



2 Counterpoint: Second Species (S2)

- III. A. 4. In species two, more care must be exercised with leaps than in species one, in terms of their size, their direction, and their continuation following a leap.
- a. Single leaps larger than a 4th: just as in species one, an upward or downward leap—and especially a large leap of a 5th, octave, or the occasional upward minor 6th—is generally best approached and left by step (i.e., conjunctly) in the opposite direction of the leap (i.e., in contrary motion). (example S2–3a)
    - (1) Although this tendency of filling in the leap by step is especially pertinent to motion following an upward leap, a downward leap, on the other hand, may be compensated by a successive contrary leap with a subsequent reversal of the line (S2–3b).
    - (2) Under no circumstances should a single leap of any size in any direction be both preceded as well as followed by conjunct motion in the same direction of the leap (S2–3c).

Example S2–3

The image shows three musical staves in treble clef, labeled a, b, and c. Staff a shows a sequence of notes with arrows indicating stepwise motion in contrary directions to a leap. Staff b shows a similar sequence but with a downward leap followed by an upward leap, with arrows indicating stepwise motion in the same direction as the leap. Staff c shows a sequence of notes with arrows indicating stepwise motion in the same direction as a leap, with 'X' marks over the notes immediately preceding and following the leap, indicating this is an incorrect approach.

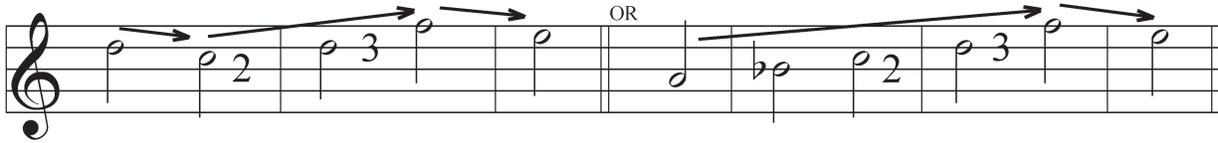
- b. Single leaps smaller than a 5th: the “larger-smaller ascending rule” (LSAR) and the “smaller-larger descending rule” (SLDR).
  - (1) Leaps of a 3rd upwards or downwards or that of a 4th downwards may be approached or left by conjunct motion in the same direction given the following context of interval succession and according to the principles of the LSAR and SLDR:
    - (a) LSAR: An *upward* leap of a 3rd may be used if smaller intervals follow larger intervals. The leap must be preceded by contrary conjunct or disjunct motion—but may be *followed* by conjunct motion in the same direction as the leap (example S2–4a). The leap of the 3rd must not be *preceded* by stepwise motion in the same direction (S2–4b).

Example S2–4: upward leap of a 3rd (LSAR)

The image shows two musical staves in treble clef, labeled a and b. Staff a shows a sequence of notes with intervals of 3 and 2, followed by an upward leap of a 3rd, with arrows indicating stepwise motion in the same direction as the leap. Staff b shows a sequence of notes with intervals of 2 and 3, followed by an upward leap of a 3rd, with an 'X' mark over the note immediately preceding the leap and the text 'BUT NOT' below it, indicating this is an incorrect approach.

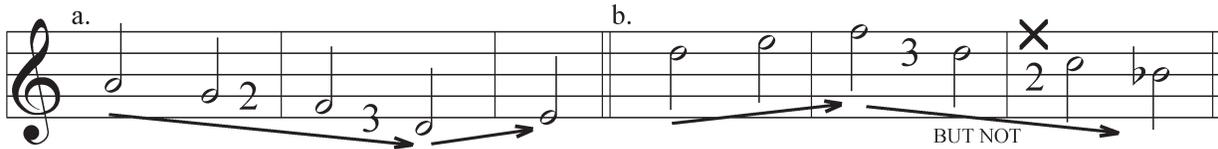
- III. A. 4. b. (1) (b) Exception to the LSAR: the line immediately reverses direction conjunctly following the upward leap of a 3rd (example S2-5).

Example S2-5: exception to the LSAR



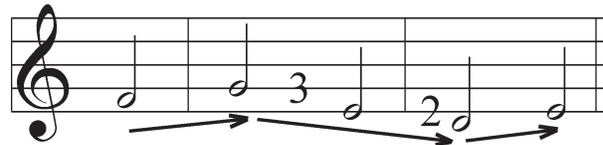
- (c) SLDR: A *downward* leap of a 3rd may be used if larger intervals follow smaller intervals. The leap may be preceded by conjunct motion in the same direction as the leap—but must be followed by contrary conjunct or disjunct motion (example S2-6a). The leap of the 3rd must not be *followed* by stepwise motion in the same direction (S2-6b).

