

Parallel Motion

Motion types

- Review the following types of motion:



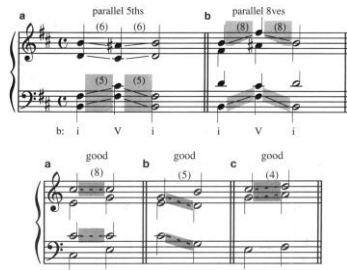
static oblique contrary similar parallel

- A. contrary** - Both parts move in opposite directions
- B. oblique** - Only one part moves
- C. parallel** - Both parts move in the same direction by the same interval
- D. similar** - Both parts move in the same direction by different intervals
- E. static** - Neither part moves

Parallel motion

- One of the basic goals of voice leading is to maintain **independence** between voices (especially the outer voices), so we avoid certain types of parallel motion that prevent independence
- Parallel octaves** between any two voices that are meant to be independent are unacceptable
- Parallel fifths** between any two voices are also unacceptable

Parallel fifths and octaves

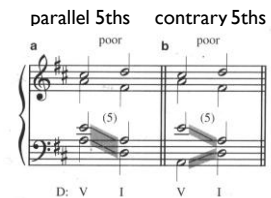


Other parallel intervals

- Parallel unisons** are basically the same as parallel octaves—not permissible
- Parallel thirds and sixths** are good, and extremely common
- Parallel dissonant intervals** like parallel seconds, sevenths, or tritones are obviously avoided
- Parallel fourths** are only found in certain contexts

Contrary fifths and octaves

- Consecutive perfect fifths and octaves by contrary motion are also avoided (for similar reasons)



Unequal fifths

- **Unequal fifths** are generally okay—but it is best to avoid going from a diminished fifth to a perfect fifth between the bass and another voice

Three musical examples labeled a, b, and c, showing voice leading between two voices (soprano and bass) with a fifth interval. Example a shows a transition from a perfect fifth (P5) to a diminished fifth (°5) to a perfect fifth (P5), labeled "good". Example b shows a transition from a perfect fifth (P5) to a diminished fifth (°5) to a perfect fifth (P5), labeled "good". Example c shows a transition from a diminished fifth (°5) to a perfect fifth (P5), labeled "avoid".

Direct fifths and octaves

- **Direct fifths and octaves** should be avoided
- A direct (or hidden) fifth / octave occurs when the *outer parts* move in the same direction into a P5 or P8, with a *leap in the soprano*

Four musical examples labeled a, b, c, and d, showing voice leading between two voices (soprano and bass) with a fifth or octave interval. Example a shows a direct fifth (direct 5th) where the outer parts move in the same direction, labeled "direct 5th". Example b shows a direct octave (direct 8ve) where the outer parts move in the same direction, labeled "direct 8ve". Example c shows a good transition where the outer parts move in opposite directions, labeled "good". Example d shows a good transition where the outer parts move in opposite directions, labeled "good".