


MUS 211A: Basic Musicianship IIIa


Summary of Part-Writing Rules and Guidelines

Avoid parallel perfect fifths or octaves.

NO



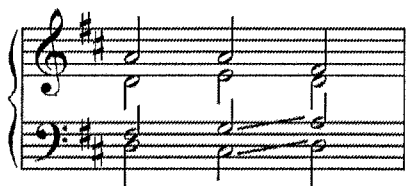
NO




The first example shows a piano accompaniment in B-flat major. The right hand has a half note G4, a half note A4, and a half note B4. The left hand has a half note B2, a half note C3, and a half note D3. This creates parallel perfect fifths between the two hands. The second example shows a piano accompaniment in B-flat major. The right hand has a half note G4, a half note A4, and a half note B4. The left hand has a half note B2, a half note C3, and a half note D3. This creates parallel perfect octaves between the two hands.

Avoid moving from a diminished fifth to a perfect fifth. (It is acceptable to move from a perfect fifth to a diminished fifth.)

NO



OK




The first example shows a piano accompaniment in D major. The right hand has a half note D4, a half note E4, and a half note F#4. The left hand has a half note D3, a half note E3, and a half note F#3. This creates a diminished fifth between the two hands. The second example shows a piano accompaniment in D major. The right hand has a half note D4, a half note E4, and a half note F#4. The left hand has a half note D3, a half note E3, and a half note F#3. This creates a perfect fifth between the two hands.

Avoid hidden (or "direct") fifths or octaves (two voices moving in similar motion to a perfect fifth or perfect octave) between outer voices unless the upper voice moves by step.

NO



NO



OK



The first example shows a piano accompaniment in B-flat major. The right hand has a half note G4, a half note A4, and a half note B4. The left hand has a half note B2, a half note C3, and a half note D3. This creates hidden perfect fifths between the two hands. The second example shows a piano accompaniment in B-flat major. The right hand has a half note G4, a half note A4, and a half note B4. The left hand has a half note B2, a half note C3, and a half note D3. This creates hidden perfect octaves between the two hands. The third example shows a piano accompaniment in B-flat major. The right hand has a half note G4, a half note A4, and a half note B4. The left hand has a half note B2, a half note C3, and a half note D3. This creates a direct perfect fifth between the two hands, but the upper voice moves by step.

Avoid consecutive (anti-parallel) fifths or octaves between any pair of voices.

NO



NO



Use conservative vocal ranges (with rare exceptions) when writing for SATB texture (standard four-part realization).

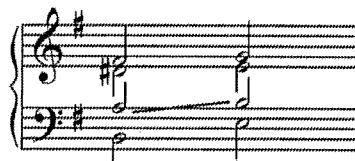
S A T B



(guidelines only)

Resolve all sevenths down by step (with one exception).

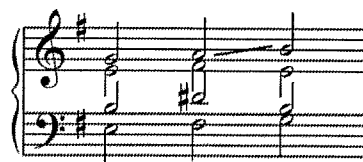
NO



OK



OK



(Note parallel tenths in bass)

Avoid doubling the chordal seventh (dissonance) and the leading tone (tendency tone).



Resolve the leading tone (scale degree seven) up by step. (The leading tone may be “frustrated”—left by leap—if it appears in an inner voice.)



(raise leading tone in minor)