

The viio6 chord

viio6 generally functions as a passing chord (between I and I6)
or a neighbor chord to either I or I6

viio6 contains scale degrees $\hat{7}$, $\hat{2}$, and $\hat{4}$; the bass note is $\hat{2}$.
Scale degrees $\hat{7}$ and $\hat{4}$ form a tritone, which can be spelled as either an augmented 4th or a diminished 5th.

Generally, double the bass note ($\hat{2}$). One of these will move up to $\hat{3}$; the other moves down to $\hat{1}$.

Occasionally, it is possible to double $\hat{4}$ (for smoother voice-leading).

Never double the leading tone!

Voice-leading guidelines:

$\hat{7}$ will always move up to $\hat{8}$ (whether or not it is in an inner voice).

$\hat{4}$ will generally move down to $\hat{3}$.

(Moving $\hat{7}$ up to $\hat{8}$ while moving $\hat{4}$ down to $\hat{3}$ is called "resolving the tritone".)

But, sometimes it is acceptable to move $\hat{4}$ up to $\hat{5}$:

- if viio6 is moving to I6

OR

- if viio6 is moving to I and the tritone is spelled as an augmented 4th.

Handwritten musical notation showing voice-leading for the viio6 chord in two systems. The first system shows four measures of a progression: I6 -> viio6 -> I, I6 -> viio6 -> I, I6 -> viio6 -> I, and I -> viio6 -> I6. The second system shows the same progression in a keyboard style. Handwritten annotations include: "05, so 4 → 3", "+4, so 4 → 5 OK", "4 → 3 also OK", "05 → P5 OK because soprano & bass move in parallel 10ths", and "same as above, but in keyboard style".