Phrases and Cadences

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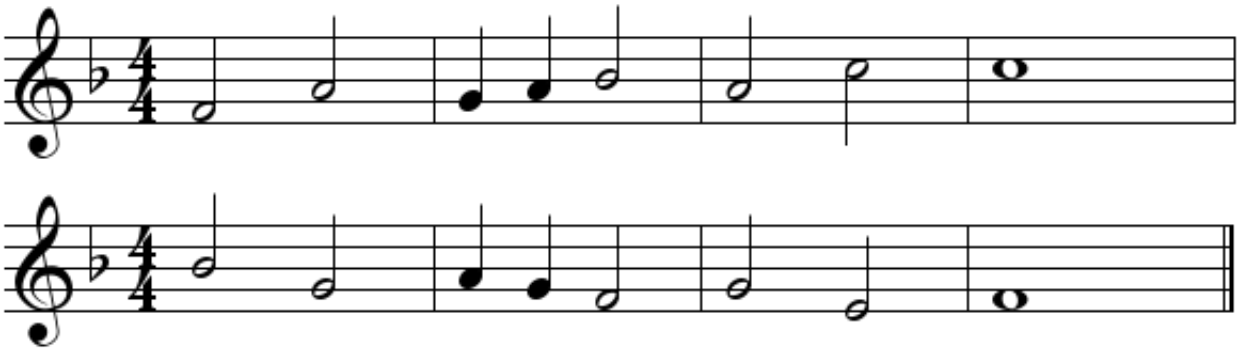
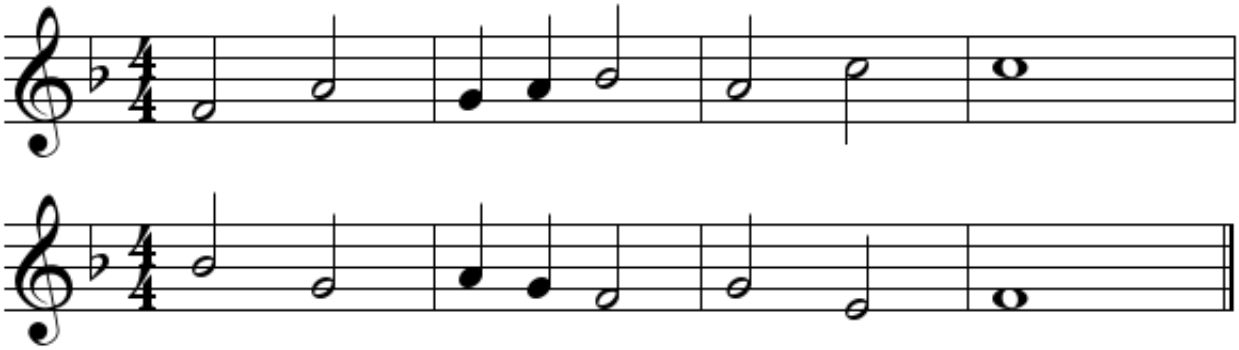
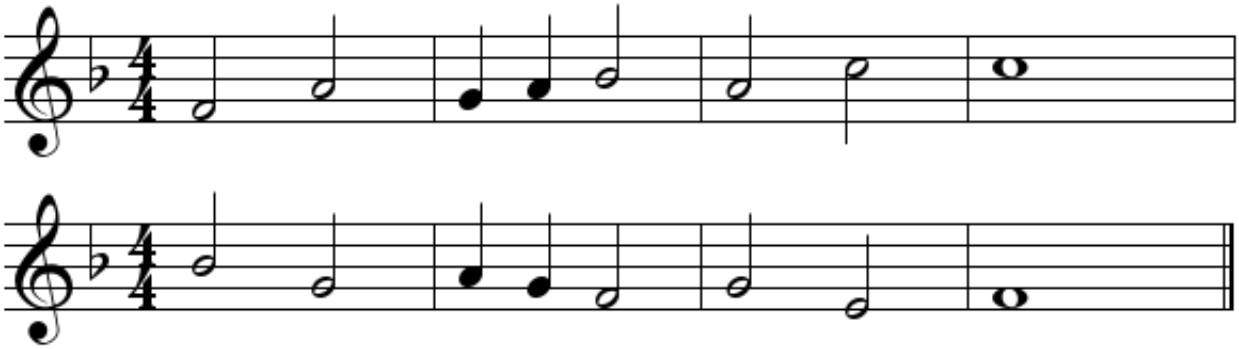
- A **phrase** is a series of notes that sound complete even when played apart from the main song.
- We will use this musical example to demonstrate phrases.



