Tissimo

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tissimo.co/worksheets/non-chord-tones

Non-chord tones

Most melody notes belong to the chord underneath. The ones that don't are **non-chord tones** — short visitors that add motion and spice. Each kind has its own way of arriving and leaving.

CHORD TONES AND VISITORS

Below, every melody note that belongs to its chord wears that chord's color. The three ink notes do not belong. Each one moves **by step**: a **passing tone (P)** walks between two chord tones in one direction; a **neighbor tone (N)** steps away from a chord tone and straight back.

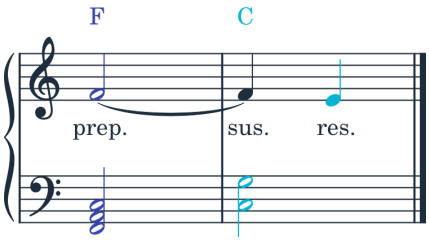
- **I** chord tone (C–E–G)
- **IV** chord tone (F–A–C)
- **V7** chord tone (G–B–D–F)
- **ink** = non-chord tone



THREE MORE VISITORS

Suspension

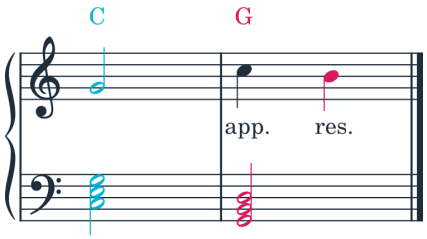
prepare · hold · resolve



The F belongs to the **F chord**. The harmony moves to C, but the F is **held over** and clashes. Then it **steps down** to E, a chord tone. A 4–3 suspension.

Appoggiatura

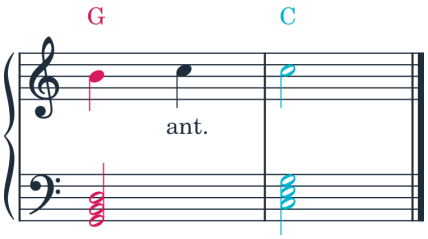
leap in · step out



The melody **leaps** straight onto a clashing note, **on the beat**, and leans: C over the G chord. Then it **steps down** to B. The leaning note gets the weight.

Anticipation

arrives early



The melody reaches the **next chord's note** too soon: C sounds over G, off the beat, and is simply repeated when the C chord arrives. Common at final cadences.

HOW TO TELL THEM APART

VISITOR	LABEL	ARRIVES	LEAVES	BEAT
Passing tone	**P**	by step	by step, same direction	usually weak
Neighbor tone	**N**	by step	by step, back to the same note	usually weak
Suspension	**S**	held over from the chord before	by step, usually down	strong
Appoggiatura	**App**	by leap	by step, usually the other way	strong
Anticipation	**Ant**	by step, before its chord	stays: the next chord takes it	weak

Try it Play the four-bar melody with the L.H. chords, then play it again **leaving out the ink notes** (hold the note before instead). It still works, only plainer — the visitors were the spice. Then label the visitors in three new phrases on **Exercise 47**.

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