





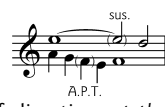
FREE TWO-PART COUNTERPOINT

Previous rules are still valid, except (or as well as):


- All white notes (♩, ♪, ♫) that move simultaneously must be consonant with each other.
- Even-numbered ♩s that move against ♩s may be dissonant if **P.T.**s, but only rarely neighbours: 
- A suspended quarter note may dissonate on a weak beat (2 or 4) in descending stepwise movement:  Schubert calls it “diminished 4<sup>th</sup> species,” which “is more common in lighter styles.”<sup>1</sup>
- Note against note in quarters only may dissonate, so long as each voice is treated correctly in itself. E.g., a simultaneous *cambiata*/passing tone combination: , or an ant./p.t. combination: 
- Both voices should not be tied (and/or be repeated) over a strong beat) simultaneously.
- Although a series of parallel 3<sup>rd</sup>s/6<sup>ths</sup> is *not* generally advisable (because it is not contrapuntal), more are allowed in quarters than in longer values. My arbitrary limit: No more than ~5 in a row. **Contrary/conjunct motion is much preferred.**
- Avoid rhythmic unison (simultaneous, identical rhythmic values in both voices) “for more than 5 ♩s or 9 ♪s.”<sup>2</sup> **Contrasting rates of activity is much preferred.** In particular, avoid simultaneous identical rhythmic *patterns* for more than about one bar.

• **THE REMAINING RULES ALL RELATE TO SUSPENSIONS:**

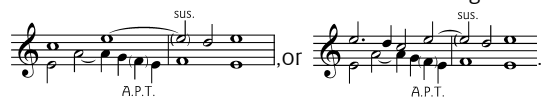
- 8.1 **Accented P.T. in the preparation for a suspension.** The 3<sup>rd</sup> of 4 descending ♩s may serve as a *temporary* dissonance in

preparing a suspension in the other voice: . Restrictions: (i) The 1<sup>st</sup> of the ♩♩♩ must be fully accented; (ii) the 4<sup>th</sup> ♩ must be followed by a stepwise change of direction *at the point where the suspension occurs* (leading to the non-suspended note).

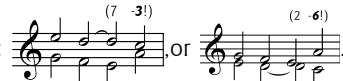
- 8.2 **Accented P.T. in the preparation for a suspension.** We learned in 5<sup>th</sup> species that the 1<sup>st</sup> of a pair of descending ♩s may be dissonant if following a downbeat ♩ (attacked or tied). This device may be used in preparing a suspension (as in 8.1), and is “particularly common near cadences,”<sup>3</sup> **N. B.** In the 3<sup>rd</sup> example that follows, *consecutive dissonances occur*:

 Spooky!


- 8.3 **Accented P.T. in the preparation for a suspension.** We also learned in 5<sup>th</sup> species about the A.P.T. that may occur in relation to the so-called “filled in *cambiata*” figure. This too may be used in preparing a suspension (as in 8.1 and 8.2), as follows:




9. **Change of bass/non-syncopating voice.** The non-syncopating voice can jump to a *different* imperfect consonance on the

resolution beat, so 7-(6) *suspension type* could become 7-3 or 7-10, for example: 

10. **9-(8) Suspension.** Previously, the 9-8 was not available in 2 voices because the interval of resolution is a perfect consonance, considered a ‘thin’ sound. We may now use the 9-(8) *suspension type* (sparingly!), provided there is a *change of bass* at the

resolution to an *imperfect consonance*, becoming, for example, 9-6: 

11. ♩s in the **non-syncopating voice**, such as: . In this case, a L.N. ♩ decorates the stable tone (the **A** in the lower voice), against which there is an upper-voice 4-3 suspension. An U.N. ♩ decoration is also possible, but less common due to the strong preference of L.N.s to U.N.s. All examples of this device in Jeppesen are 3- (or greater) part; use sparingly!

<sup>1</sup> Schubert, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Gauldin, *op.cit.*, p. 43.

**Setting the text:**

1. White notes can carry syllables.
2. A single quarter note may carry a syllable only if it follows a dotted half and is followed by a white note.
3. The first of several quarter notes in a row may carry a single syllable.
4. The natural accents of the text should normally occur on musical accents.
5. Don't change syllables immediately after quarters, only after white notes.
6. The final syllable coincides with the final note, even if it means breaking one of the above rules.
7. Repetition of tones requires new syllables, with the exception of the quarter-note anticipation, which should **not** carry a syllable change.
8. The two parts usually change syllables at different times; if imitation is used, syllable changes should correspond accordingly.

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**Imitation:**

1. Imitation is highly-desirable in polyphonic music.
2. Real imitation was preferred in the 16th C, with some tonal imitation.
3. Imitation may also occur by inversion, augmentation, or diminution, although these devices were more popular before Palestrina's time. Retrograde imitation is not characteristic of the style.
4. Stretto (overlapping) imitation is the most common.
5. Imitation may occur in any interval relationship whatsoever, although imitation at the fifth was most common in Palestrina's music (especially at the beginning of a motet), with imitations at the unison or octave also frequent.
6. The actual interval occurring under or over the imitative voice's (follower's) first note may be a perfect or imperfect consonance.
7. The melody to be imitated should possess some memorable characteristics in order to be recognizable when accompanied later by counterpoint.
8. Try to continue the imitation for at least 2-3 bars, although the imitating voice is not *obliged* to introduce more of the theme than the preceding voice has sung at the entrance of the imitation.
9. After 2-3 bars, the imitation may (i) continue, (ii) break off, or (iii) change type, meaning you can have real imitation for 2-3 bars that then switches to imitation by inversion, or by augmentation, etc.

**Cadences:**

1. .