Example S2-6: downward leap of a 3rd (SLDR)



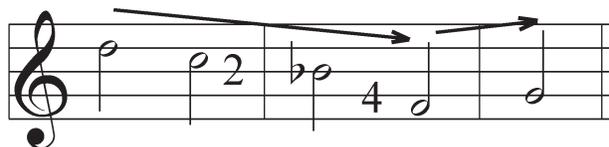
- (d) Exception to the SLDR: the leap of a 3rd is approached conjunctly by contrary motion (example S2-7).

Example S2-7: exception to the SLDR



- (e) SLDR: A downward leap of a 4th may be used if larger intervals follow smaller intervals. Further, the leap may be preceded by conjunct motion in the same direction as the leap—but must be followed by contrary conjunct or disjunct motion (example S2-8).

Example S2-8: downward leap of a 4th (SLDR)



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- III. A. 4. c. Successive leaps in the same direction and subdividing a large interval
- (1) Two successive leaps in the same direction before the line reverses direction may now be used in species two if all of the following conditions are met (S2-9):
- (a) The interval spanning the two leaps must be a 6th, 7th, or octave.
  - (b) The interval must be subdivided by two leaps between successive strong beats.
  - (c) The tone between the two leaps must be consonant with the cantus firmus (see the circled pitch in the examples).
  - (d) The two leaps must effect a gradual change of register.

Example S2-9: dividing a large interval with two successive leaps in the same direction

- (e) The two successive leaps must be approached and left by contrary conjunct motion, applying the principles of LSAR and SLDR (see above, pp. 2-3).
  - i) For two upward leaps in succession, the larger interval should precede the smaller interval, followed by a reversal in the direction of the line (example S2-10a). Under no circumstances should the smaller interval precede the larger interval (S2-10b).

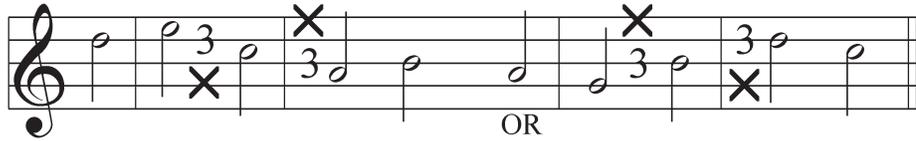
Example S2-10: applying the principles of LSAR and SLDR to two successive leaps ascending

- ii) For downward leaps in succession, the smaller interval should precede the larger interval, followed by a reversal in the direction of the line (example S2-11a). Under no circumstances should the larger interval precede the smaller interval (S2-11b).

Example S2-11: applying the principles of LSAR and SLDR to two successive leaps descending

III. A. 4. c. (1) (f) Outlining triads in “root position” should be avoided (example S2–12)

Example S2–12: avoid using two successive 3rds in the same direction

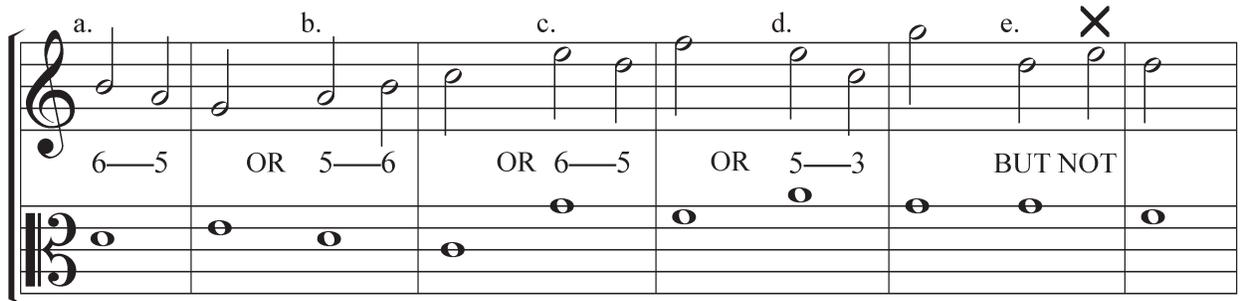


Note: although you may find melodies in the style of Palestrina that have two successive 3rds in the same direction, we cannot recommend this practice to the student of species counterpoint. Such writing usually results in melodies that largely consist of linear triads, seventh chords, and ninth chords—all of which are antithetical to the style.

