

Phrases and Period Forms

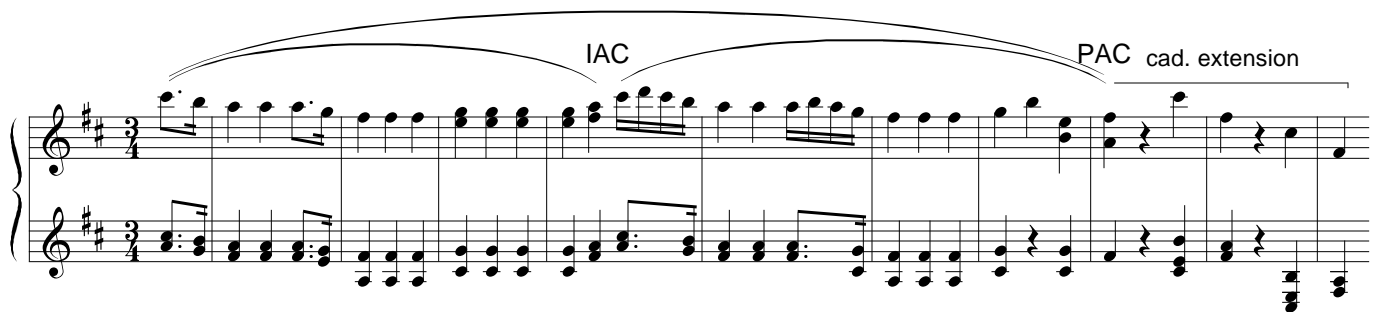
Phrase - a relatively independent musical thought terminated by a cadence. Phrases are labeled using lower-case letters (a, b, c, etc.). The overlapping of phrases is referred to as "elision."

Period Forms - A period is the combination of 2-4 phrases and consequently involves 2-4 cadences. The final cadence in a period is normally the strongest. In a two phrase period, there is typically an antecedent-consequent relationship between the phrases. That relationship is established by means of a stronger cadence at the end of the second phrase. This stronger cadence, usually a PAC, is referred to as a "complete" cadence. A weaker cadence, such as an IAC, DC, or HC, is referred to as an "incomplete" cadence. Two frequent possibilities exist:


- 1)  2) 

Period Types:

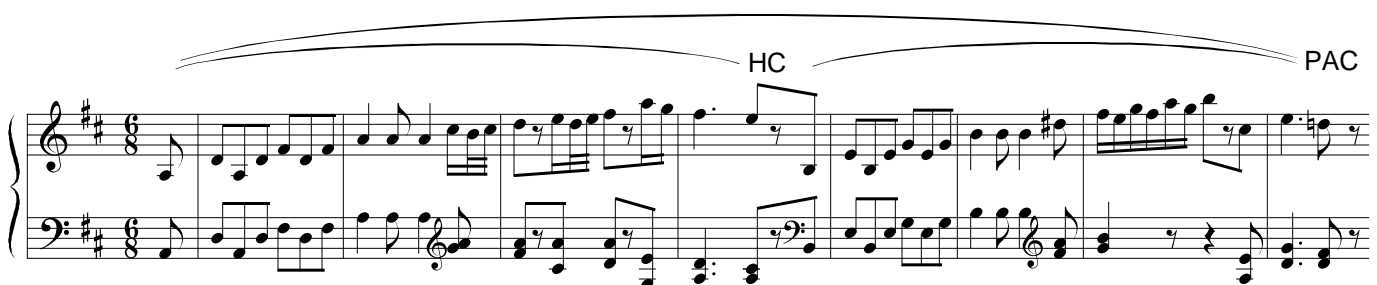
- 1) **Parallel** - Both phrases begins with similar or identical material.



- 2) **Contrasting** - The Phrase begin with different, unrelated material.



- 3) **Sequential** - The material at the beginning of the two phrases is sequentially related.



4) **Modulating** -The consequent phrase begins or accomplishes a modulation.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a modulating phrase. The first system is in 4/4 time, with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is marked with a slur and a fermata, and the label "HC" is placed above the final measure. The bass line consists of block chords. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with the label "HC in C" above the final measure, indicating a modulation to the key of C major. The bass line continues with block chords.

5) **Three Phrase** - Involves three different phrases. The possibilities are antecedent-consequent-consequent (the most common), and antecedent-antecedent-consequent (rare). The strength of the cadences will be the determining factor.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a three-phrase structure. The first system is in 3/4 time, with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is marked with a slur and a fermata, and the label "IAC" is placed above the first phrase. The bass line consists of block chords. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with the label "PAC" above the final measure, indicating a Perfect Authentic Cadence. The bass line continues with block chords.

6) **Four-Phrase** - Antecedent-antecedent-consequent-consequent is the most typical.

The image displays three musical examples in 4/4 time, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first example, labeled 'HC', shows a two-phrase structure with a half-cadence at the end of the first phrase. The second example, labeled 'IAC', shows a two-phrase structure with an internal antecedent-consequent relationship. The third example, labeled 'IAC extension' and 'PAC', shows a two-phrase structure with an internal antecedent-consequent relationship and a phrase extension.

NOTE: Any two-phrase period may be expanded by repetition of one or both of the phrases. For example, aab, abb, aabb. A cadential expansion may also extend the phrase.

The Double Period - Consists typically of four phrases. The first two phrases and the last two phrases are paired. The cadence of the second pair is stronger than the cadence of the first pair. There are two types of double periods:

- (1) Parallel - The material that begins each half is similar.
- (2) Contrasting - The material that begins each half is different.

A musical score in treble and bass clefs, key of D major, 6/8 time. It consists of four phrases. The first two phrases are similar, and the last two phrases are also similar. A half cadence (HC) is marked at the end of the second pair of phrases.

A musical score in treble and bass clefs, key of D major, 6/8 time. It consists of four phrases. The first two phrases are different from the last two phrases. A perfect cadence (PAC) is marked at the end of the second pair of phrases.

A musical score in treble and bass clefs, key of D major, 6/8 time. It consists of four phrases. The first two phrases are similar, and the last two phrases are also similar. A half cadence (HC) is marked at the end of the first pair of phrases, and a perfect cadence (PAC) is marked at the end of the second pair of phrases.

Phrase Group - Several related phrases that do not form a period or a double period.