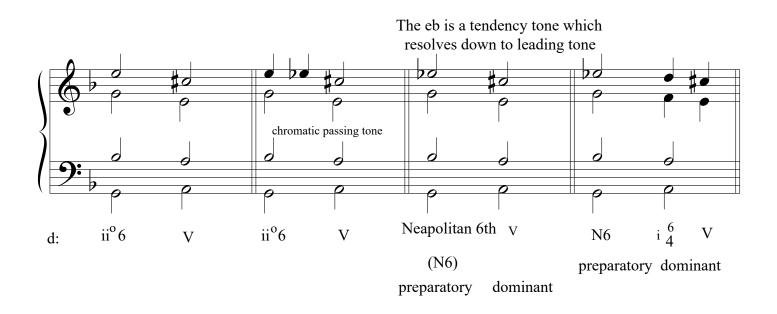
Neapolitan Sixth Chord

by Dr. Joe L. Alexander

Assumed concepts:

- 1. Roman numerals: a) root, b) quality, c) function
- 2. Linear motion; i.e., tendency tones
- 3. Functional harmony: a) tonic, b) preparatory (sub dom.), c) dominant



The Neapolitan 6th chord is a tertian triad and the 6 is an inversion number. The chord is usually found in first inversion, but there are many examples in music of this chord in root position When part writing, the 4th scale degree (bass pitch) is doubled (the function of the chord) because the root is a tendency tone and it's doubling would result in parallel P8's. One should follow the procedures for part writing when roots are a step apart. (Everything moves in contrary motion to the bass.)

The Neapolitan 6 chord is used as an altered, preparatory (sub dom.) function chord and moves directly to V, (or a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$)

From an every day perspective, the Neapolitan 6th chord is a major triad, built on the lowered second scale degree, and is usually found in first inversion. It progresses directly to a V chord.