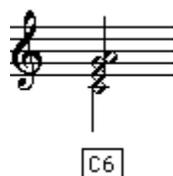


Sixth Chord - Napolitan Six



A "sixth chord," also called the "added sixth chord," in modern terms is a major triad with the interval of a sixth added (as measured from the root of the chord). You've got your root tone, then the third, then a fifth, and finally that extra topping of the sixth. This chord has a sort of jazzy sound and you often hear it as the final chord of a jazz number. The major sixth is the most common one: a major triad with a major sixth:



There's always some confusion of terminology here with regard to traditional music theory. I regard Wikipedia as mistaken in its description of "Sixth Chord." The author of the Wikipedia article says a sixth chord is "any chord or meaningful combination of notes that contains the interval of a sixth." But an ordinary triad in first inversion contains the interval of a sixth, and it is not a "sixth chord:"



So, if you're analyzing a classical piece you won't identify any chord as a sixth chord, though you were certainly find some **"six" chords**, like the example below. In most cases of the third (in this case the E) is only in the bass and some of the remaining voices is repeated in the higher voices. This makes the sic-chord more typical. This chord has an unique character and is never used as the final chord of a musical piece. It has no directional tendency but asks for more to come.



quartsix chord

The image shows a musical score for a chord progression in C major. It consists of five measures. The first measure is a C major triad (I). The second measure is an F major triad (IV). The third measure is a C major triad in first inversion (I⁶/₄), with the bass note G and the upper notes E and C. The fourth measure is a G7 chord (V). The fifth measure is a C major triad (I). The notes in the third measure are highlighted in red.

This chord has the intervals 4 and six from the bass tone to the starting tone (C) of the scale, in this case the interval of G to C which is 4. It also has an interval of 6 to the second tone of the triad which is the E. Therefore it is called the quart-six cord.

His functionality is unstable and it asks for V and finally I in the chord progression. It is often used at the end of a musical piece. Because it asks for V it is progressing clockwise on the circle of fifths which is the opposite of a 7th chord.

On both chords described above it is not a good idea to use the concepts of "inversions" to describe those cords since they got their unique functionality through the bass note. The upper 3 notes still can appear in the 1st or 2nd inversions or root position. In the above example the last cord is in its root position but when only looking at the triad in the treble clef staff this, one is the first inversion in itself.

Both chords are very basic and have its unique characteristic. A especial example of the six-chord is the **Napolitan six** chord.