

Adding a Bass Voice

To prepare for the final project, we are going to add another voice to the melody. We will call this voice the “bass voice.” Adding another voice will require you to follow a series of chords called a “chord progression.” Chords follow a progression that begins and ends on tonic. The two most common and simple chord progressions are:

a) I IV V I

b) I ii V I

The bass voice will emphasize the **root notes** of the chord progression. When adding the bass line, first determine the notes in each triad of the progression. Then pick out the **root notes** of each triad. Those will be your bass line.

Example: C Major I= **C E G**
 IV= **F A C**
 V= **G B D**

Now you will want to compose your melody to fit with the bass line. It is best to use the notes of the triad **on the beats** of each measure and especially beats 1 and 3. When writing eighth notes, you may use non-triad notes on the “&”s of a pair of eighth notes.