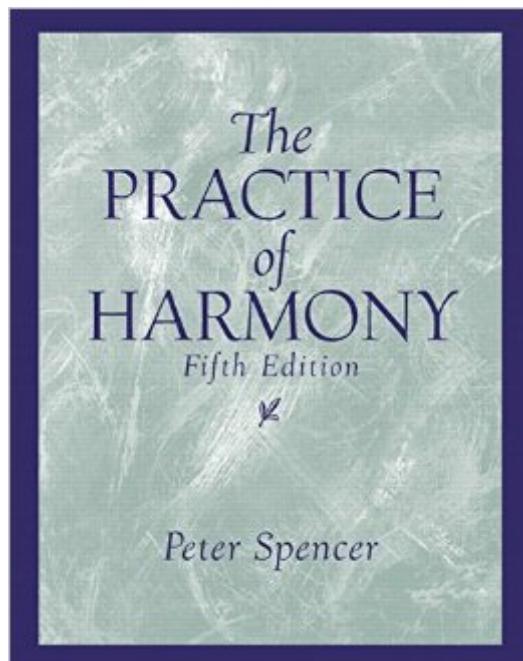


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# The Practice Of Harmony (5th Edition)



## **Synopsis**

With an emphasis on learning and understanding by doing, this workbook takes learners from music fundamentals through harmony in common practice to some of the more important harmonic procedures of the 20th century. The approach is “additive” throughout, allowing readers to use what was learned in one chapter to help comprehension of the materials in the next. A four-part organization covers foundations, the diatonic vocabulary, the chromatic vocabulary, and post-common practice harmony. For anyone looking for an easy-to-use book and an understanding of “music theory.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I'm not as enthusiastic as the previous reviewer. I have taught music theory at all levels for 17 years, and while there is good material in Spencer's *The Practice of Harmony*, there is much that seems downright peculiar. If your theory professor assigns this book, of course you've got to use it; otherwise, much of the material is presented more clearly in other sources. The problems are twofold: reliance on standard theoretical concepts divorced from practice or context, and Spencer's attempt to either explain concepts in new ways or offer shortcuts in learning or remembering the concepts--it's a laudable effort, to be sure, but one which leads him astray. Take, for example, this wonderfully abstruse line from his "Suggestions and Strategies" for learning triad quality: "If the root of a triad is natural and the fifth is flat, or if the root is sharp and the fifth is natural, or if the fifth is double-flat, the triad is diminished." (p. 69) All that may well be true, but if you've memorised that

and still can't tell that the third of the chord is minor and the fifth is diminished, you have no recognition of what a diminished triad IS. There's quite a difference between naming and understanding, and Spencer ignores this. Another and much more significant problem occurs with Spencer's explanation of the minor. Frankly, he doesn't seem to understand that there is not a "harmonic minor key" or a "natural minor key"--he does not use the terms, but in the section "Triads in Major and Minor Keys" (p. 68) he shows the triads first on C major, then on A minor (natural), a minor (harmonic), and a minor (melodic)--ascending only.

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