

Second-Species Counterpoint Grading Guidelines

3-point mistakes:

- parallel and “antiparallel” (also known as “contrary” or “consecutive”) fifths, both on the note-to-note level and on successive strong beats (i.e., beats that are metrically stronger than the passing tone itself)
- parallel and “antiparallel” (also known as “contrary” or “consecutive”) octaves, both on the note-to-note level and on successive strong beats (i.e., beats that are metrically stronger than the passing tone itself)

2-point mistakes:

- direct fifth or octave (i.e., similar motion into P5 or P8) if the upper voice leaps
- use of any harmonic dissonance that is not a passing tone

1-point mistakes:

- illegal melodic leap (e.g., 7th, 9th, anything augmented or diminished except for $\hat{3}$ down to $\hat{1}$ in a minor key, etc.)
- consecutive leaps not involving $\hat{1}$, $\hat{3}$, and $\hat{5}$: two leaps = -1, three leaps = -2, etc.
- simultaneous leaps (with the exception of a voice exchange, or the exclusive use of $\hat{1}$, $\hat{3}$, and $\hat{5}$)
- upper voice leap into harmonic P8 or P5 (exception: oblique motion)
- voice crossing
- overlap
- unresolved leading tone
- poor use of $\hat{6}$ and/or $\hat{7}$ in a minor key
- ending on something other than $\hat{1}$ or $\hat{3}$ in the upper voice
- ending on something other than $\hat{1}$ in the lower voice
- inappropriate approach to final note
- immediately repeated note in the added voice (except with the penultimate *cantus firmus* note, but this is normally written as a long note rather than a shorter repeated note)
- more than two perfect consonances in a row: three = -1, four = -2, etc.
- inappropriate or missing accidental
- unbalanced leap
- range of more than a tenth
- ending in the wrong register (i.e., more than a fifth from the starting note)
- pretty much anything else that isn't a good idea

Possible global deductions (1 to 3 points, depending on severity):

- overuse of perfect intervals
- very boring melody
- insufficient passing tones