

Species Counterpoint: Guidelines

1. Each line should have a distinct and independent melodic character.
2. Be aware of *consonances* (perfect and imperfect) and *dissonances*.
3. Always write the interval *between* the two staves so you can keep a working analysis of the relationship between the two voices.
4. Begin with either a *Perfect 5th* or *8ve* with the tonic in the lower part.
5. Avoid more than *three* of the same imperfect consonances in a row.
6. Avoid *similar* or *parallel* 5ths or 8ves.
7. The conclusion of each exercise must be prepared with the 7th scale degree in one voice and the 2nd in the other in the penultimate measure, with the final sonority being a Perfect 8ve (tonic in both voices).
8. Maximize the *ambitus* of your contrapuntal voice, but avoid more than one ledger line in either the treble or bass voices.
9. All leaps must be prepared and compensated by steps in contrary motion to the leap. Otherwise, you will have articulated a *cascade* (which must be avoided).
10. Avoid leaps of a tritone, 7th, or more than an 8ve.
11. Only one 8ve leap per exercise is allowed.
12. Do not cross the voices.
13. Avoid oblique motion.
14. Combine similar/parallel and contrary motion to allow for maximum independence of your contrapuntal line.
15. Understand each species' rule alterations for the penultimate bar.

In each species, new approaches to handling material in the free contrapuntal voice will be introduced.

First Species:

Only consonant whole notes are allowed.

Second Species:

1. *Passing* and *neighbor tones* are introduced.
2. Leaps are no longer allowed over the bar.
3. Half notes throughout (except the final bar).
4. You *may* begin with a half rest.

Third Species:

1. The *double passing* and *double neighbor tones* are introduced.
2. Quarter notes throughout (except the final bar).
3. You *may* begin with a quarter rest.

Fourth Species:

1. The *suspension* is introduced.
2. Only descending steps and ascending leaps are allowed.
3. Half notes and tied half notes throughout (except the final bar).
4. You *may* begin with a half rest.

Fifth Species:

1. Combine Second, Third, and Fourth Species freely.
2. Avoid any two successive bars containing the same rhythmic activity.
3. Divided bars are introduced (e.g. first half in Second Species, second half Third Species).