

B. FINAL CADENCES

The strongest types of cadence are those that are used at the end of a piece. In these 'final' cadences, the last chord must be the tonic chord (chord I), or the piece will not sound properly finished. There are two cadences that end with chord I:

Perfect	V - I
Plagal	IV - I

The music below is in B flat major. The vamp (oom-pah-pah) style of the accompaniment in the bass clef shows us that there is one chord in each bar. In cadences the chords are usually in root position (the root of the chord is the bottom note). The root of the chord in bar 3 is E flat. This is chord IV in B flat major. (E flat is the fourth degree in the B flat major scale). The root of the last chord is the B flat, so it is the B flat major chord (chord I). The cadence is IV to I (plagal).

1 Below are the last four bars of four melodies. Underneath each write the name (i.e. perfect or plagal) of the final cadence (i.e. the cadence at the end) that you would use. In each case there is only one chord used in the last bar. Note: two are in minor keys.

(a)

Cadence:

(b)

Cadence:

(c)

Cadence:

2 Of these two cadences, perfect tends to be more definite. When it is used at the end of the piece, it makes a strong ending. Plagal cadences are not quite so strong. They are often used in sad songs or in lullabies. Tick the line above that you think would be most suitable for a piece about sick child.