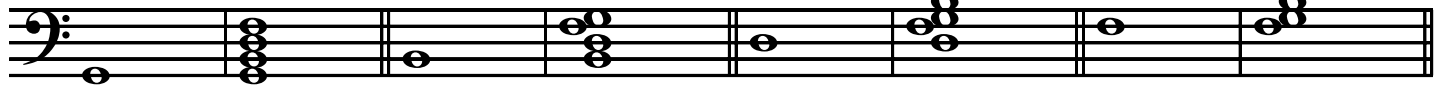


Write the following chords as indicated by the figured bass. Provided lead sheet symbol and roman numeral to indicate name and function of each. (This is not a part-writing assignment - don't try to connect chords with good voice leading!)


example	D	1	2	3	4	5
						
G:	V		6	6	6 4	6 4

6	7	8	9	10	11	
						
d:	6	6	6	∅ 4	6 4	∅

7th chords - memorize the following commonly used figured bass symbols for 7th chords and their inversions.


Root position	1st inversion	2nd inversion	3rd inversion
			
7	6 5	4 3	2

in minor keys

			
7 b	6 5	∅ 4 3	7 2

As in the examples above, write the indicated chords and provide lead sheet symbol and roman numeral.

									
D:	7	6 5	2	4 3	Bb:	6 5	4 3	7	6 5

									
f:	7 2	∅ 4 3	6 5	7 b	e:	∅ 4 3	7 2	7 #	#6 5