

## FOUR PART-WRITING (SATB STYLE)

- **USE PROPER NOTATION.**

Notate the soprano on the treble clef staff with stems up, the alto on the treble clef staff with stems down, the tenor on the bass clef staff with stems up, and the bass on the bass clef staff with stems down.



Chords may be in **open or close spacing**. Chords are in open spacing when you can put another chord tone in between the soprano (S) and alto(A) and/or between the A and tenor (T) voices. Chords are in close spacing when no chord tone can be placed between the SA or AT voices.



Close

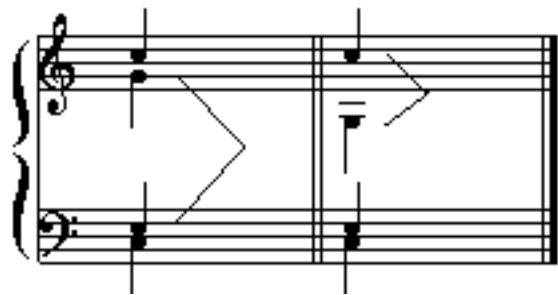
Open

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

Keep the voices in their proper ranges.

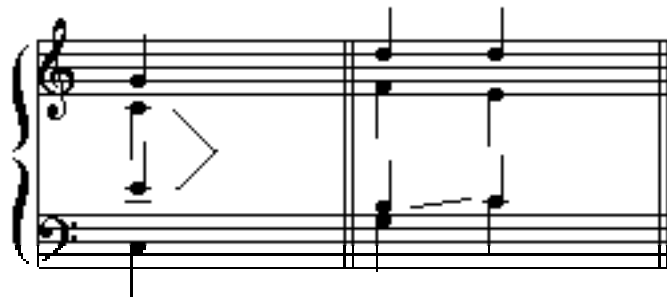


The maximum distance between SA and AT is a P8; between TB, the maximum distance is 2 P8s.



Gap between AT      Gap between SA

Do not cross voices (in the same chord). Do not overlap voices (between two adjacent chords).



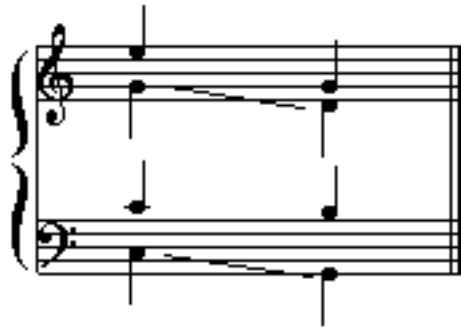
Crossed voices      Overlap of voices

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



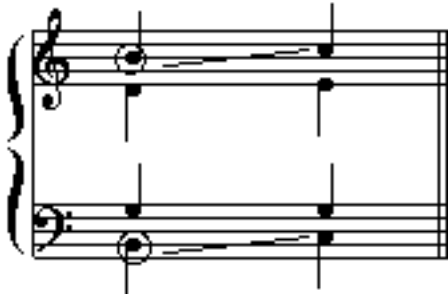
- \* Contrary motion -- voices move in opposite directions.
- \* Oblique motion -- one voice remains on the same note while the other voice moves.
- \* Similar motion -- voices move in the same direction by different intervals.
- \* Parallel motion -- voices move in the same direction by the same interval.

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



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

Never double the leading tone.



In **root position triads**, double the root

F: I vi IV V I

EXCEPT:

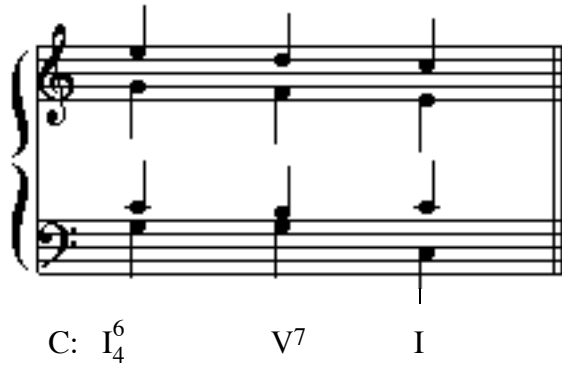
In diminished triads, double the 3rd (not a note of the tritone).  
 In V-VI in minor keys, double the 3rd of the VI chord.

c: i ii<sup>o</sup> i<sup>6</sup> c: V<sup>-7</sup> VI

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

C: I viio6 I6

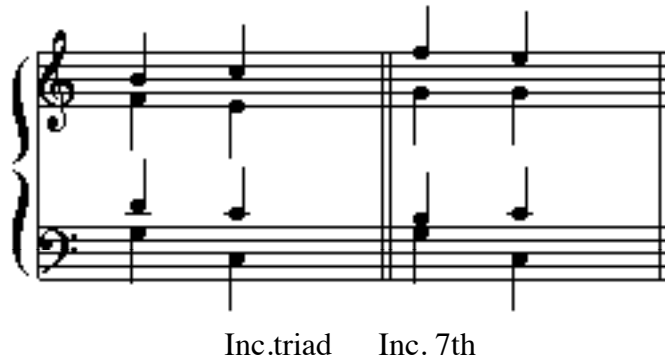
In **second inversion triads**, always double the bass.



The image shows a piano score with two staves (treble and bass clef) illustrating three chords in C major. The first chord is C6 (second inversion triad), the second is F7 (dominant seventh), and the third is C (root position triad). The bass line for the C6 chord is a double bass (two G4 notes), and for the F7 chord, it is a double bass (two C4 notes). The treble line for all chords consists of three notes: C4, E4, and G4.

C:  $I_4^6$        $V^7$       I

In **Incomplete triads**, triple the root, include the third, and omit the fifth.  
In **Incomplete seventh chords**, double the root, include the third and the seventh.



The image shows a piano score with two staves illustrating two incomplete chords in C major. The first is an incomplete triad (Inc. triad), and the second is an incomplete seventh chord (Inc. 7th). The bass line for the Inc. triad is a triple bass (three C4 notes), and for the Inc. 7th, it is a double bass (two C4 notes). The treble line for both chords consists of three notes: C4, E4, and G4.

Inc. triad      Inc. 7th

- **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 8ves                      hidden 5ths

Don't use augmented or diminished intervals melodically.

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

Resolve **sevenths** of chords down by step. Resolve the 7th of a  $V^7$  down by step.  
(See any example with a  $V^7$ )

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



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.