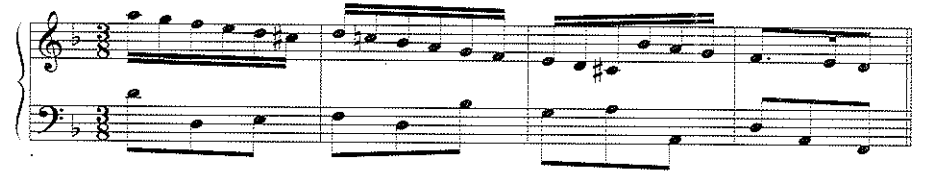


from Kent Kennan. *Counterpoint Based on Eighteenth-Century Practice*. Fourth Edition. Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999.

Example 6b FRESCOBALDI: *Canzoni alla Francese, Canzon Prima, detta La Rovetta*



Example 6c HANDEL: *Suite No. 10, Allegro*



TWO NOTES AGAINST ONE (2:1)

The exercises to be done next will involve putting two notes in the added voice against each note of the C.F. The excerpts in Example 6 illustrate the 2:1 relationship, each with a different basic unit (quarter note, half note, eighth note).

Example 6a BACH: *French Suite No. 2, Menuet*



Nonharmonic Tones²

The chief new feature that will be encountered in 2:1 exercises is the possibility of using nonharmonic tones and the unessential intervals they create. Consequently, a brief review of nonharmonic tones here may prove helpful. In Example 7, which gives short illustrations of the various types, the nonharmonic tones are circled. Unfortunately there is considerable divergence of opinion about the classification and labeling of such notes, and in some cases two or more names for a particular type are in common usage.

²Sometimes called "nonchord tones"—abbreviation "NCT." This term is preferred by those who use the word "harmony" to mean the harmonic progression in an entire composition and "chord" to mean the vertical harmonic structure at any given point—a valid distinction and one essential to Schenkerian thought. Nevertheless, "nonharmonic" has been retained here as being the term most widely used and understood.

Example 7 Nonharmonic Tones

PASSING TONES

Unaccented Accented Two in succession Double Chromatic

NEIGHBOR TONES (Auxiliaries)

CHANGING TONES (Cambiata)

Diatonic Chromatic

Upper Lower Upper Lower

Characteristic Cambiata

APPOGGIATURAS

ESCAPE TONES (Echappées)

Characteristic Unaccented

SUSPENSIONS

ANTICIPATIONS

4-3 2-3 7-8

PEDAL POINT

Abbreviations

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| P = Passing tone | App = Appoggiatura |
| N = Neighbor tone | E = Escape tone |
| Ch = Changing tones | S = Suspension |
| Ped = Pedal point | A = Anticipation |

A passing tone is a nonharmonic tone that moves by whole or half step from one harmonic tone to another (occasionally to another passing tone which then resolves).

A neighbor tone (or auxiliary) is a nonharmonic tone a whole step or a half step above or below a harmonic tone. It is approached from the harmonic tone and returns to it.

Changing tones, sometimes known (especially in the first form shown in Example 7) as the *cambiata* figure, are two neighbor tones used in succession. They may or may not be approached from the harmonic tone of which they are neighbors, but they always proceed to it. Some recent theory texts refer to them as a “neighbor group.”

An appoggiatura (“leaning tone”) is a nonharmonic tone approached by leap and resolved stepwise, most often in the direction opposite to the leap. In its characteristic form, it is accented; that is, it occurs either on a strong beat with the resolution following on the next beat, or on the first part of a beat with the resolution taking place on the second half of that beat. For this reason, some systems of theory employ other labels when the nonharmonic note in such a pattern is *unaccented*. Of these labels, the most logical seems to be “incomplete neighbor tone”—a neighbor tone approached by leap instead of from the harmonic tone of which it is a neighbor. The appoggiatura is sometimes written as a small “grace note,” as in Example 8c. In such cases it is played *on* the beat, and its value is subtracted from the note that follows. (The same type of notation is used for the accented passing tone at the beginning of measure 3 in Example 8c.)

An escape tone, or *échappée*, is a nonharmonic tone which, in its most usual form, is approached from a harmonic tone one scale step below, and which then leaps downward to a harmonic tone; the latter is not necessarily a member of the harmony just heard. (This is the pattern seen in Example 8d.) Very rarely, the escape tone is approached from a harmonic tone one scale step *above* and leaps upward to a harmonic tone. As can readily be observed, the escape tone reverses the leap-step relationship involved in the appoggiatura pattern. Like the appoggiatura, it might be thought of as a form of incomplete neighbor tone, but this time with the stepwise return to the original harmonic tone missing.