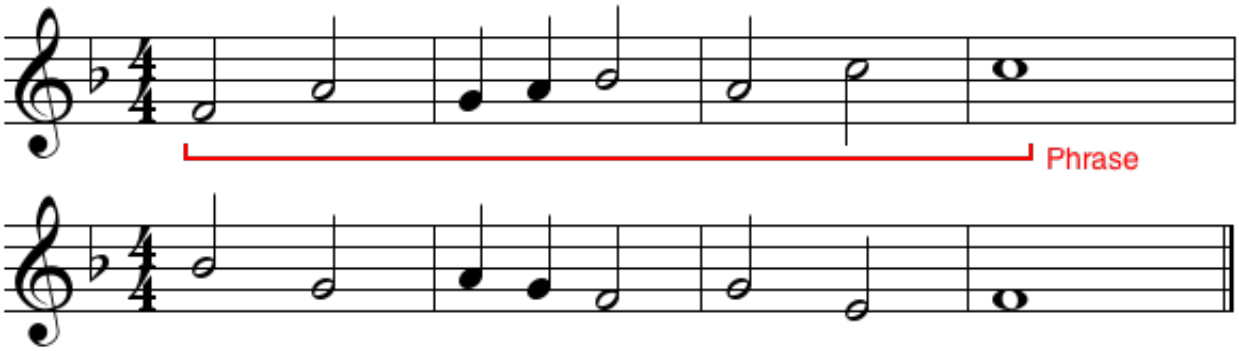
- Play the first two measures, notice how they sound incomplete.



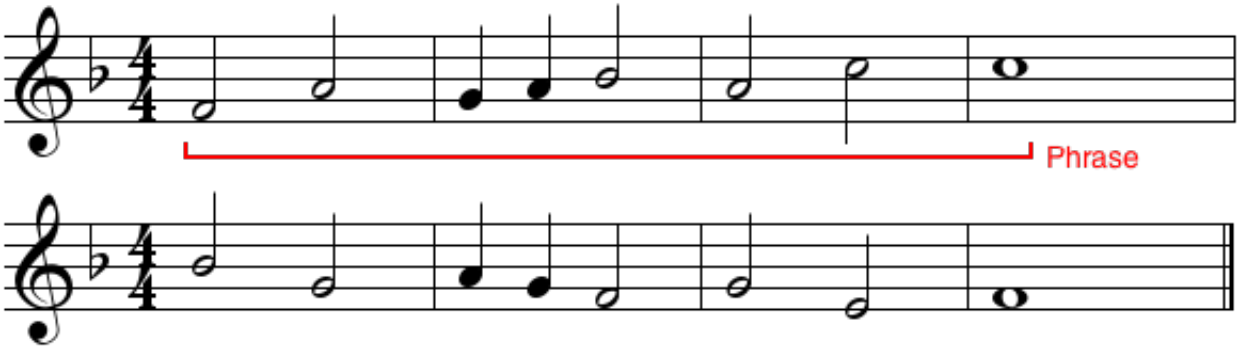
- Now play the first four measures, they sound more complete.



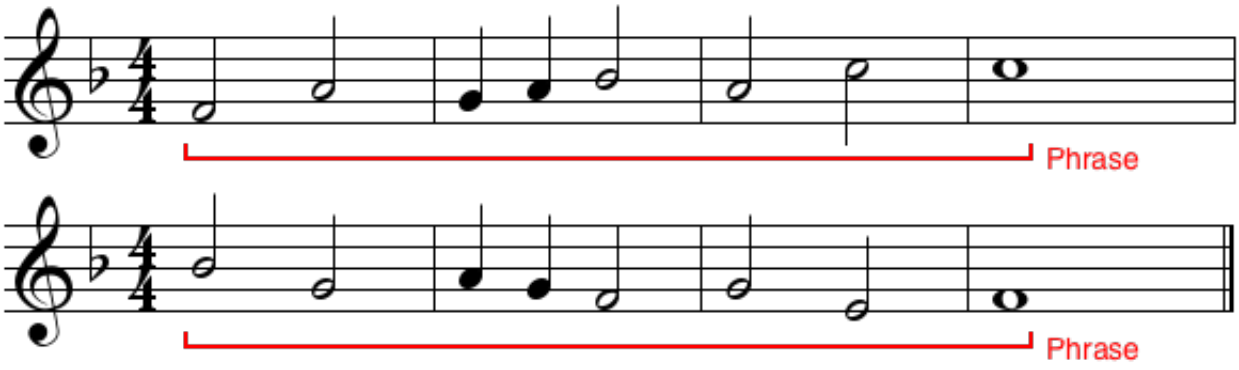
- These measures could be considered a phrase.



