

Sources of music	Questions to ask yourself
Radio Television Cinema Mobile phone ring tones Church bells Tones preceding PA announcements Background music in shops and restaurants	Is it major or minor? What is the shape of the melody? What is the texture? Which instruments are being used? What is the metre? What is the character of the rhythmic content? How is the music constructed?

No doubt there will be times when you want (and deserve) just to relax to your favourite music, but now you have chosen to specialise in music by choosing it as an AS option, make sure that on a regular basis you find time to listen to a wide range of music and explore parts of the repertoire that are new to you. This is the equivalent to the background reading you will do for your other subjects. Try some different radio stations, and explore what is available on line. A particularly good resource is the Naxos Music Library (www.naxosmusiclibrary.com): perhaps your school or college subscribes to it. Best of all, try to go to some live music events.

If any of the exercises that follow is a problem for you, turn to the *Music Literacy Workbook* by Rebecca Berkley and Gavin Richards. Rhinegold Publishing, 2007. ISBN 978-1-906178-00-0.

AQA has set out in its specification what aspects of music you should be able to identify aurally. The exercises that follow should help you to pinpoint each of these features before you try questions which combine several of them in a way typical of AS. You could work through these by yourself or with a friend, or your teacher may suggest specific exercises before giving you a sample AS question which incorporates the same musical feature.

Cadences

Music that is based on one or more major or minor keys is called **tonal**. In tonal music cadences are like punctuation in writing – they help to mark out the sections. A cadence consists of two different chords at the end of a phrase. You need to listen mainly to the progression of chords, as defined by the bass line, since the notes in the tune can vary according to the composer's melodic ideas. You need to be able to recognise the four main types of cadence:



Perfect: V⁷ I



Plagal: IV I

A **perfect cadence** consists of a progression from the dominant chord (V), or dominant seventh (V⁷), to the tonic chord (I). It gives a strong sense that the musical phrase has been completed, like a full stop at the end of a sentence.

A **plagal cadence** consists of a progression from the subdominant chord (IV) to the tonic chord (I) and gives an alternative sense of completion to a phrase. The plagal cadence is a little less energetic than the perfect cadence, the note in the melody often being the tonic in both chords.

An **imperfect cadence** consists of a progression that ends on the dominant chord (V). It creates a sense of momentary repose at the end of a phrase, rather like a comma in a sentence. There are various options for the first chord, including I, Ic, ii or IV (Ic is the second inversion of the tonic chord, explained on page 10).