IV. General Features of Vertical Intervals Between the Cantus Firmus and the Species Two Line

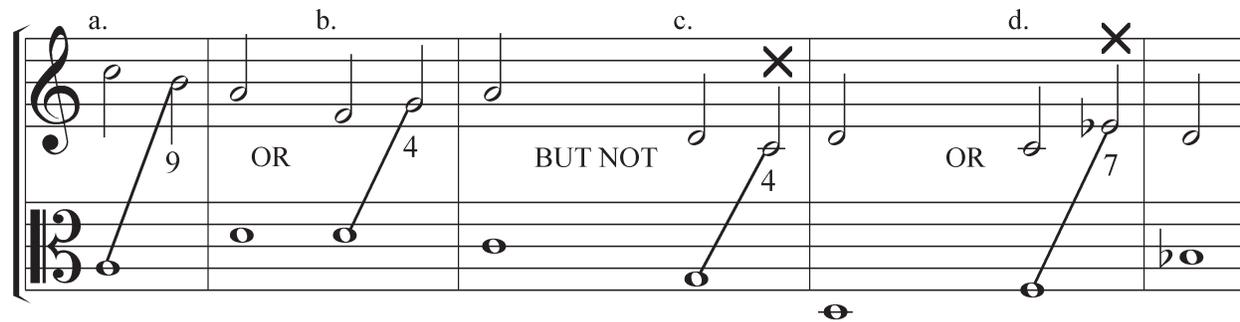
- A. The strong beat (half note 1) must always be consonant, as in species one.
- B. The weak beat (half note 2) may be a consonance of any kind against the cantus firmus; however, avoid the weak beat as a consonant complete upper neighbor (example S2–13e), as this usage was considered melodically unproductive. Examples S2–13a, 13b, 13c, and 13d are all acceptable in species two.

Example S2–13



- C. The weak beat may be a dissonant passing tone moving downwards or upwards within the melodic span of a consonant third (examples S2–14a and 14b). However, no dissonant upper or lower neighbors or leaps into dissonance may be used on the weak beat (examples S2–14c and 14d).

Example S2–14



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- IV. C. 1. The dissonant passing tone on the weak beat may form a tritone (examples S2–15a and 15b), as long as it does not form a cross-relation tritone with the adjacent strong beat of the cantus firmus (examples S2–15c, 15d, and 15e).

Example S2–15

Example S2–15 illustrates five scenarios (a-e) for tritone formation between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note. Each example shows a two-staff system with a treble and bass clef. Example a shows a tritone between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note. Example b shows a tritone between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note, with the text "OR" above. Example c shows a tritone between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note, with the text "BUT NOT" above. Example d shows a tritone between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note, with an "X" above. Example e shows a tritone between a passing tone and a cantus firmus note, with the text "OR" above.

2. A consonant or dissonant upward or downward passing tone on the weak beat may be replaced by an interval of a perfect 4th (examples S2–16a and 16b) as long as the 4th
- is in the same direction as the passing tone, and
  - is consonant with the cantus firmus.

Example S2–16

Example S2–16 illustrates two scenarios (a-b) for replacing a passing tone with a perfect 4th interval. Each example shows a two-staff system with a treble and bass clef. Example a shows a consonant passing tone (6 5 3) being replaced by a perfect 4th (6 3) in the same direction. Example b shows a dissonant passing tone (8 7 3) being replaced by a perfect 4th (8 5) in the same direction. The text "consonant passing tone" and "4th" are written below the first staff, and "dissonant passing tone" and "4th" are written below the second staff.

- c. We may also use the 4th to correct incorrect motion, such as parallel perfect 5ths.

Example S2–17

Example S2–17 illustrates two scenarios (a-b) for correcting parallel perfect 5ths with a perfect 4th interval. Each example shows a two-staff system with a treble and bass clef. Example a shows a parallel perfect 5th (6 5 5) being replaced by a perfect 4th (6 3) in the same direction. Example b shows a parallel perfect 5th (6 5 5) being replaced by a perfect 4th (6 3) in the same direction. The text "consonant passing tone" and "4th" are written below the first staff, and "consonant passing tone" and "4th" are written below the second staff.

## V. Features of Vertical Motion Between the Cantus Firmus and the Species Two Line

A. In general, the species two counterpoint minus its weak beat should form a perfect species one line against the cantus firmus; however, certain exceptional usages in regard to motion between *perfect intervals* are occasionally possible.

1. In species two, internal unisons may be used—but only on the weak beat. Such unisons should be approached disjunctly and left by conjunct contrary motion (example S2–18).