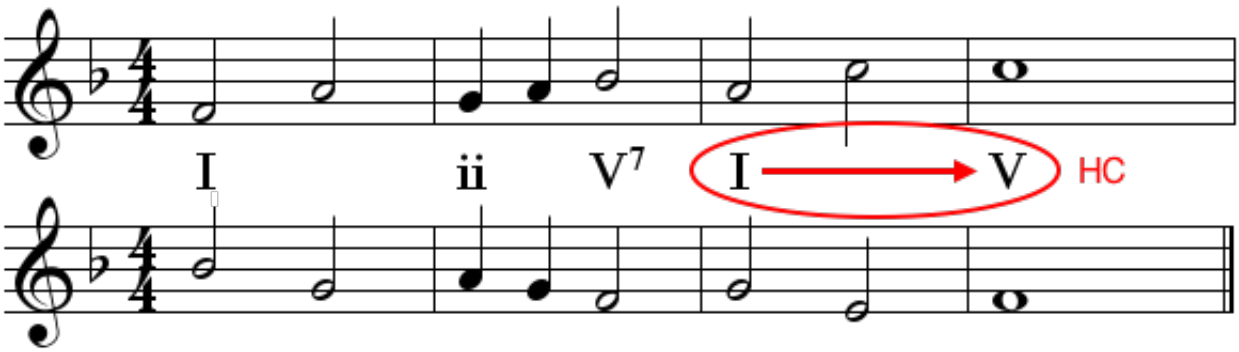
- Play the fifth through eighth measures.



- Due to their completeness, they also form a phrase.

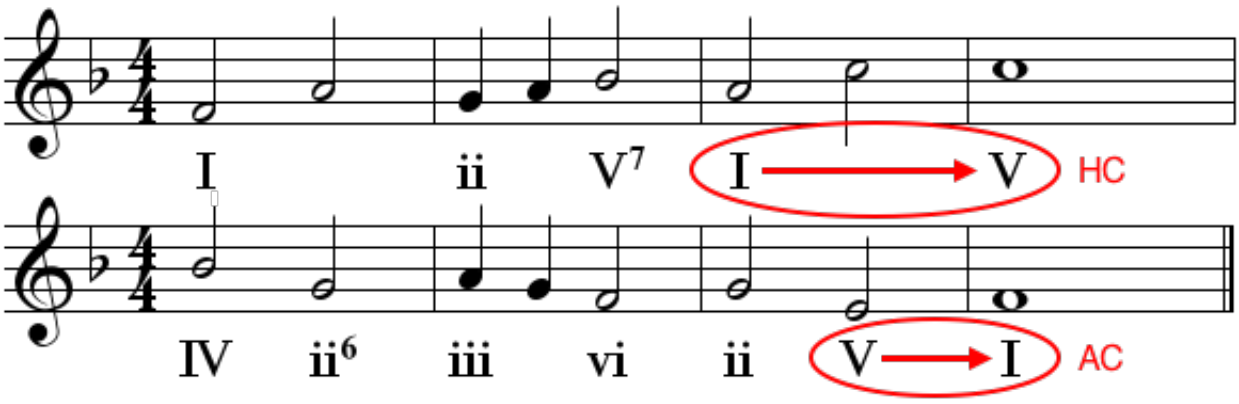


- A **cadence** is a two-chord progression that occurs at the end of a phrase.
- If a phrase ends with any chord going to V, a **half cadence (HC)** occurs.



