

3.7 SATB Part Writing 7: Chromatic Part Writing

1. Follow all guidelines and principles of diatonic part writing.
2. **Resolve tendency tones FIRST** (LTs, 7ths, $b2$ in N, $+6$ in $+6$ chords, $V+$, etc.).
3. Chromatically **raised notes** usually resolve **upward**; **lowered notes** often resolve **downward**.
4. Keep the chromatic tone in the same voice as the unaltered note to avoid **cross-relations** (see below).

A **cross-relation** occurs when a pitch in one voice is followed by a **chromatic alteration** of the **same** pitch in another voice (like $G\sharp-G\flat$). Cross-relations are best avoided in part-writing; they overemphasize the chromatic pitch. However, even Bach included cross-relations occasionally, esp. between the end of one phrase and the start of the next. Below are **some** (not all) of the more common cross-relations.

Cross-relation 1: Subtonic and leading tone in minor keys

One common type of cross relation results from the raised **leading tone** and **subtonic** in minor keys.

Left example: $a: i$ (with $G\flat$ = subtonic) → $a: vii^{o7}$ (with $G\sharp$ = LT). **Avoid!**

Right example: $a: i$ (with $G\flat$) → $a: vii^{o6}$ (with $G\sharp$). **Better**

Cross-relation 2: Tonicization of vi in major keys

Left example: $C: I$ (with $G\flat$) → $C: V7/vi$ (with $G\sharp$). **Avoid!**

Right example: $C: I$ (with $G\flat$) → $C: V7/vi$ (with $G\sharp$). **Better**

(The temporary LT $G\sharp$ can then resolve down a 3rd in the inner voice.)

Cross-relation 3: N6 followed by V

When the Neapolitan 6 (N6) or Neapolitan (N) resolves to V, voice leading conventions **allow** the cross relation **between $b2$ and $\sharp2$** so that $b2$ can move down to the LT.

$C: N^6$ (with $D\flat = b2$) → $C: V$ (with $D\sharp = \sharp2$). **LT!**

OK cross-relation: allows $b2$ to go to LT

Cross-relation 4: $+6$ chords resolving to V7

When any $+6$ chord resolves to a V7 (or secondary V7), the raised note in the augmented sixth **"SLIDES"** down to avoid a cross-relation.

Left example: $C: Fr+6$ (with $F\sharp$) → $C: V7$ (with $F\flat$). **Avoid!**

Right example: $C: Fr+6$ (with $F\sharp$) → $C: V7$ (with $F\flat$). **Better: the "SLIDE"**