Example S2–18

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is in 2/4 time. The first measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The second measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The third measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The fourth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The fifth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The sixth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The seventh measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The eighth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The word "OR" is written between the staves in the fourth and sixth measures. Arrows indicate the motion between notes: disjunct approach to the unison on the weak beat and conjunct contrary motion on the following strong beat.

2. In species two, never form parallel, consecutive (i.e., anti-parallel), or direct perfect octaves and perfect 5ths from adjacent weak to strong beats (example S2–19).

Example S2–19

The image shows two staves of music with six measures. Above each measure, the interval type is labeled: "parallel 5ths", "parallel 8ves", "consecutive 8ve", "direct 8ve", "direct 5th", and "direct 5th". Below each measure, the interval is labeled with a number: "5 5", "8 8", "1 8", "8", "5", and "5". "X" marks are placed over the intervals in the first, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth measures, indicating they are forbidden. "OR" is written between the staves in the second and fourth measures. The word "BUT NOT" is written between the staves in the fourth measure. The word "sequence" is written below the staves in the fourth and sixth measures.

3. Parallel perfect 5ths and perfect octaves may occur on successive weak beats—as long as they do not form sequential patterns (S2–20).

Example S2–20

The image shows two staves of music with seven measures. The first measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The second measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The third measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The fourth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The fifth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The sixth measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The seventh measure shows a half note in the treble and a half note in the bass. The word "OR" is written between the staves in the second and fourth measures. The word "BUT NOT" is written between the staves in the fourth measure. The word "sequence" is written below the staves in the fourth and sixth measures.

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- V. A. 4. Parallel perfect 5th and perfect octaves may also appear on successive strong beats but only given the following conditions:
- when there is contrary conjunct motion in both voices into the perfect 5th or perfect octave (examples S2–21a, 21c, and 21e); or,
  - when there is contrary conjunct motion at least in the upper species two voice into the perfect 5th or perfect octave (examples S2–21b and 21d\*); *and*,
  - when the species two line continues in conjunct motion against the cantus firmus (examples S2–21a, 21b, 21c, 21d, and 21e).
  - Avoid contrary disjunct motion in the species two line after the second perfect 5th or octave is reached (examples S2–21f, 21g, and 21h).

Example S2–21

The image displays musical notation for Example S2-21, illustrating various voice leading scenarios for parallel perfect 5ths and octaves. It is divided into two systems of staves.

**System 1 (Examples a-d):**

- Example a:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 5, 5, etc. Lower voice: 5, 5, etc. Arrows indicate contrary conjunct motion in both voices.
- Example b:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 5, 5, etc. Lower voice: 5, 5, etc. Arrows indicate contrary conjunct motion in the upper species two voice.
- Example c:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 8, 8, etc. Lower voice: 8, 8, etc. Arrows indicate contrary conjunct motion in both voices.
- Example d:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 8, 8, etc. Lower voice: 8, 8, etc. Arrows indicate contrary conjunct motion in the upper species two voice.

**System 2 (Examples e-h):**

- Example e:** Bass clef. Upper voice: 8, 8, etc. Lower voice: 8, 8, etc. Arrows indicate contrary conjunct motion in both voices.
- Example f:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 5, 5, 5, 5. Lower voice: 5, 5, 5, 5. The 5th and 5th notes in the upper voice are marked with an 'X', indicating they are disjunct.
- Example g:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 5, 5, 5, 5. Lower voice: 5, 5, 5, 5. The 5th and 5th notes in the upper voice are marked with an 'X', indicating they are disjunct.
- Example h:** Treble clef. Upper voice: 8, 8, 8, 8. Lower voice: 8, 8, 8, 8. The 8th and 8th notes in the upper voice are marked with an 'X', indicating they are disjunct.

\* be careful to avoid shadowing the cantus firmus in the counterpoint, as in S2–21d above!

- V. A. 5. The *ottava battuta* (beaten octave): in an upper species two line, from a weak to a strong beat, do not emphasize a perfect octave by leaping in the same direction as the preceding conjunct tones (example S2–22a). The cantus firmus, however, may leap, as long as the species two line moves conjunctly into the octave (examples S2–22b and 22c).

Example S2–22

## VI. Starting and Ending the Counterpoint

- A. Starting the counterpoint above or below the cantus firmus: same as in species one except that, in order to create more independence of the two lines, the counterpoint may also begin on an upbeat, that is to say, the first weak beat may be preceded by a half rest (example S2–23b). The upbeat of the counterpoint must be either a perfect unison or a perfect octave. Additionally, the upbeat can be a perfect 5th if the counterpoint is above the cantus firmus.