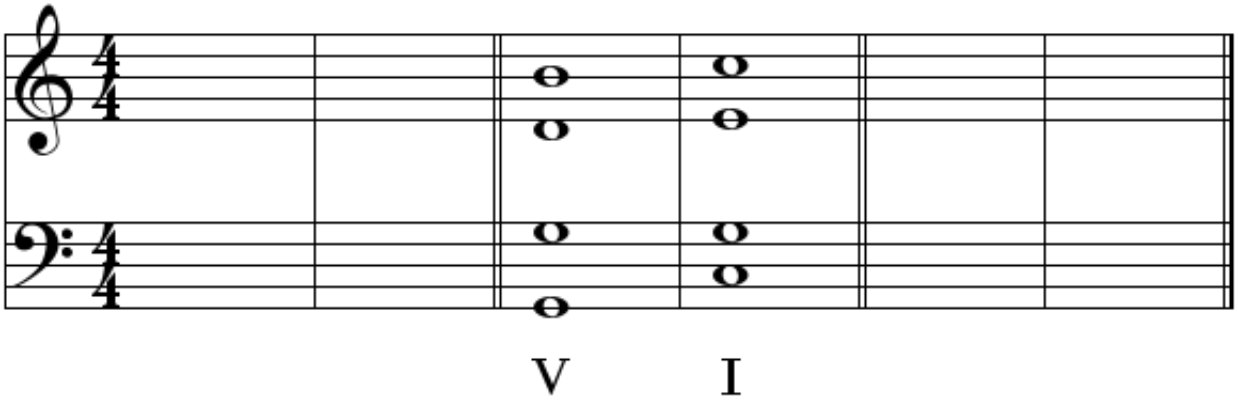
- Replay the first four measures and notice the sound of the half cadence.

- Most people will hear a half cadence as sounding incomplete. Hence, composers usually follow them with a phrase ending in an **authentic cadence (AC)**.
- An authentic cadence occurs whenever a phrase ends with V or vii° going to I (or i if minor).

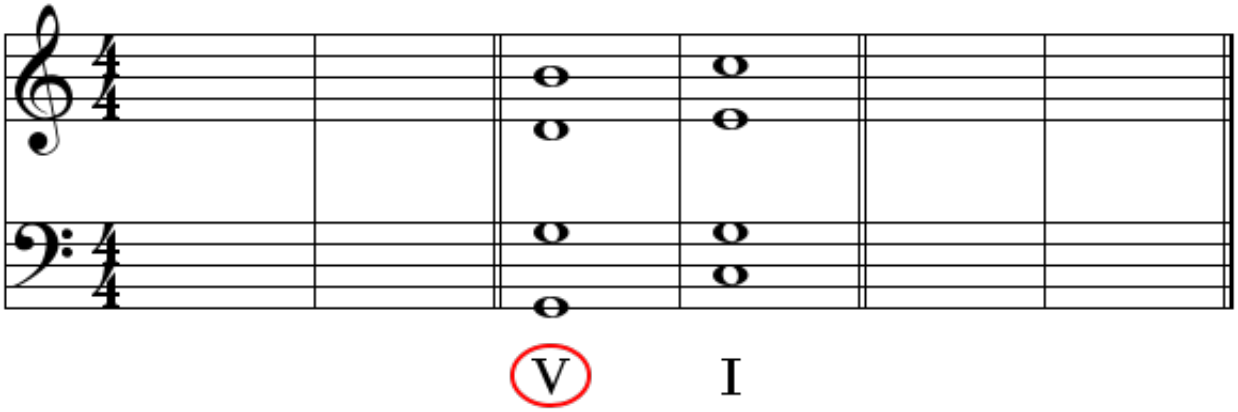


- Play this example and notice the sound of both cadences.

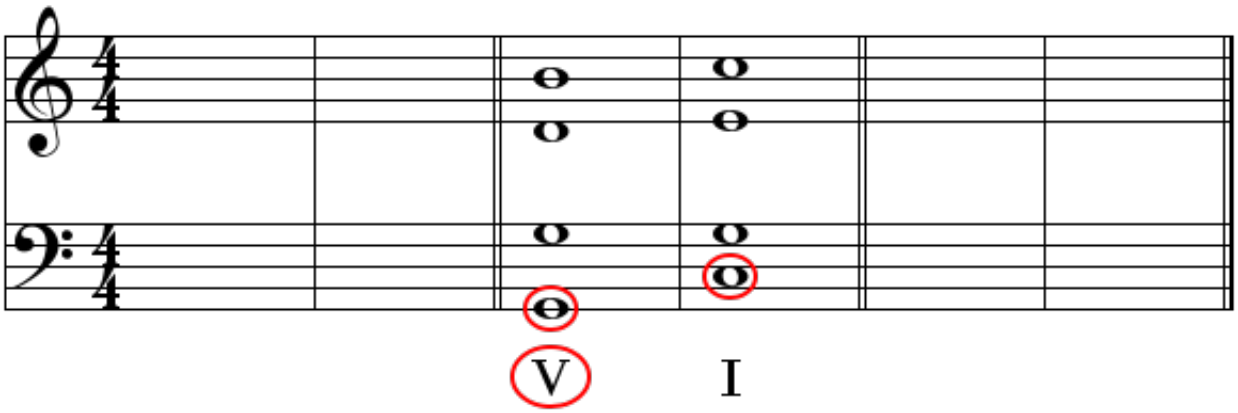
- Authentic cadences are often classified as either perfect or imperfect.
- To be considered a **perfect authentic cadence (PAC)**, the cadence must meet three requirements.



