

COUNTERPOINT

THIRD SPECIES, SUPPLEMENT

The cambiata figure (see Third Species handout) is also useable in third species beginning on the third quarter note. Remember that it is in using a cambiata that you have your only opportunity to leap from a dissonance, and that this only works when the third quarter of the figure is consonant! A cambiata beginning on the third quarter might look like this:



Note that the fourth quarter note, a dissonant quarter on a weak beat, leaps down to E, which is consonant on the downbeat with the new note of the cantus firmus, C. (N.B. if the new cantus firmus note had moved down to A, this figure would create a direct fifth!). In order to justify the leap from the dissonant G (to the consonant E), the line must immediately move to F to complete the cambiata figure. Note that moving to F here, which is dissonant with the cantus firmus, forces the line to G on the next quarter note.

You may not write upper neighbor notes. An upper neighbor is defined as a weak quarter a step higher than the strong quarters that precede and follow it. In other words, the following line is bad:



The F in the first bar and the A in the second bar are upper neighbors. This is a *melodic* rule, not a contrapuntal one, so this rule applies *even when the upper neighbor is consonant with the cantus firmus*. Lower neighbors, both consonant and dissonant ones, are allowed. (Remember that by definition, the lower neighbor must occur on a weak quarter).

Remember: Never leap *up* to a weak quarter, even if it “sounds right.”