Rules for Writing 4-Part Harmonies in 18th Century Counterpoint:

Mrs. Gomez: AP Music Theory

**Spacing Rules:**

1. *Ranges* for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass:

2. No more than an octave between **adjacent upper three voices.**

3. No *voice crossing*: ie. The tenor note must sound BELOW the alto.

4. *Closed Spacing* is when the there is less than an octave between Tenor and Soprano

5. *Open Spacing* is when there is and octave or more between Tenor and Soprano

**Melodic Rules: (Horizontal rules)**

1. No leaps of: a 7th, more than an octave, and +2nd or +4th or o5th (unless fa, ti do)

2. A leading tone must resolve to Do (7 to 8) in an outer voice (exception: not if it is part of a stepwise descent.)

3. The line from start to finish should not have a range of more than a 10th.

Keep it singable and mostly Conjunct.

4. Boring inner voices are *GOOD.*

**Harmonic Rules: (Vertical Harmonies)**

1. Avoid parallel P5ths, P8ves and P1s.
2. Avoid direct P5, P8 and P1s. (Similar motion and both voices jump)
3. Never have both voices jump into a Perfect interval.
4. Watch out for Parallel 5ths and 8ves by Contrary Motion.
5. When Possible: **KEEP YOUR COMMON TONE!!!!**
6. When the bass moves up by step *USE CONTRARY MOTION*  (other three voices move DOWN)

**SPECIAL Dominant Seventh Rules: (V7)**

1. The Chordal Seventh will always be prepared by step or common tone.
2. The Chordal Seventh will always resolve Down by Step.
3. The Leading Tone must resolve UP (Ti Do) if it is in Soprano or Bass Line.

**Triad Doubling Rules:**

1. In Root Position: Double the Bass. (Chordal Root)
2. In first Inversion: Double anything BUT the leading tone.
3. In Second Inversion: Double the Bass. (Chordal 5th)
4. Never, ever, ever double the leading tone. Ever.

\*It is OK to Omit the fifth of any chord. If you do leave out the 5th, double the root.