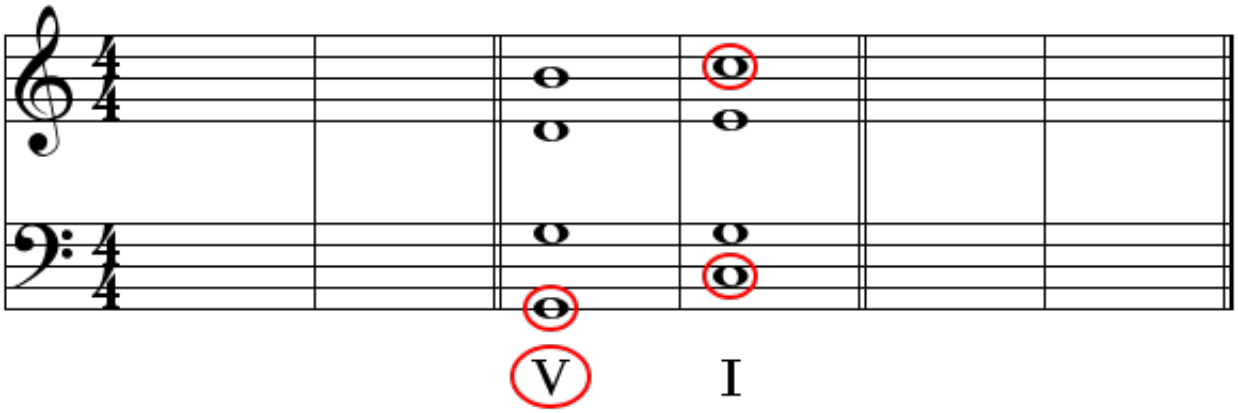
- First, V must be used rather than vii°.



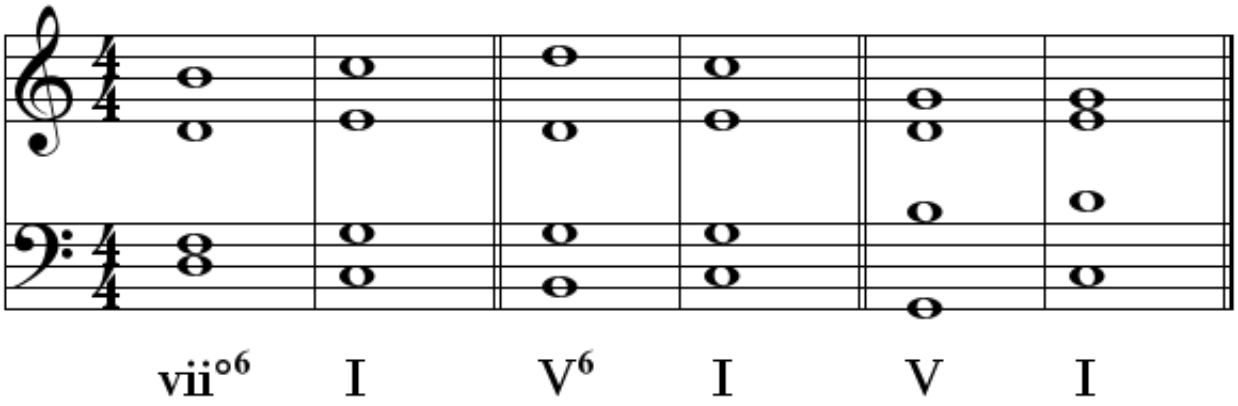
- Second, both chords must be in root position.