Example 8 illustrates the use in actual music of the nonharmonic tones defined so far.

Example 8a BACH: Sinfonia No. 12

Example 8b VIVALDI: Concerto in F Major for Violin, Strings, and Cembalo*

Largo

*The cembalo (harpichord) part is not included here. It consists of the same line taken by the cellos and double basses, plus figured-bass symbols.

Example 8c C.P.E. BACH: Kurze und leichte Klavierstücke, No. 15b, Minuetto II
Example 8d HAYDN: Sonata in C Major

The chief point to remember in using these nonharmonic tones is that they must be resolved stepwise—with the exception of the escape tone, of course. The latter nearly always appears in the pattern involved in Example 8*d*. A fault frequently encountered in student counterpoint is that of allowing a note which obviously has the function of a passing tone to leap rather than “pass” stepwise.

A suspension is a member of one harmony tied over or repeated as a nonharmonic tone in the next, and normally resolved downward into that harmony. Suspensions that resolve upward are sometimes called “retardations.”

An anticipation is a nonharmonic tone that occurs just in advance of the harmony to which it belongs. Its most frequent position is in cadences.

Both suspensions and anticipations will be taken up in some detail a little later on in connection with syncopated (fourth species) counterpoint.

A pedal point is a sustained or repeated note, usually on the tonic or dominant pitch, which lasts through two or more harmonies. (Its name stems from its characteristic use in the pedal part of organ music.) Although it is most often seen in the bottom voice, it may occur in any voice. It usually begins and ends as a harmonic note, but may, between these points, be dissonant to the harmony—that is, nonharmonic. In Example 9*a* the tonic pedal point appears in both the middle and the bottom voices; one has repeated eighth notes, the other, longer sustained tones. In Example 9*b* the tonic pedal point is part of an eighth-note figure.

Example 9a HAYDN: Sonata in E-flat Major

Presto

Example 9b BACH: French Suite No. 6, Bourrée

Placement of Harmonic and Nonharmonic Tones: Vertical Intervals

An example in the preceding chapter illustrated the use of harmonic and nonharmonic tones in various relationships. It is shown again here, slightly altered, for purposes of further analysis:

Example 10

Example 10 shows two staves of music. The top staff has notes with fingerings: 3 (2) 6 (5) 3 (4) 3 8. The bottom staff has notes with fingerings: (4) 3 (2) 3 8. Labels 'a', 'b', and 'c' are placed above the notes. Below the staves are Roman numerals: I, I⁶, IV^a, ii, V, I.

At points marked *a* (Example 10), there is a harmonic tone on the first half of the beat and a nonharmonic tone on the second half. With the lower voice, these create an essential interval followed by an unessential interval.

At *b* there are harmonic tones on both halves of the beat (two essential intervals).

At the two points marked *c* there is a nonharmonic tone on the first half of the beat with the harmonic tone following (an unessential interval followed by an essential interval).

These are the three chief arrangements of harmonic and nonharmonic tones (within the beat) usable in 2:1 counterpoint. The ones shown at *c* undoubtedly originated through rhythmic displacement of the tones in relationships such as those seen at *a* and *b*. In other words, a tone first employed in a light rhythmic position (off the beat) came to be used *on* the succeeding beat. This process is illustrated in Example 11, in connection with an unessential perfect 4th at *a*, an unessential major 7th at *b*.

Example 11

Example 11 shows two staves of music. The top staff is labeled 'a' and the bottom staff is labeled 'b'. Below the staves are labels 'Basic form' and 'Rhythmically altered form'.

A further possibility, though one seen less frequently, can be illustrated by changing the second measure of Example 10 slightly:

Example 12

Example 12 shows two staves of music. The top staff has notes with fingerings: (4)(d5) 3 3. The bottom staff has notes with fingerings: I I⁶ IV ii V I.

Here in Example 12, the nonharmonic C in the top voice on the first beat of the second measure is now a quarter note, and instead of resolving within the beat it delays its resolution until the second beat. Thus *both* vertical intervals within the first beat are unessential. The principle involved is this: when the harmonic rhythm encompasses two beats (whatever the meter signature), the style we are using accommodates an unessential interval on one of these beats with the essential interval on the other. In such cases the quarter note obviously assumes the role that the eighth note has in a quarter-note harmonic rhythm.

