

Delle Dissonanze, o sia legatura di quarta

A translation on the section on the
suspension of the fourth
in Fedele Fenaroli's *Partimenti ossia basso numerato*
Book III Naples (1775) with adaptations to the guitar.

On the Preparation of the Fourth

The interval of a perfect fourth, classified as a dissonance in traditional contrapuntal theory, may be effectively prepared by any of the four primary consonances: the octave, major or minor third, perfect fifth, and major or minor sixth.

1. Preparation by the Octave

The fourth may be prepared by the octave when the bass (i.e., the partimento) ascends by a perfect fifth or descends by a perfect fourth. This motion establishes a strong tonal foundation for the introduction of the dissonance. (Refer to Example A: ① → ⑤)

2. Preparation by the Third

Preparation by the third occurs when the bass descends stepwise, thereby maintaining smooth melodic motion. (Refer to Example B1: ⑥ → ⑤ or B2: ② → ①)

Example A: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 1 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 5 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 8 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Example B1: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 6 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 5 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 3 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Example B2: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 2 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 5 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 3 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

3. Preparation by the Fifth

When preparing the fourth via the perfect fifth, the bass should ascend stepwise, allowing for a seamless connection between the preparatory and dissonant sonorities. (Refer to Example C1: ④ → ⑤ or C2: ① → ②)

4. Preparation by the Sixth

A fourth may also be prepared by the sixth if the bass ascends by a third, creating a consonant framework from which the dissonance may emerge. (Refer to Example D: ③ → ⑤)

Example C1: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 4 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 5 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 5 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Example C2: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 1 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 2 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 5 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Example D: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 3 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 5 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 6 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

On Dissonant Preparations

Though less common, the fourth can also be prepared by certain dissonant intervals under specific circumstances:

5. Preparation by the Minor Seventh

In this case, the bass ascends a perfect fourth, resulting in the fourth appearing above the preceding minor seventh. (Refer to Example E: ⑤ → ①)

6. Preparation by the Diminished Fifth

Alternatively, the fourth may be prepared by a diminished fifth, which is introduced by a semitonal ascent in the bass. (Refer to Example F: ⑦ → ①)

Example E: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 5 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 1 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 7 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Example F: A treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure contains a whole note chord with notes G4 and G5 (octave), labeled with a circled 7 below. The second measure contains a whole note chord with notes C5 and F#5 (fourth), labeled with a circled 1 below. A slur connects the G5 in the first measure to the C5 in the second measure, with the number 5 above the slur. The third measure contains a whole note chord with notes E5 and A5 (third), labeled with a circled 3 below. A slur connects the C5 in the second measure to the E5 in the third measure, with the number 4 above the slur.

Structural Consideration

It is imperative to note that the dissonance of a fourth must always be accompanied or underpinned by the consonance of a fifth. This requirement stems from the fourth's inherent instability when placed above a bass note that does not admit a fifth, rendering the interval acoustically and structurally unsupported within the contrapuntal framework.

