

The diatonic triads in any major key can be divided into three functional groups: Tonic, Subdominant, Dominant.

The I, iii, and vi chords function as Tonic.

The ii and IV chords function as Subdominant.

The V and (sometimes) vii chords function as Dominant.

Progression using all diatonic triads

A musical staff in C major (G clef, four sharps) showing a sequence of chords: I, III^m, VI^m, II^m, IV, V, VII^o, and I. Below each chord is a bracket indicating its function: [____ T ____] for I, [__ SD __] for III^m, [__ D __] for VII^o, and [T] for I.

T = Tonic
SD = Subdominant
D = Dominant

A musical staff in G major (G clef, one sharp) showing a sequence of chords: I, III^m, VI^m, II^m, IV, V, VII^o, and I. Below each chord is a bracket indicating its function: [____ T ____] for I, [__ SD __] for III^m, [__ D __] for VII^o, and [T] for I.