

HOW MELODY BEHAVES AT CHORD CHANGES

When the chord changes under a held or repeated melody note, one of four things happens to its emotional quality. These four behaviors describe every possibility.

STAY SWEET

Zone stays



Both chords contain the melody note — it's a chord tone in both. **No emotional shift.** The harmony moves but the note is carried along safely with warmth throughout.

Use when: you need stable, confident chord changes. Great for chorus arrivals and sections that need to feel settled and grounded.

TURN TENSE

Zone worsens



Was a chord tone, now the new chord doesn't contain it. **Sudden forward pull** — a comfortable note becomes tense or searching at the change.

Use when: you need urgency at a chord change. Powerful for pre-choruses and climactic builds. The listener feels the floor shift.

FLOAT FREE

Zone improves

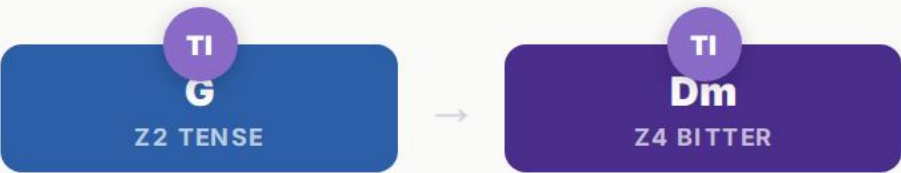


Was floating outside the chord; the new chord **claims it as a chord tone.** Sudden harmonic support — the tension releases as the chord "arrives under" the melody.

Use when: you want release at a chord change. Letting the harmony arrive under a tense note creates a beautiful harmonic exhale.

SINK DEEPER

Tension escalates



Already tense, the new chord makes it **worse.** Loses harmonic support at the change. Tension compounds — each chord change makes the note feel more stranded.

Use when: you need escalating drama. Best for bridge climax — but needs a strong Zone 1 arrival to release the accumulated tension.

QUICK REFERENCE — WHICH BEHAVIOR TO CHOOSE

STAY SWEET

Choose when stability serves the moment — sections that need confidence and warmth

FLOAT FREE

Choose for release — letting the new chord resolve the melody creates satisfaction

TURN TENSE

Choose when you need sudden urgency — classic pre-chorus energy

SINK DEEPER

Choose for escalating drama — bridge climax, emotional peak, but resolve it after