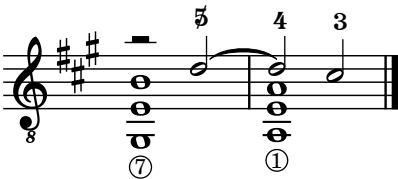
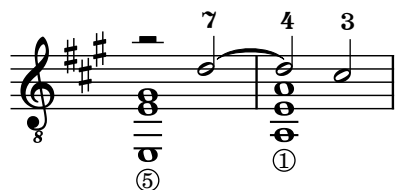
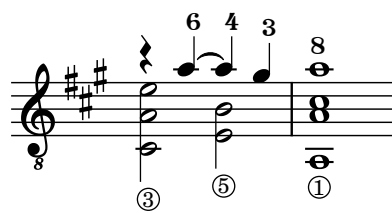
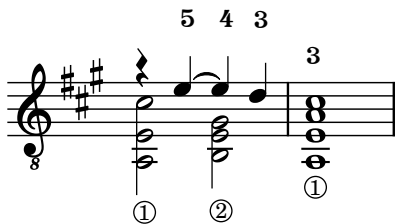
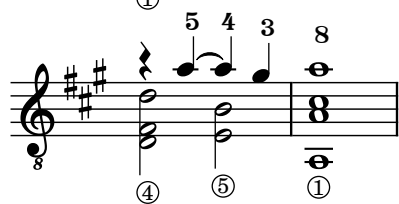
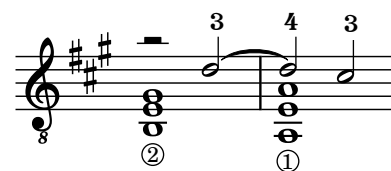
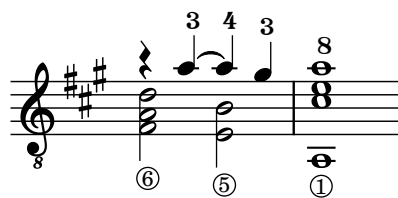
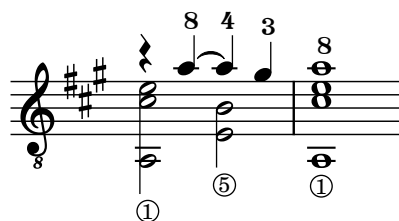
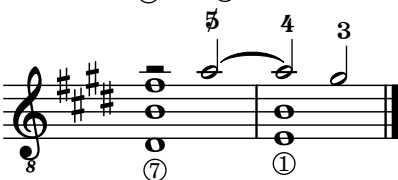
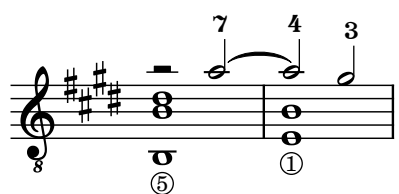
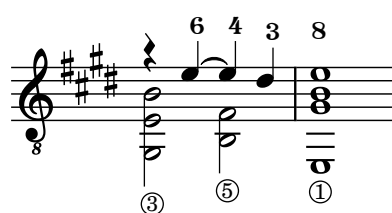
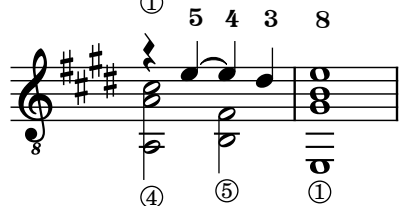
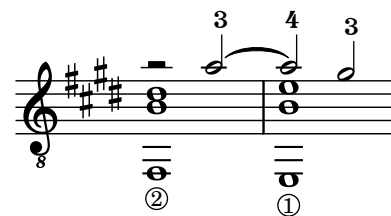
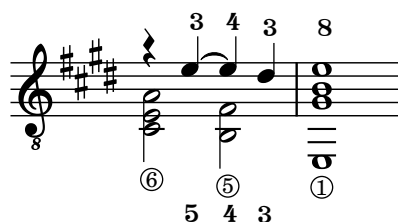
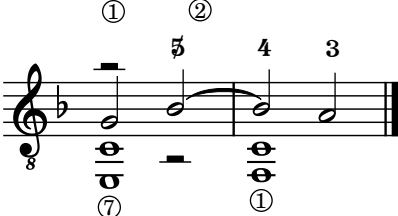
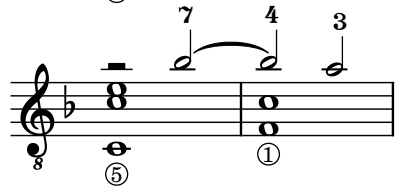
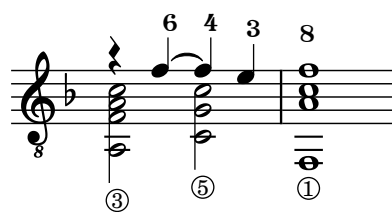
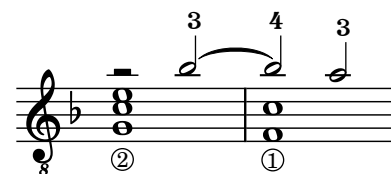
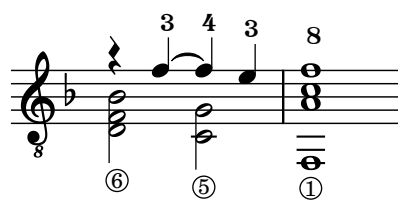
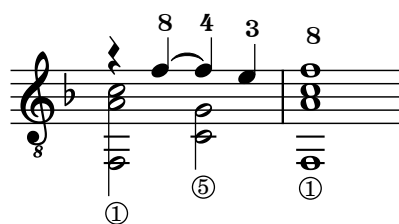
Suspension of the fourth

