

The Double SLAP

Voice-leading rules in Bach Chorales

Double (Dbl: [comment]) Root pos. – double root || 1st inv. – double third or root (except Vb – double root) || 2nd inv. (Ic) – double fifth || chord viib – double third OR fifth)

S Spacing (Sp.)

- Top three parts should be as high as possible (within their ranges – see footer)
[In each phrase the tenor should not be more than a 12th lower than the soprano and must at some point be less than an octave]
- Make sure the parts don't cross

L Leaps

- Avoid excessive leaps in bass
- Avoid unnecessary leaps in alto and tenor
- Avoid two leaps in the same direction
- Avoid leaping **both** to **and** from a 1st inversion in the bass

A Accidentals (Acc.)

- Raise the seventh in minor keys
- Don't forget accidentals needed for changes of key

P Parallels (5^{ths} / 8^{ves})

- Avoid consecutive parallel octaves and fifths
- Avoid hidden fifths and octaves (leaping to these intervals in the soprano when the bass is moving the same direction)
- Edexcel considers that 'a diminished fifth to perfect fifth, or vice versa, is acceptable unless the bass is involved'. Bach often hides this type of fifth with a suspension.

Suspensions (Susp. prep. / res.?)

Make sure suspensions are prepared and resolved. Common suspensions are the 7th in II7b and the 4 in V4-3. Dissonances in Bach are generally either unaccented (e.g. a passing note) or treated as a suspension.

Leading notes (LNR)

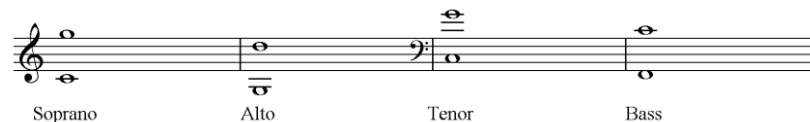
- Don't lead from the seventh of the scale to the third (particularly common at perfect cadences)
- Don't ever double the leading note (e.g. the third in **Vb** and the root in **viib**)

Augmented and diminished intervals (Aug. / Dim.)

Avoid all, but the most common are tritones (between notes 4 & 7 of the scale) and augmented seconds (notes 6 & 7 of the minor scale).

Passing sevenths (Pass. 7th?)

- Add a passing seventh (of V) at perfect cadences where possible
- Make sure it is the seventh above the root of V (not the 9th)
- Where the melody goes from 7-8, passing sevenths should be avoided.



The boxes and dotted lines explain how Double SLAP errors are notated on your work. The system of abbreviations and annotations make such wordy feedback unnecessary once you have got used to what they mean..

A 'hidden' parallel octave
is where the soprano leaps
to an octave with the bass
(here to the D)

Leap of 6th
from A to F
in alto is
excessive

Suspension:
D in tenor is
not
prepared in
previous
beat

Accidental:
C# should
be raised in
D minor

Augmented interval:
augmented 2nd
from C# to Bb
in bass.

Parallel octaves
between
tenor and
bass (Bb to
A)

Doubling:
there are
two thirds
(the circled
F#s) in this
D major
chord

Leading note (C#)
leaps to the
third of the
scale (F) in
tenor

Passing 7th of V
(G to F) is
absent – it
should fit
when melody
is 2-1.

Hidden 8ve

Leap

Susp.

Acc. #

LNR

Pass 7th?

Aug. 2nd

8ves

Dbl: 2 x 3rd

prep.?

d: Vb i IVb V I V⁴ 3 I

Harmonic DOs and DON'Ts

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep most of the harmony simple by starting from stage one and only harmonic changes that are necessary in order to improve the bass line • Use characteristic progressions from Bach's own chorales as often as you can • Ib and VI are the best approach chords to Iib7 in the run up to a cadence • All other things being equal, it is a good idea to keep a root position I on the first strong beat of a chorale or its upbeat (in fact, this is not a bad rule of thumb for all phrases) • Root progressions using falling thirds (e.g. VI to IV and I to VI) are much better than those using rising thirds. • If you use the same chord twice in a row, make sure that one is in root position and one is in first inversion • Play through at least the soprano and bass lines together to check they sound right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't use second inversions other than IC in IC - V - I • Avoid progressions using II other than as an approach chord to V • Don't use II in root position in minor keys (it is a diminished chord) • Don't use iii other than as an approach to vi and avoid in minor keys altogether • Avoid progressions between IV and V unless the melody is going in the opposite direction to the root progression of the two chords • Only use VI in root position • Don't use vii other than as vii^b resolving either to I or Ib • Don't repeat the bass note (except from the upbeat to the first beat of the first phrase) • Don't use passing notes in inner voices (except for at cadences) unless you are sure you know what you are doing (rising sixths and falling sevenths work best)