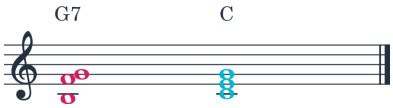
Cadences

how phrases end — the period, the amen, and the comma

A cadence is musical punctuation: the two-chord formula that closes a phrase. Three to know: the **authentic cadence** (V→I) is a full stop — the strongest "THE END" in music; the **plagal cadence** (IV→I) is the gentle "A-men" sung at the end of hymns; and the **half cadence** (ending ON V) is a comma — the phrase pauses mid-air, promising more. Colors as always: I cyan, IV indigo, V magenta.

Authentic — the period

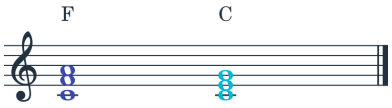
V(7) → I · "THE END."



The dominant's pull resolves home. Nearly every piece you have ever heard ends this way. A cadential 6/4 often comes just before the V (Handout 383).

Plagal — the amen

IV → I · warm & soft



Sing "A-men" as you play it — the subdominant settles onto home like a blessing.

Half — the comma

… → V · to be continued



The phrase parks on the dominant and **waits**. Question phrases end here; answer phrases end authentic.

Try it Play question-and-answer: improvise four measures in C position ending on a **half cadence** (park on G), then four more ending **authentic** (G7 to C). Congratulations — you just built a musical period, the same two-phrase shape as Ode to Joy. Then listen for the amen: play Saints and end it plagal for the full gospel effect. Hear all four cadences, including the deceptive one: Exercise 66. Find them at the ends of phrases: Exercise 85.

LISTEN
Scan to hear every example
tissimo.co/worksheets/cadences-intro

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