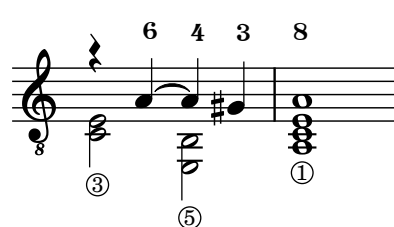
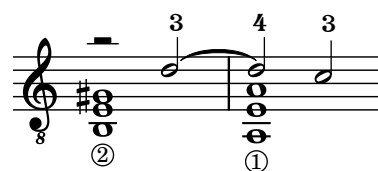
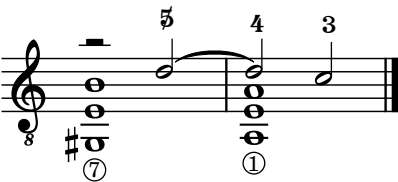
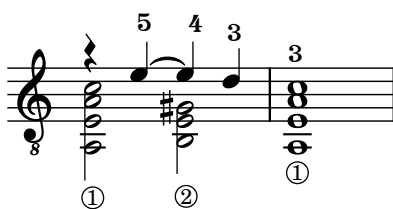
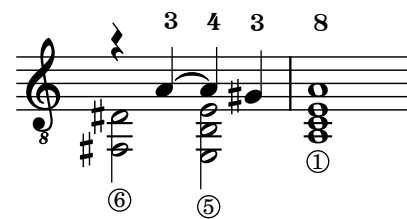
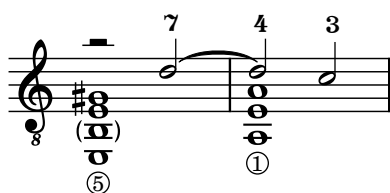
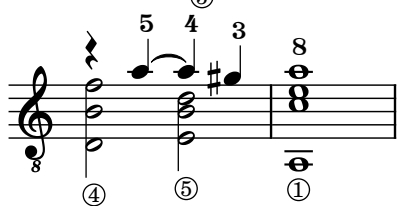
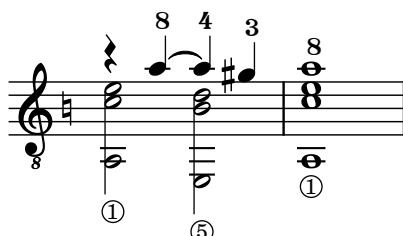
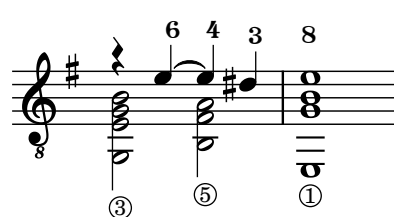
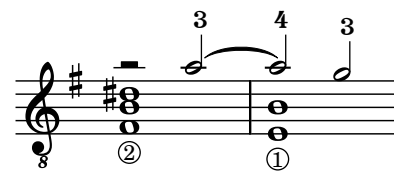
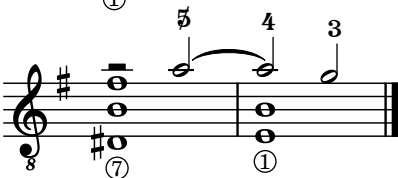
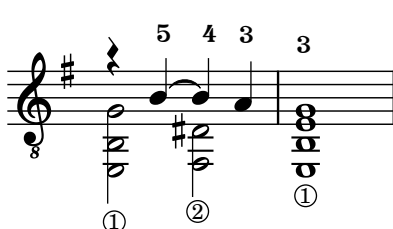
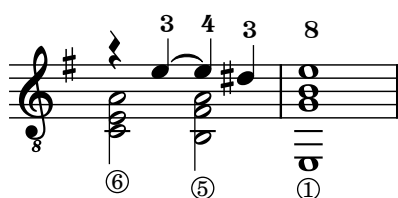
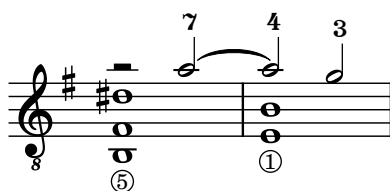
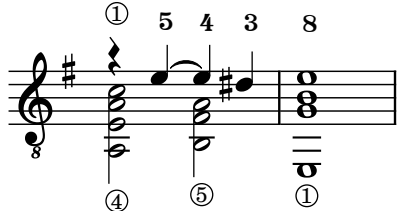
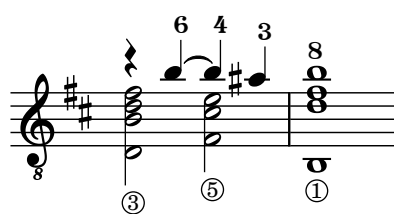
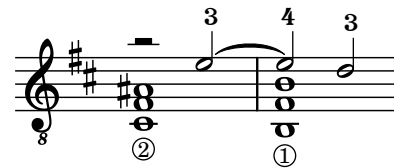
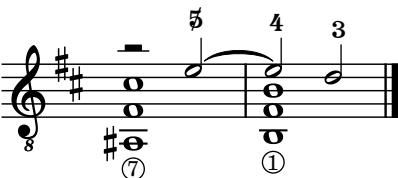
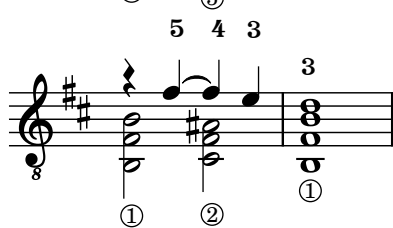