The intervals of a 2nd, a 7th, and a perfect 4th were avoided in 1:1 exercises because they are not usable as essential intervals there. It should now be apparent that in 2:1 counterpoint they become entirely acceptable for use as unessential intervals. In that role, they most often occur between beats; but even when placed on the beat with the essential interval following, they are heard as having only secondary importance—that is, merely as tones connecting the basic 1:1 counterpoint.

Very rarely, the major 2nd and the minor 7th may occur as essential intervals in 2:1, providing that the other members of the implied seventh chord precede or follow closely (Example 13).

Example 13

Example 13 shows two staves of music. The top staff has notes with fingerings: 2 7. The bottom staff has notes with fingerings: V I⁶ ii⁷ V.

Techniques of Writing 2:1

One way, though not necessarily the best way, of writing 2:1 counterpoint is to start with a 1:1 version and convert it by the addition of notes between the beats, in one voice. Example 14 shows how a 2:1 version might be derived from a 1:1 counterpoint we have used previously. Of course only the top and bottom voices in the example are intended to sound in the 2:1 version.

Example 14

Various devices for expanding 1:1 counterpoint to 2:1 can be seen in operation here. Probably the easiest and smoothest of these is simply the insertion of a passing tone between two notes originally a 3rd apart, as at *d* and *e*. Sometimes a 4th in the 1:1 version can be filled in with two adjacent passing tones, one of them accented, as at *c*. At the beginning and near the end, the original 1:1 counterpoint moves by step and obviously does not allow for the insertion of a passing tone (except a chromatic passing tone, which would not be particularly appropriate in this style). However, a leap to a chord tone can be made instead, as at *a*, *b*, and *f*. Care must be taken not to overuse this latter device. Too much outlining of chords to the exclusion of stepwise motion becomes tiresome and tends to make the voice sound less like a line than a succession of harmonic figurations.

A second, and frequently preferable, approach to the writing of 2:1 counterpoint is to invent the 2:1 version directly, without having it grow out of a 1:1 version, in which case one major possibility is added: we can have the same note on adjacent *beats* because other notes will intervene, and the notes on the beat will then not be repeated in succession. For example, according to the restrictions that apply in 1:1 counterpoint, we could not write the following because of the repetition at *a* and *b*:

Example 15

But in 2:1 counterpoint there would be no objection to the following:

Example 16

In this particular example (16), a lower neighbor tone carries on the eighth-note motion at *a* and *b*. But these notes between the beats might have been chord tones rather than nonharmonic tones if we had happened to choose another counterpoint.

Parallelism

In 1:1 counterpoint, parallel octaves and 5ths are generally apparent to both the ear and the eye. But in 2:1 the presence of intervening notes between the beats makes the situation more complex as far as the recognition of parallelism is concerned. There are even certain note patterns that are condemned by some writers on counterpoint on the grounds of parallelism but accepted by others. It would seem, then, that the only sensible criterion is what was actually practiced by composers of this period (Bach, in particular), and it is this standard on which the comments in Example 17 are based.

Example 17

The cases given here in Example 17 can be listed according to the following categories, which may be of some help in remembering which patterns are usable:

1. “open” (with intervening notes in one voice, as in *a* and *e*): bad
2. “symmetrical” or “corresponding”
 - a) with parallelism on strong beats, as in *b* and *f*: bad
 - b) with parallelism on weak beats, as in *c* and *g*: possible³
3. “asymmetrical” (parallel intervals not at corresponding places in the measure, as in *d* and *h*): good

It is obvious, then, that if there are parallel octaves or 5ths in a 1:1 version, the addition of intervening notes in a 2:1 version will not destroy the feeling of parallelism. Also, it is particularly necessary, in converting 1:1 to 2:1, to be on guard against parallel octaves that may be formed by the addition of notes (Example 18).

Example 18



One special case should be mentioned. The consecutive 5ths illustrated in the next example are not considered objectionable, since the second of the two is unessential. They may therefore be used freely.

Example 19 SCARLATTI: Sonata (Kirkpatrick No. 377)

[Allegrissimo]

Example 19 shows a musical exercise in two voices, labeled [Allegrissimo]. The first voice (treble clef) has four measures with notes G4, A4, B4, C5. The second voice (bass clef) has four measures with notes G3, A3, B3, C4. Above the first two measures, the ratio 1:1 is indicated. Above the last two measures, the ratio 2:1 is indicated. This illustrates how the addition of notes in a 2:1 version can create consecutive 5ths that were not present in the 1:1 version.

(Diatonic 2:1 exercises may be done at this point.)

³However, this arrangement is not desirable if dissonances occur on the strong beats, as in:

