

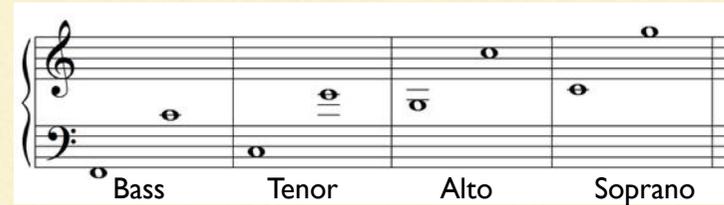
GRADE 6 MUSIC THEORY

Dr. Declan Plummer

Lesson 6: Voice-Leading & Harmonising Guidelines

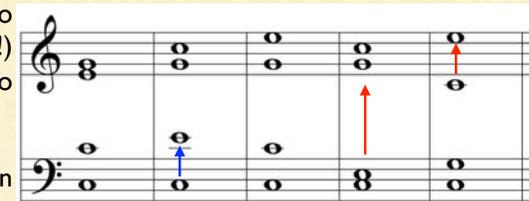
SATB: Basic Guidelines

1. Make sure that each voice part is written in a **normal range**:



2. **Avoid wide gaps** (no more than an octave!) between tenor and alto and alto and soprano.

Wide gaps between **bass and tenor** is permissible!



Good Good OK Bad Bad

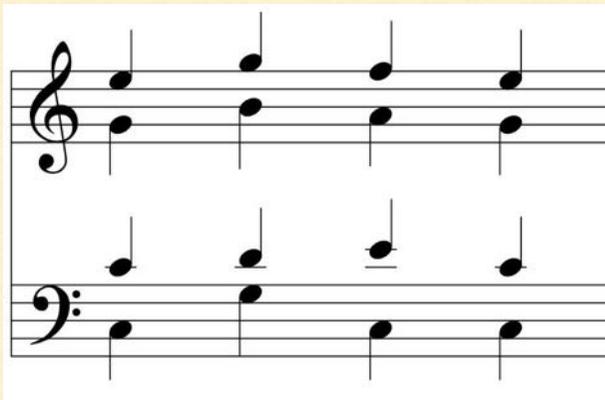
3. Stems in Soprano, Alto, Tenor Bass format (SATB), the **soprano** and **tenor** voices go **upwards**. The stems of the **alto** and **bass** voices go **downwards**. This makes the voice leading easy to read.

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass



SATB: Voice-Leading Guidelines

1. Melodic Motion between voices can be:

Contrary Motion: excellent!

Two voices moving in opposite directions



Similar Motion: Ok but try to avoid!

Two voices moving in the same direction but intervals vary



Parallel Motion: Ok if 3rd or 6th!

Two voices moving in the same direction at the same interval

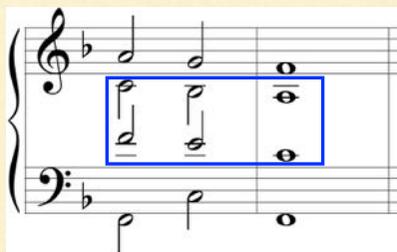


Oblique Motion: good!

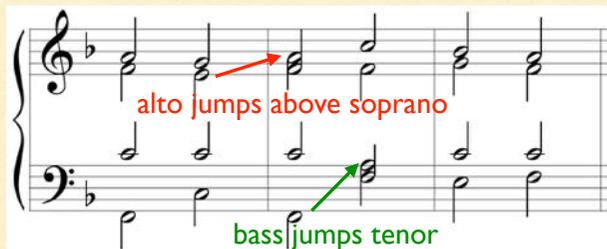
One voice remains motionless while the other moves



7. Don't overlap or cross voice parts!



tenor consistently above alto



alto jumps above soprano

bass jumps tenor

SATB: Harmony Guidelines

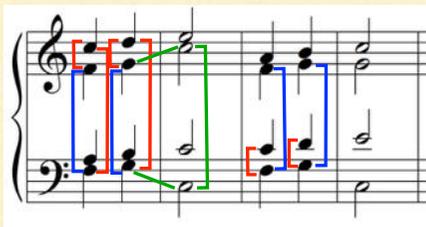
1. Be careful when you decide **which notes to double** in a chord

	Root Position	1st Inversion	2nd Inversion
Primary Chords (I, i, IV, iv, V)	Root of the Chord	Root or a Tonal Degree	5th of the chord
Secondary Chords (ii, ii°, iii, III, vi, VI, vii°)	3rd of the Chord	3rd or a Tonal Degree	<i>not applicable!</i>

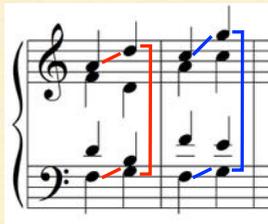
No matter what chord it is part of, the **leading note** (7th degree of the scale) should NEVER be doubled in SATB writing!

Tonal degrees are simply the **1st, 4th and 5th degrees** of the scale. They are vital in helping to establish tonality, therefore they make good notes for doubling.

2. **Avoid all consecutive perfect 5ths and 8ves!!** Check between bass-tenor, bass-alto, bass-soprano, tenor-alto, tenor-soprano and alto-soprano).



Consecutive perfect **5ths** and **8ves** are sometimes called parallel perfect **5ths** and **8ves**. Be careful of consecutive perfect **5ths** and **8ves** in **opposite directions!**



Hidden perfect **5ths** and **8ves** occur when the outer voices move in the same direction on to a perfect **5th** or **8ve** with the top part **not moving by step!** They are sometimes called exposed **5ths** and **8ves!**

3. A great way to avoid consecutive and hidden 5ths and 8ves is make the **outer voices** move in **contrary motion**.

4. There are a few exceptions to the consecutive 5ths and 8ves rule:

- In vocal music, at perfect cadences, the 5th of a V7 can move down a step to anticipate the tonic in the next chord, while the root of the V can move down to the 7th – resulting in consecutive perfect 5ths

'Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen' from Bach's *St Matthew Passion*



V7 I

- For keyboard music that is clearly not contrapuntal, the normal voice-leading conventions do not apply. By the Classical period, consecutive perfect 8^{ves} in contrary motion were common at perfect cadences

End (Allegro) Mozart, Piano Sonata, K.331 (1st mvt)

- For keyboard music consecutive 5^{ths} in the right-hand part are not allowed, though acceptable in the left-hand accompaniment figures

0:48 Mozart, Sonata in C major K545 (2nd mvt)

etc

acceptable

- For keyboard music consecutive 5^{ths} and 8^{ves} between upper and lower parts are acceptable in a passage that is melodic and in unison.

Allegro molto Start Mozart, Sonata in C minor K457 (1st mvt)

poor

- Do not repeat a chord from a **weak beat** to a **strong beat**:

poor

good, especially in another position