

FIGURED BASS (“Thoroughbass”)

Standard “figures” for triads and sevenths, all inversions:

Triads:

Root Position	1 st Inversion	2 nd Inversion
(5)	6	6
(3)	(3)	4

Seventh Chords:

Root Position	1 st Inversion	2 nd Inversion	3 rd Inversion		
7	6	(6)	(6)	or sometimes	(6)
(5)	5	4	4		(4)
(3)	(3)	3	2		2

- All the figures (numbers) represent INTERVALS ABOVE THE BASS
- Intervals in parentheses are omitted in the standard abbreviations
- Compound intervals in the music are represented by simple intervals in the figures e.g. 10th=3rd, etc.
- These intervals are WITHIN THE KEY SIGNATURE unless otherwise indicated by an accidental before or (usually) after the figure.
- Accidentals in music must be reflected (usually by the same accidental) in the figures.
- An accidental with no figure refers to the note a third above the bass.
- A diagonal slash through a figure indicates that the note corresponding to the figure is to be raised a semitone (but a regular accidental may be used instead of a slash)