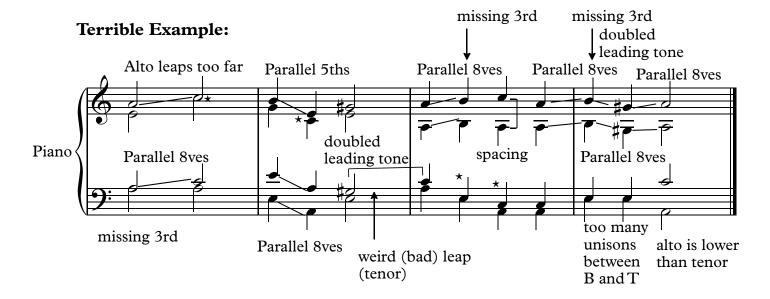
Voice Leading Rules - Cheat Sheet

Voice Leading Rules:

- Move the voices a little as possible when changing chords
 - **Rule: Resolve 7->1 in a V chord in the outer voices.
 - **Guideline: Keep the notes the same if you can (except in soprano). Move mostly by step.
 - **Guideline: Avoid melodic leaps with dissonant intervals.
- Make each line unique
 - **Rule: no parallel fifths/octaves (or unisons)
 - **Rule: no hidden fifths/octaves between the outer voices
 - **Rule: Don't double tendency tones!
 - **Rule: Keep upper voices within an octave of one another
 - (i.e. soprano is within an octave of the alto, alto is within an octave of the tenor)
 - **Guideline: No voice crossings (where one voice goes above another) or overlaps (see below)
- Doubling/complete chords
 - **Guideline: Write complete chords whenever possible.
 - **Rule: you may only leave out the fifth
 - **Guideline: Double the root of the chord (except for diminished...)

Double the fifth if it makes the voice leading smoother. Be careful with the third.

- Misc:
 - **Rule: Write outer voices first make sure they sound good together!
 - **Guideline: Contrary motion between upper voices and bass whenever possible
 - **Guideline: Start with a closed position chord and work out from there.
 - **Guideline: If a pair of upper voices leap together by more than a third, rethink it...



^{*}Voice overlap - where a voice jumps higher (or lower) than a neighboring voice's preceding note. In the first measure, the alto leaps above the soprano's previous A. This confuses our ears and sounds bad.