

FOUR PART-WRITING (SATB STYLE)

- **USE PROPER NOTATION.**

Notate the **Soprano (S)** on the treble clef staff with stems up.

Notate the **Alto (A)** on the treble clef staff with stems down.

Notate the **Tenor (T)** on the bass clef staff with stems up.

Notate the **Bass (B)** on the bass clef staff with stems down.

Chords may be in **open or close spacing**.

Chords are in **close spacing** when no chord tone can be placed between the SA or AT voices.

Chords are in **open spacing** when you can put another chord tone in between the S and A and/or between the A and T voices.

Close Spacing

Open Spacing

- **MAINTAIN 4 DISTINCT VOICES; MAINTAIN THE INDIVIDUALITY OF THE VOICES.**

Keep the voices in their proper ranges.

Soprano (S) Alto (A) Tenor (T) Bass (B)

The maximum distance between S and A and A and T is a P8.

The maximum distance between T and B is 2 P8s.

Good No No Good No

Do not **cross** voices in the same chord or **overlap** voices between two adjacent chords.

Crossed voices Overlapped voices

Tenor higher than Alto

Bass (C) higher than Tenor (B)

Use contrary or oblique motion to the bass more frequently than similar motion. Use parallel motion only when necessary.

The image shows a single treble clef staff in 2/4 time. It is divided into four measures by double bar lines. Each measure contains two notes. Below each measure is a label: 'Contrary', 'Oblique', 'Similar', and 'Parallel'.
 - **Contrary:** The first note is on a lower line, and the second note is on a higher line.
 - **Oblique:** The first note is on a lower line, and the second note is on the same line.
 - **Similar:** Both notes are on the same line, but the second note is higher than the first.
 - **Parallel:** Both notes are on the same line, and the second note is higher than the first.

- * Contrary motion -- voices move in opposite directions.
- * Oblique motion -- one voice remains on the same note while the other voice moves.
- * Similar motion -- voices move in the same direction by different intervals.
- * Parallel motion -- voices move in the same direction by the same interval.

NEVER write parallel P1, P5 or P8. (Parallel 5ths shown below.)

The image shows a two-staff piano arrangement in 2/4 time. The treble staff has two notes, and the bass staff has two notes. Orange arrows point from the first notes to the second notes in both staves, indicating parallel motion. Purple brackets labeled 'P5' are placed between the notes in each staff to indicate that the interval between the notes is a perfect fifth.

- **DOUBLE THE STABLE TONE IN A CHORD.**

In **root position triads**, double the root (the most stable tone).

The image shows a two-staff piano arrangement in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The chords are: F major (F, A, C), I (F, A, C), vi (D, F, A), IV (B-flat, D, F), V7 (G, B-flat, D, F), and I (F, A, C). In each chord, the root note (F) is doubled in the bass staff.

F: I vi IV V7 I

EXCEPT:

In diminished triads, double the 3rd (not a note of the tritone).

c minor: i viio6 i6

In V-VI in minor keys, double the 3rd of the VI chord.

c minor: V V7 VI

In **first inversion triads**, double a stable tone. OR: double the soprano. OR: double the 1, 4, or 5 scale degree.

In the example below: In the viio6 chord, the D is doubled since the other two notes in this chord (B and F) form a tritone – a very unstable interval. In the I6 chord, the C, the tonic or scale degree 1, is doubled; this note is also the soprano tone in the chord.

C: I viio6 I6

In the example below: In the ii6 chord the third of the chord, the bass and scale degree 4, is doubled. In the V6 chord, the G, scale degree 5, is doubled.

C: ii6 V6 I

In **second inversion triads**, always double the bass.

C: I₄⁶ V⁷ I

C: I IV₄⁶ I

In **Incomplete triads**, triple the root, include the third, and omit the fifth.
 In the example below, the I chord is incomplete; it has 3 roots (C) and 1 third (E).

C: V7 I

In **Incomplete seventh chords**, double the root, include the third and the seventh.
 In the following example, the V7 chord is incomplete; it has 2 roots (G), 1 third (B), and 1 seventh (F).

C: V7 I

Never double the leading tone. When both resolved to tonic, it creates parallel octaves.

C: V6 I

- **MOVE TO THE NEAREST CHORD TONE AT ALL TIMES.**

Use conjunct motion (stepwise) as much as possible.

Do not leap in a voice (melodically) more than a P8. Try to limit leaps in the soprano to a M6, in the tenor and alto to a P4.

Do not leap twice in the same direction unless outlining a triad.

Don't write hidden octaves or fifths. Don't move in the same direction in the outer voices (soprano and bass) and by leap in the soprano to an octave or a fifth.

Hidden/Direct 8:

C: V7 I

Hidden/Direct 5:

C: V6 I

Don't use augmented or diminished intervals melodically.

c: V VI

c: iv V

- **RESOLVE NOTES IN THE DIRECTION OF THEIR INFLECTION.**

Resolve **active tones** in the direction of their tendency.

The **leading tone** in the Soprano or Bass must resolve to tonic.

C: V7 I

In an inner voice, it may resolve down to the 5 (frustrated leading tone).

The diagram shows two measures of music in C major. The first measure contains a C7 chord (F4, G4, Bb4, C5) and the second measure contains a C major chord (C4, E4, G4). An orange arrow points from the Bb4 note in the inner voice of the C7 chord down to the B4 note in the inner voice of the C major chord. Below the staff, the chords are labeled "C: V7" and "I".

Resolve **sevenths** of chords down by step. Resolve the 7th of a V^7 down by step.

The diagram shows two measures of music in C major. The first measure contains a C7 chord (F4, G4, Bb4, C5) and the second measure contains a C major chord (C4, E4, G4). An orange arrow points from the Bb4 note in the inner voice of the C7 chord down to the B4 note in the inner voice of the C major chord. Below the staff, the chords are labeled "C: V7" and "I".

Resolve **tritones** as follows: A4 will resolve out, d5 in.

The diagram shows two measures of music in C major. The first measure contains a C7 chord (F4, G4, Bb4, C5) and the second measure contains a C major chord (C4, E4, G4). Orange arrows show the resolution of the tritone: the Bb4 note moves up to B4 (labeled "d5 moves in") and the F4 note moves down to E4 (labeled "A4 moves out"). Below the staff, the labels "A4 moves out" and "d5 moves in" are placed under the respective notes.

It is OK to move from a P5 to a d5 (**unequal fifths**), but not from a d5 to a P5 (the tritone doesn't resolve).

P5-d5 -> OK d5-P5 -> NOT OK

Altered notes: If note is raised, continue going up. If note is lowered, continue going down.

Keep chromatic movement of a note in the same voice; don't write **cross relations** especially between the outer two voices.