

# (Book 2) Lesson 29e.

## Triad Inversion

When a triad is written with its notes as close together as possible, it is said to be in "close position." If it is then turned upside down, it is called "first inversion" since it is the first turn over. Turn it over again and it becomes the "second inversion." Eventually, any note in the triad may appear at the top, in the middle or at the bottom.

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion

5th      Root      3rd

Root      3rd      5th

Observe the inversion procedure. It is impossible to move the notes closer together in the above triads.

If the middle note of a triad is moved up one octave, the triad is said to be in "open position." Notice that even though the "position" of the triad has changed from "close" to "open," the inversion remains the same.

close      open      close      open      close      open

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion

When the note spelling is not in close or open position, the chord is said to be in "dispersed position."

These are just a few examples of dispersed voicing. The notes could be dispersed even more widely.

The inversion type is still controlled by the lowest note regardless of the position. (or voicing)

close      open      disp.      close      open      disp.      close      open      disp.

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion

Root-bass note      3rd-bass note      5th-bass note

Root Position      First Inversion      Second Inversion

While we will eventually be concerned with all the chord positions, we will now concentrate on the close position triads. Playing them on the first three strings will of course move the notes into a higher pitch as shown above.

Visual recognition when reading triads is made easier by the fact that in any Root Position triad in close position, the notes will appear on adjacent lines or on adjacent spaces.

In First Inversion, the highest note is slightly removed from the lower pair which are on either adjacent spaces or lines.

In Second Inversion, the lowest note is slightly removed from the upper pair which are on either adjacent spaces or lines.

This visual aspect is slightly more difficult if a non-chordal tone is replacing the highest note. You will see this aspect a bit later in this book.

Any kind of inside voice auxiliary note will also disrupt this visual short cut. (see later)

Always spell the chord from the lowest note upward.

Always read the chord from the lowest note upward.

This reading procedure will usually ensure the proper fingering on the first pass.