

First Species

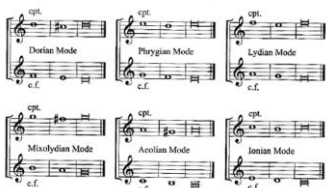
Starting and ending first species

- In the *first species*, one note in the counterpoint is written against each note in the cantus firmus
 - It can be written either above or below the cantus firmus
 - Every interval in first species is a consonant interval
- The exercise starts and ends with perfect intervals
 - Starting a P8 or P1 above or below is common
 - It can also start a P5 above (not below)
 - Exercises always end on a P8 or P1



Cadence formulas

- First species exercises always end with a specific *cadence formula* (a stereotypical pattern)
 - One of the voices (generally the cantus firmus) ends with the pattern 3-2-1
 - The other voice ends with the pattern 1-7-1



Musica ficta

- In the Dorian, Mixolydian, and Aeolian modes, the leading tone is raised in the 1-7-1 cadence pattern



- This accidental at the cadence is an instance of *musica ficta* (imagined music), because it was traditionally added by the performer rather than being written into the music
- ALL of the cadence formulas end with a major 6th moving to a perfect 8^{ve} (or a minor 3rd going to a perfect unison, if the cantus firmus is on top)

Consonant intervals

- The first species allows only *consonant* intervals between the two voices
- The following intervals are considered consonant:
 - The *perfect* consonances: P1, P5, P8 (but NOT the P4!)
 - The *imperfect* consonances: M3, m3, M6, m6
- All other intervals are considered dissonant:
 - M2, m2, P4, M7, m7
 - All augmented and diminished intervals
- Therefore, the only allowable intervals in the first species are: P1, P5, P8, M3, m3, M6, m6 (M10, m10)
 - The P1 is only allowed at the beginning or the end
 - The two voices cannot be more than a tenth apart

Motion types

- There are five different types of motion between the two voices:



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|--------------------|--|
| A. static | - Neither part moves (not common) |
| B. oblique | - Only one part moves |
| C. contrary | - Both parts move in opposite directions |
| D. similar | - Both parts move in the same direction by different intervals |
| E. parallel | - Both parts move in the same direction by the same interval |

Fux's four basic principles

- Fux stated four basic principles for voice leading in first species counterpoint
 - 1. From **perfect to perfect** consonances, use contrary or oblique motion
 - 2. From **perfect to imperfect** consonances, use similar, contrary, or oblique motion
 - 3. From **imperfect to perfect**, use contrary or oblique motion
 - 4. From **imperfect to imperfect**, use contrary, parallel, similar, or oblique motion

Summary of Fux's principles

- Here is a simpler summary of Fux's principles
 - 1. Contrary motion always works
 - 2. Oblique motion always works (but don't overuse it)
 - 3. Similar motion only works when moving to a 3rd or a 6th (an imperfect consonance)
 - 4. Parallel motion is only allowed with 3rds and 6ths
- Note that any other parallel intervals are forbidden (no parallel fifths, octaves, or unisons)
- Also, you should avoid too many parallel thirds and sixths in a row—a good rule of thumb is to allow no more than three successive 3rds or 6ths

Some basic melodic principles

- Here are some basic principles about writing effective contrapuntal melodies:
 - Melodies should have an interesting contour
 - Melodies should have a clear climax tone
 - Melodies should mostly move by step
 - A few well-placed leaps are effective
 - Large leaps should be balanced by a step in the opposite direction (Ex: leap up then step down)
 - Successive leaps in the same direction are rare, but when they occur, they should outline a triad
 - Melodies should not leap by a dissonant interval
 - Melodies should never emphasize the tritone