

## UNIT 7: CADENCES

The organization of musical thought, known as Form, is an involved subject and requires more space than can be given in this abbreviated study guide on theory. However, it is possible to approach the material on a basic level through the understanding of cadences.

A phrase in music may be defined as a substantial musical thought. If drawing parallels to literary composition helps to clarify, a musical phrase may be synonymous to a sentence fragment. As in the written word a fragment is set apart by some punctuation mark, so in music a phrase is punctuated by a cadence. The word cadence comes from the Latin "cadere" which means "to fall." A cadence is a progression of chords which produces a sense of temporary repose or finality at the end of a phrase.

There are four types of cadences: Authentic, Half, Deceptive, and Plagal. The AUTHENTIC CADENCE is defined by the progression V I and gives a feeling of finality. It may be further modified by the addition of the words, Perfect or Imperfect. A PERFECT AUTHENTIC CADENCE is a progression wherein both chords are in root position and the tonic chord has the root in the soprano as well. An IMPERFECT AUTHENTIC CADENCE is when one of the provisions for Perfect has not been observed. For instance, one of the chords may be in an inversion or the soprano may not have the root.

Example 7.1

C Major V I V I V I V I

The HALF CADENCE usually occurs on a V and gives a feeling of temporary repose.

Example 7.2

C Major I V IV V ii V

A cadential second inversion chord (see Unit 8) is often used to accentuate the Half Cadence.

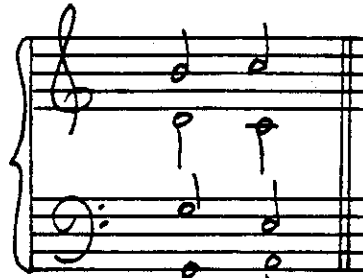
Example 7.3



C Major IV I<sub>6</sub> V

A DECEPTIVE CADENCE employs a harmonic progression which is unexpected or "deceives" the listener. It is usually defined as a V to VI progression, but may be any chord progression which produces the unexpected. For instance, if the listener expects an authentic cadence where V resolves to I, but the composer resolves the V to a VI or some other chord, then the phrase has ended with a Deceptive Cadence.

Example 7.4



C Major V vi

The PLAGAL CADENCE is commonly called the "Amen" cadence because it uses the progression IV I. Sometimes the chord ii<sub>6</sub> is substituted for the IV because it has the same bass note. The modifiers Perfect and Imperfect may be applied to Plagal cadences as they are applied to Authentic Cadences (i.e., both chords in root position and the root in the soprano of the tonic chord.)

Example 7.5



C Major IV I \*ii<sub>6</sub>  
5

\*see Unit 11 regarding ii<sub>6</sub>  
5

## UNIT 8: SECOND INVERSION CHORDS

Second inversion chords are described as unstable, suspensive, and demanding resolution. Used indiscriminately in a phrase, they can appear illogical and out of place. Used with understanding and good judgment, they give variety and movement to the phrase.

Some theorists divide second inversion chords into four categories: Cadential, Neighbor, Passing and Arpeggiated. The chords are described according to the Roman numerals which may be used in  $\frac{6}{4}$  position, the chord approaching the  $\frac{6}{4}$  and the chord resolving the  $\frac{6}{4}$ .

## A. CADENTIAL

1. Used on I only.
2. Appears at cadence points, usually on a strong beat.
3. Resolves to V, usually in root position.
4. Approached by any chord which normally progresses to a V.

Example 8.1

C Major ii I $\frac{6}{4}$  V I IV I $\frac{6}{4}$  V I  
4

Mozart - Sonata in D, K. 284 (Theme and Variations)

D Major I vi ii $\frac{6}{4}$  V $\frac{7}{4}$  I ii $\frac{6}{4}$  I $\frac{6}{4}$  V $\frac{7}{4}$  I

## B. NEIGHBOR

1. Used on any major or minor triad.
2. Bass is repeated for the three chords.
3. Frequently the second inversion chord is approached and resolved by the

same root position chords. Observe in Example 8.2 that the second inversion ii is approached and resolved by a vi.

Example 8.2

C Maj. vi ii<sup>6</sup> vi ii V<sup>6</sup> ii

Schumann - Wilder Reiter (The Wild Rider) Op. 68, No.8

A minor i i i iv<sup>6</sup> i V i<sup>6</sup> V i V

### C. PASSING

1. Used frequently on I or V.
2. Bass moves by step in the same direction.
3. Chords of approach and resolution are often the same Roman numeral, one in root position and the other in first inversion.

Example 8.3

C Maj. : V<sup>6</sup> I<sup>6</sup> I<sup>6</sup> V<sup>6</sup> I IV I<sup>6</sup> IV<sup>6</sup> IV<sup>6</sup> I<sup>6</sup> IV

Beethoven - Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 2, No. 3 (3rd Mvt.)

A minor i V<sup>6</sup> i<sup>6</sup>

D. ARPEGGIATED

Second inversion chord is approached and followed by chords of the same Roman numeral. This type occurs frequently in the left hand figuration of keyboard literature.

Example 8.4 Chopin - Prelude in B minor, Op. 28, No. 6

C Maj. I I<sup>6</sup> I<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> I B minor i i<sup>6</sup> i i<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> i<sup>6</sup>

Drill 8.1

Add soprano, alto and tenor parts to the given bass line observing the figured bass symbols. Determine the key and write the Roman numerals beneath the chords. Identify the types of second inversion chords used.

6/4 6 6/4 6 6/4