

Unaccented Non-Harmonic Tones - Cheat Sheet

A non-harmonic tone is a note that doesn't belong in the chord. Whether writing or analyzing music, it is important to label them.

Unaccented NHT include: Passing Tone (PT), Neighbor Tone (NT), Escape Tone (ET)
Incomplete Neighbor Tone (AKA Reaching Tone) I.NT, and Anticipation (ANT)

*Note - both the passing and neighbor tone can be used in an accented fashion as well.

Three musical examples in treble and bass clef. The first example, labeled 'PT', shows a passing tone between two notes in the same direction. The second example, labeled 'NT', shows a neighbor tone approached and left by step in different directions. The third example, labeled 'Double NT', shows both upper and lower neighbor tones.

Passing Tone: Approached and left by step in the same direction.

Neighbor Tone: Approached and left by step in different directions. Notice that it returns to the original note.

Double Neighbor Tone: Includes both the upper and lower neighbor to the note.

Three musical examples in treble and bass clef. The first example, labeled 'ET', shows an escape tone approached by step and left by leap in the opposite direction. The second example, labeled 'I.NT', shows an incomplete neighbor tone approached by leap and left by step in the opposite direction. The third example, labeled 'ANT', shows an anticipation note that rearticulates the next note.

Escape Tone: Approached by step, and left by leap in the opposite direction.

Incomplete Neighbor Tone: Approached by leap, and left by step in the opposite direction. Note that it is the opposite of the Escape Tone.

Escape Tone: Approached by step (most of the time), then rearticulated (it anticipates the next note)

Example:

A musical example in treble and bass clef, labeled 'Pno.' on the left. The notation includes various non-harmonic tones labeled: NT, PT, DNT, I.NT, ET, and ANT. Below the staff, a harmonic analysis is provided: C: I ii⁶ V I I⁶₄ V I. A bracket under I⁶₄ and V indicates a V-I resolution.