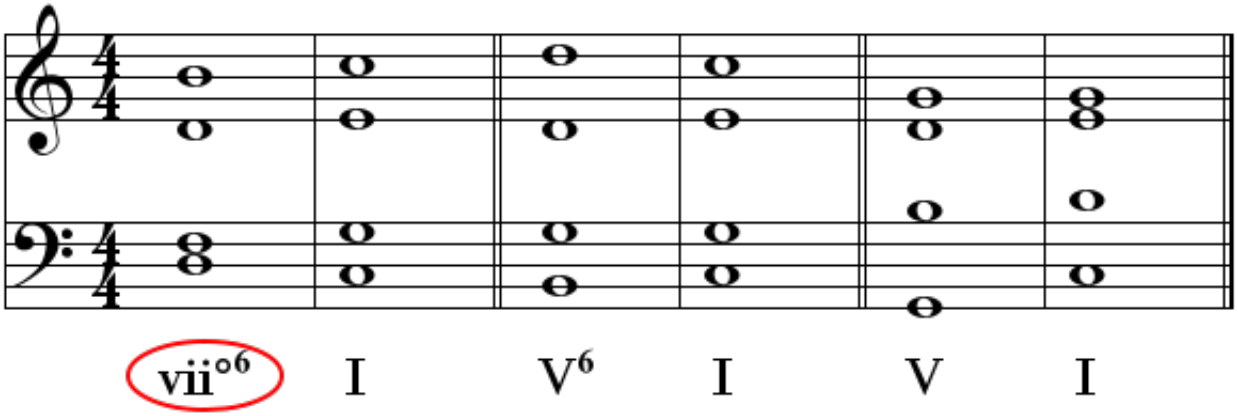
- Finally, the highest note of the I (or i) chord must be the tonic of the scale.



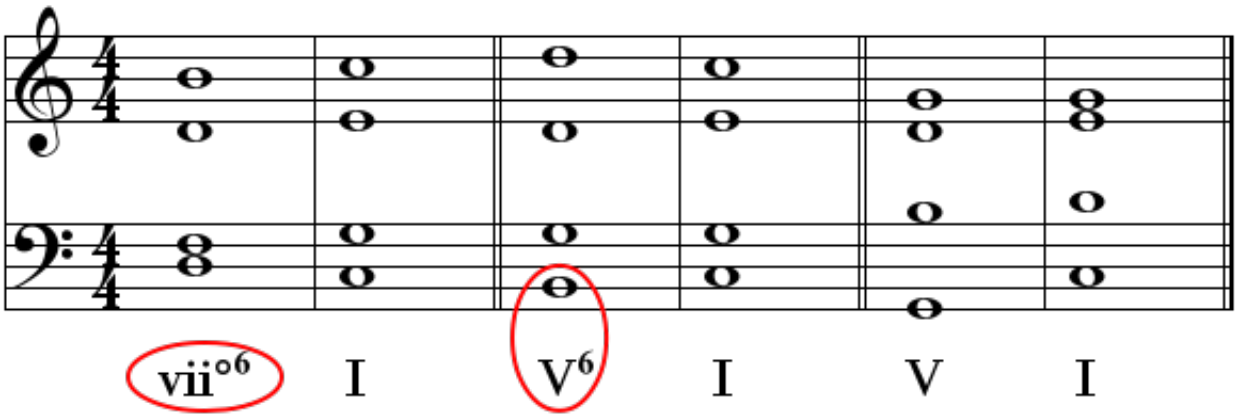
- An **imperfect authentic cadence (IAC)** fails to meet these requirements.
- These authentic cadences are all imperfect due to various reasons.



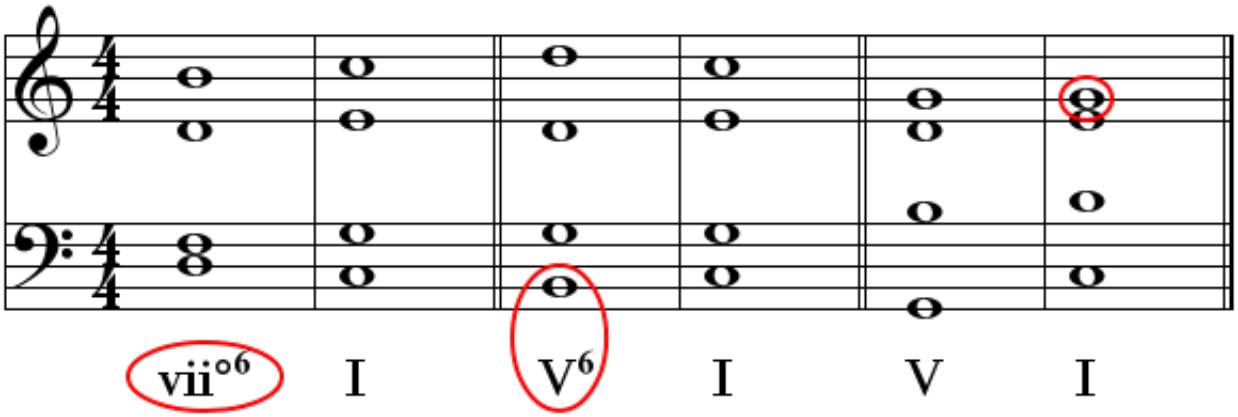
- In the first example, a vii° is used instead of a V.