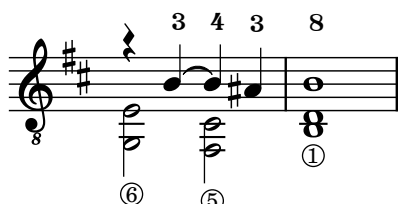
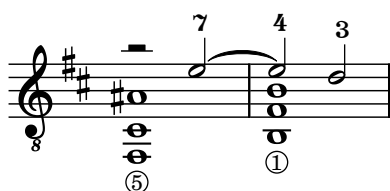
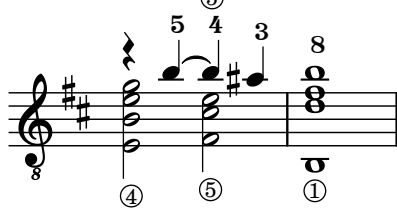
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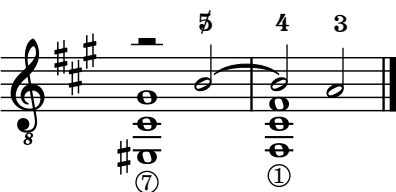
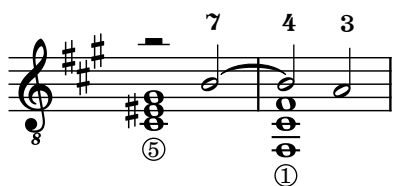
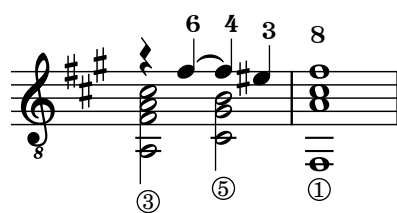
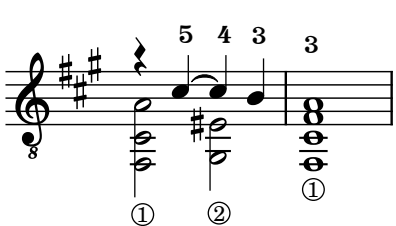
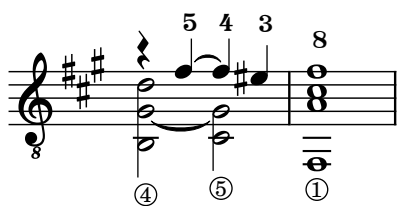
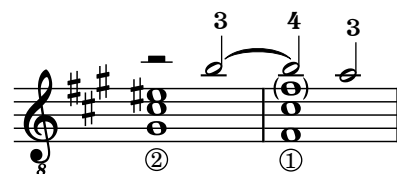
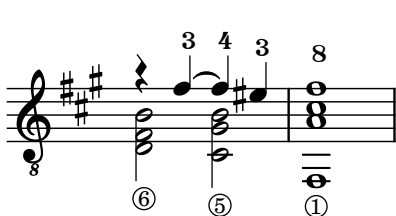
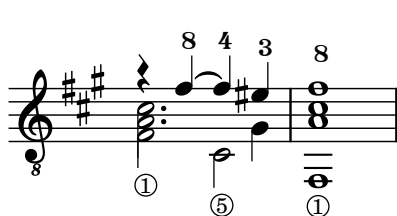
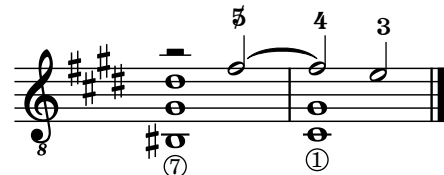
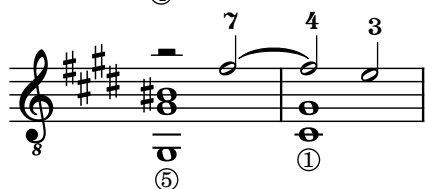
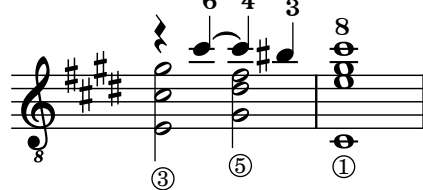
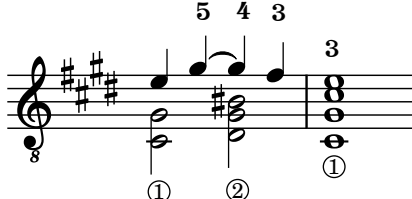
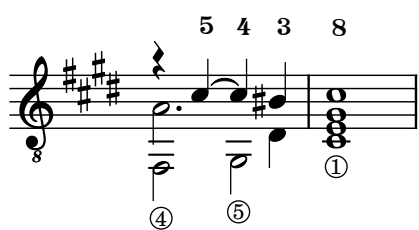
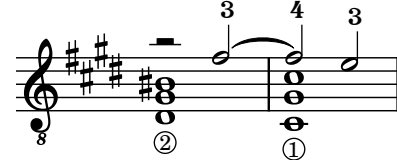
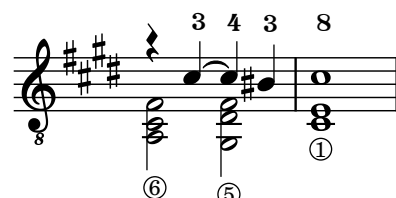
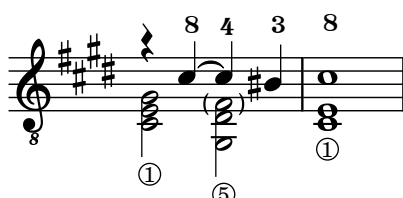
G

D

The image displays three sets of musical exercises for the C, G, and D major scales, each focusing on the suspension of the fourth degree. Each set consists of three rows of exercises. The first row shows the scale with fingerings 1, 5, 1. The second row shows the scale with fingerings 4, 5, 1. The third row shows the scale with fingerings 5, 1. The exercises are written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 8/8. The exercises are labeled with C, G, and D in a box. The exercises are written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 8/8. The exercises are labeled with C, G, and D in a box.

A**E****F**

Am**Em****Bm**

F#m**C#m****Dm**