Example S2–23

- B. Ending the counterpoint: the final note value of the species two counterpoint must be a  $\parallel\bullet\parallel$ , corresponding to the cantus firmus's, exactly as in species one. However, the next-to-the-last note value of the cantus firmus, which is always a  $\bullet$ , may be set rhythmically in the counterpoint either with the continuing half-note motion of species two (example S2–24a), or occasionally, with the whole note of species one (example S2–24b).
- C. Occasional internal unisons may be employed (as stated in V. A. 1. above).
- D. All other technical features of species one apply.

Example S2–24

### Analysis of Species Two Example

#### I. C Ionian (example S2–25)

- A. In general, the upper counterpoint is a little too disjunct. The counterpoint should be more conjunct and when leaps are used, they should be employed thoughtfully and carefully.
1. The vertical intervals formed between the cantus firmus and the upper counterpoint are all acceptable.
  2. Notice the dissonant passing tone (F) on the second half note of measure 4.
  3. Unfortunately, in measures 2–3, we still have a tritone between successive strong beats (B in the counterpoint and F in the cantus firmus).
  4. In measures 4–5, there is a voice exchange from G to E in the cantus firmus and from E to G in the upper counterpoint. The voice exchange implies either an E-minor triad or the two upper components of a C-major triad. Avoid using voice exchange in 16th-century species counterpoint.
  5. Avoid breaking up the interval of a 5th with two successive 3rds in the same direction; in other words, do not unfold a “root position” triad (see above, p. 5, example S2–12).
  6. In the upper counterpoint of measure 8, the tone C appears to be subdividing a descending 6th between E and G. However, this usage is an incorrect subdivision of the interval because the E occurs on a weak beat, the C on a strong beat, and the G on a weak beat.
    - a. As stated above (p. 4), “the interval must be subdivided by two leaps between successive strong beats.” (see example S2–9)
  7. Although more of an aesthetic issue, notice that the appearance of the tonic on the second half note of measure 10 (third note from the end) gives away, or spoils, the cadence point in the final measure.
  8. The line above the cantus firmus has both a high point (measure 5) and low point (measure 9).
- B. The lower counterpoint has several problems.
1. In measure 2, there is a dissonant upper neighbor on the second half note (B), producing a 4th (11th) with the cantus firmus.
  2. For much of the example, the counterpoint shadows the cantus firmus.
  3. In measure 3, there is a dissonant lower neighbor on the second half note (C), producing a 4th (11th) with the cantus firmus. There is a striking octave leap upwards away from the dissonance.
  4. In measures 4–5, there is a direct 5th between C/G and A/E.
    - a. Notice that the second 5th is approached with similar motion, rather than with contrary conjunct motion in the lower species two voice.
    - b. Similar motion (i.e., direct motion) into a perfect unison or octave can only occur at the cadence.
  5. In measures 6–7, there are parallel octaves (A/A to G/G) from adjacent weak to strong beats.
  6. Sequences such as the following should be avoided:
    - a. Measures 6–7 present F to A, G to B.
    - b. Measures 9–11 present D to E, B to C, A to B.
  7. The sequential activity in measures 9–11 underscores the shadowing of the downwards-moving cantus firmus.
  8. In measure 9, there is a dissonant upper neighbor on the second half note (E), producing a 9th with the cantus firmus.

9. The line leading to the dissonant upper neighbor in measure 9 is poor: a descending leap of a 4th is preceded by stepwise motion in the same direction of the leap.
10. In measures 10 and 11, an 11th occurs on the first half note.
11. Finally, there is no single low point for the line below the cantus firmus; a high point occurs in measure 4, however, it is part of a faulty leap away from a dissonance.

Example S2-25

The musical score for Example S2-25 is presented in three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 2/2 time signature, containing a counterpoint line. The middle staff is in bass clef with a 2/2 time signature, containing the cantus firmus (CF) line, which consists of whole notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a 2/2 time signature, containing another counterpoint line. The key signature is C major, labeled as 'C Ionian'. The score consists of 11 measures. In measure 9, the top counterpoint line has a descending leap of a fourth (G4 to D4) preceded by stepwise motion (A4, G4, F4, E4, D4). In measures 10 and 11, the middle CF line has an 11th interval (G4 and F3) on the first half note. In measure 4, the bottom counterpoint line has a high point (G3) that is part of a faulty leap away from a dissonance (F3).