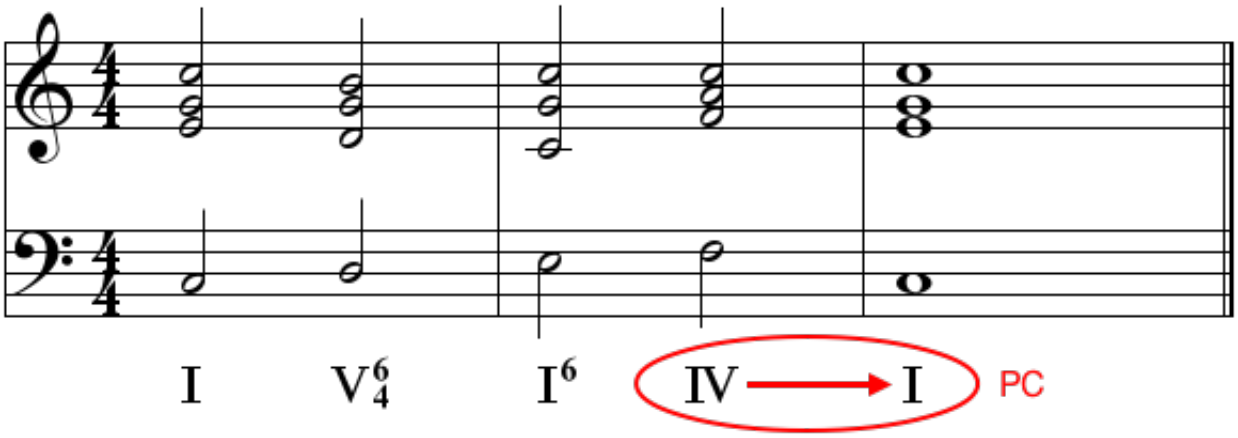
- In the second example, one of the chords is not in root position.



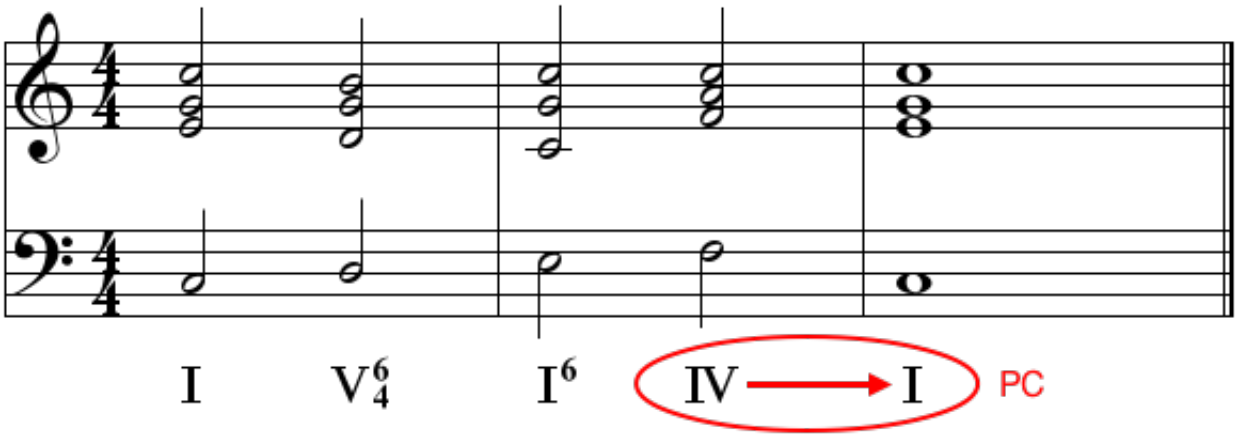
- In the third example, the highest note of the I chord is not the tonic of the scale.



