

## Figured Bass

In figured bass, you start with a bass line. The arabic numbers beneath the bass line tell you which notes to add above. It's like a musical version of painting with numbers.

If there is nothing underneath a bass note, you add a third above the bass in the key signature and a fifth above the bass in the key signature. In this case the bass is the root of a triad.

If there is a 6 beneath the bass note you add a third above the bass in the key signature and you add a sixth above the bass in the key signature. In this case the bass is the third chord member of a first inversion triad.

If there is a 6 beneath the bass and a 4 beneath that 6, you add a fourth above the bass in the key signature and a sixth above the bass in the key signature. In this case the bass is the fifth chord member of a second inversion triad.

If there is ever a slash (going "one o'clock to seven o'clock") through a number you find the note that interval above the bass in the key signature and then you RAISE IT a half-step.

If there is an accidental hanging out in open space, you DO THAT to the third of the triad built upon the bass.

If there is a 7 underneath a note, you add a third above the bass in the key signature, a fifth above the bass in the key signature and a seventh above the bass in the key signature. In this case, the bass is the root of a seventh chord.

If there is a 6 underneath a note and a 5 underneath the 6, you add a third above the note in the key signature, a fifth above the note in the key signature and a sixth above the note in the key signature. In this case the bass is the third chord member of a first-inversion seventh chord.

If there is a 4 beneath the bass and a 3 beneath the 4, add a third above the bass in the key signature, a fourth above the bass in the key signature and a sixth above the bass in the key signature. In this case, the bass is the fifth chord member of a second inversion seventh chord.

If there is a 4 beneath the bass and a 2 beneath the 4, add a second above the bass in the key signature, a fourth above the bass in the key signature, and a sixth above the bass in the key signature. In this case the bass is the seventh chord member of a third inversion seventh chord.

[illegible]