

FIRST SPECIES (one whole-note against each C.F. whole-note)

**Always indicate:** (i) harmonic intervals, (ii) #s of steps vs. skips, (iii) #s of contrary vs. other motion, and (iv) melodic range.

**Melody:**

1. Melody should have a good **sense of direction** and an **attractive, singable contour**. Avoid meandering aimlessly, slow trills, etc.
2. **RANGE:** Range helps define mode *type* (authentic vs. hypo-). The modal 8<sup>ve</sup> may be exceeded by a step at either end.
3. **Aim for a melodic span of an octave** (if the C.F. is short – i.e., fewer than ~10 notes – then *at least* a sixth).
4. **HIGH NOTE** in region **should only occur only once** (and, to a lesser degree, the low note as well). Try Mel. Contour analysis.
5. **Aim to reach the high note toward the end of the melody**, but **never end on it**; it is also preferable not to begin on it.
6. **SKIPS: Avoid skipping to or from the high note** (or even a temporary high note in a grouping).
7. **Mainly stepwise** (a.k.a. *conjunct*) **motion**, with a judicious mix of leaps is best (*at least* 50% steps in this species).
8. **CONTAINMENT:** (i) Skips should generally be approached *and* left in the opposite direction of the skip. (ii) They have a tendency to be ‘filled in.’
9. Two **consecutive skips in the same direction are possible but not common**, because this practice goes against the tendency described in #8, above. When consecutive skips in the same direction occur, however...
  - 9.1 • **The larger of two consecutive skips in the same direction is generally the lower one.** The melodic forms of  $\frac{5}{3}$  and  $\frac{6}{4}$  triads are common in consecutive, same-direction skips, but  $\frac{6}{3}$  skips involving whole notes are only occasionally possible. Consecutive skips breaking up the octave (5th & 4th, or 4th & 5th) are OK if the larger of the two skips is generally on the bottom. The 5th & 3rd combination of D-A-C is also possible in the Dorian Mode<sup>1</sup>.
  - 9.2 • Gauldin says “**it is unusual to find leaps larger than a third that continue in the same direction.**”<sup>2</sup> A third followed by a second in the same direction is possible (but not common) provided the third is on the bottom and is preceded by a change of direction. A fourth followed by a second in the same direction, subject to the same restrictions, is unusual, while *any* combination of larger intervals and a second in the same direction is so rare as to be avoided completely.
  - 9.3 **Leaps should not occur in the middle of a line that moves in the same direction** (i.e., step-skip-step, all moving ↑).
  10. **Ascending and descending** skips of all **perfect, major, and minor intervals up to the fifth**, as well as the **octave** are permitted. In addition, the **ascending minor sixth** is available.
  11. The seventh degree is raised to approach the final by semitone at the cadence in the Dorian, Mixolydian, and Aeolian modes, but *not* the Phrygian; also, it should not be approached by skip from below (i.e. so-ti-do).
  12. Avoid outlining the tritone melodically, or by skip; **B** may be flattened to correct this (*ficta*). However, melodies that span a diminished fifth are not particularly problematic, especially if larger durations (like whole-notes) are used.
  13. **REPETITION:** Avoid sequences; these are a feature of baroque and later music. Also avoid direct repetition of any figure.
  14. A note may be repeated once, or 2-3 times if the C.F. is longer (as in the Schubert text), but *never when C.F. is repeating a note*.
  15. The last note should be a breve.
  16. According to Gauldin<sup>3</sup>, ‘the note B natural is handled with care. Ascending leaps to this tone are rare.’
  17. Begin and end only with the first or fifth degree of the mode in the top voice (slightly better to end with the final of the mode if you can), but the bottom voice *must* begin and end with the final (to do otherwise would either create a dissonance or change the mode, if counterpoint rule 2 (below) is adhered to).

**Counterpoint:**

1. Use **consonances only** (1, 3, 5, 6, 8); therefore, no PT, N,
2. Begin and end with 8ve, 5th, or unison in top voice, unison or 8ve in bottom voice. **Unisons only at beginning or end.**
3. Schubert says: “Avoid more than two perfect vertical intervals in a row.”<sup>4</sup>
4. Parallel and **hidden** (a.k.a. *direct*) **8<sup>ves</sup> and 5<sup>ths</sup> are not permitted** (which also prohibits “horn fifths”). This means that perfect intervals may only be approached by contrary or oblique motion.
5. **Avoid exceeding about a tenth between parts**; if you do, make darn sure it’s beautiful!
6. Use a mixture of harmonic interval types (3<sup>rds</sup>, 6<sup>ths</sup>, and perfect intervals). No more than three (or *maybe* four) parallel 3<sup>rds</sup> or 6<sup>ths</sup> in a row.
7. **Avoid simultaneous, same direction skips in both voices.** If they both skip by a 3<sup>rd</sup> it is “not so serious.” An 8ve skip is considered note repetition and is therefore exempt from this rule.
8. Contrary motion is best; oblique and parallel motions are possible. **There should be at least 50% contrary motion.**
9. **Occasional part crossing is good.** But not at the beginning or end, because it creates confusion as to which voice is high/low.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Gauldin: *A Practical Approach to Sixteenth-Century Counterpoint*, 1985. P. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, P. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, P. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Schubert: *Modal Counterpoint, Renaissance Style*, 2008. P. 30.