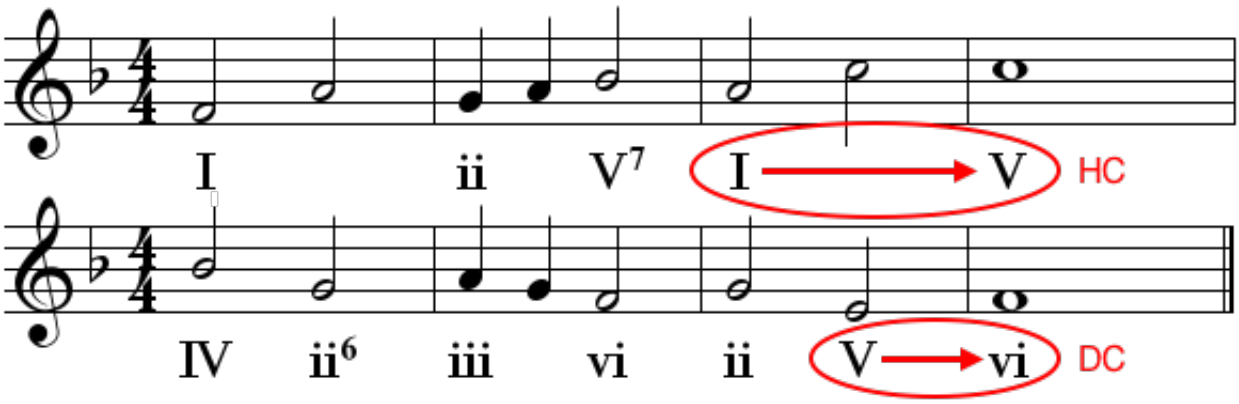
- In addition to authentic and half cadences, two other kinds exist.
- If a phrase ends with IV (or iv) going to I (or i), a **plagal cadence (PC)** occurs.



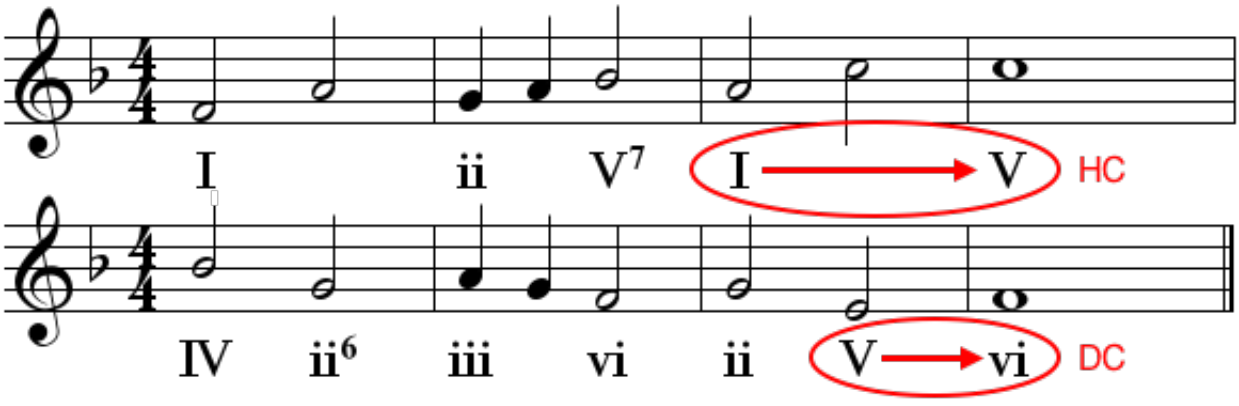
- Play this example and notice the sound of the plagal cadence.



- If a phrase ends with V going to a chord other than I (or i), a **deceptive cadence (DC)** occurs.
- A deceptive cadence is often used in place of an authentic cadence.
- Recall the musical example used at the beginning of this lesson. Let's replace the authentic cadence at the end of the second phrase with a deceptive cadence.



- Play the modified example. Notice how the cadence “deceives” you (since you are expecting to hear a I).



- Use this chart to reference cadences.

Cadence	Progression
Half	ANY → V
Authentic	V → I
Plagal	IV → I
Deceptive	V → NOT I

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