6\(4\) (Second inversion) Chords

**Explanation:**
6\(4\) chords are triads in second inversion. They should be used in four-part writing and in music in general with extreme caution because they are unstable chords since they contain the interval of the fourth above the bass (a dissonance).

**Second inversion triads should be used only in the following ways:**

**Cadential:**
Even though the chord looks like a tonic chord, it really is a dominant chord. As such, it is labeled as a V chord with a 6 and 4 above the bass that move to a 5 and 3 above the bass. Since the chord is a V chord, the bass is doubled.

\[
\begin{align*}
C: & \quad IV \quad V(\frac{6}{4} - \frac{5}{3}) \quad I \\
\end{align*}
\]

[Image of musical notation showing the progression C IV V(6 − 5/3) I]
**Passing bass:**

The bass note of the $6_4$ chord acts as a passing note in the bass (see examples below).

$$
\begin{array}{c}\text{C:} & I & V^{6}_4 & I6 \\
\text{C:} & IV & I & 6_4 & IV6
\end{array}
$$

The bass note of the $6_4$ chord is doubled.

**Pedal or neighbor (or static bass):**

In this type of $6_4$ chord, the bass note is approached and left by the same tone and is between two root position triads that are the same.

The bass note of the $6_4$ chord is doubled.
**Arpeggio:**

The bass note of this $6_4$ chord participates in an arpeggiation of the same chord. This type of $6_4$ chord use may occur with any type of triad (usually major and minor chords). The bass note of the $6_4$ chord is doubled.

C: I I6 I$_6^6$