

# Group Tuning Drills

## C Instruments

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## How To Use This Book

### The performance:

This is a book of group ear training and tuning drills using the most common chord progressions in traditional four-part chorale style. It is not meant to be played straight through from measure one to the end (although one may certainly do so); rather, for the group to pick specific keys and chord progressions to focus on as the needs of the group change over time. Rehearsal directors may pick a set of specifically numbered exercises for any given rehearsal.

These books are organized into many different keys and transpositions, so that groups of vastly varying size and composition can use these books effectively. Simply ensure that all four parts are covered. For example, a brass quartet might have a C trumpet playing the first stave from a C book, a B $\flat$  trumpet playing the second stave from a B $\flat$  book, and a trombone and a tuba playing the third and fourth staves, respectively, from two bass clef books.

### The Notation:

Italicized numbers beneath notes indicate their place in the chord's structure. In order to play the progressions with pure, beat-less harmony, adjust the tuning of the notes with the following cent adjustments, compared to the equal temperament of a piano:

- 7      The harmonic minor seventh, here used only in the dominant V7 chord. Play it 31 cents flat. Not used in this book are other minor sevenths which are tuned differently.
- 5      The perfect fifth. Play it 2 cents sharp.
- +5     Also the perfect fifth, but because of a quirk of tuning and voice leading, this note will be 21 cents sharper than the preceding note.
- 4      The suspended fourth. Play it 2 cents flat, but this note in this book will always be 29 cents sharper than the preceding note.
- 3      The major third. Play it 14 cents flat.
- 3     The minor third. Play it 16 cents sharp.
- 1      The root. Play it exactly in tune.

In the bottom (fourth) part, some of the notes doubled at the octave are in parenthesis. These are optional notes; play the lower if it is possible on the instrument.

Note that in some of the progressions, like the I-iii-V7-I, sometimes a voice stays on the same note but it changes function. For example, in the key of B $\flat$ , the voice with a D on the I chord plays the third, whereas the same voice with a D on the iii chord plays the root. When this happens, unless specifically indicated otherwise, that note will not necessarily need to be re-tuned; the relative correct movement of the other voices usually gets the chord in tune anyway. To make sure that this is the case (aside from using our ears), add or subtract the exact distance between intervals. Thus, the upper note of a major third interval is in tune, not when the upper note is lowered by 14 cents by itself, but when it is exactly 14 cents less than an equally-tempered major third above the lower note. The last two sets of chord progressions are more advanced, involving cases where at least one of the voices will need to adjust tuning despite staying on the same note. These are by no means the only times when such tuning adjustments will need to be made, but are common examples to illustrate the concept.