

Form and Analysis  
Binary Form Review

Summary:

Binary forms are compositions in two parts. They are labeled according to their **harmonic structure** and **thematic design**.

If the *first half*

- Ends on the tonic, the binary type is **sectional**;
- Ends on a HC, modulates, or tonicizes a harmony other than the tonic (in other words, does not end on the tonic), the binary type is **continuous**.

If the thematic design of the *second half*

- Contrasts with the first half, the binary type is **simple**  
||: a :||: b :||
- Brings back opening (phrase 1) melodic material from the first half toward the end, the binary type is **rounded**  
||: a :||: b a' :||
- Brings back material from the end of the first half (in other words, the two halves end the same, but the opening material is not brought back), the binary type is **balanced**  
||: a x :||: b x :||

Study/review questions:

1. What is the basic principle of binary form?
2. What are the most common harmonic structures for first sections in a binary form in major keys? In minor keys?
3. What are the most common harmonic structures for second sections in a binary form in major keys? In minor keys?
4. Where are you most likely to find a sequence in a binary-form piece?
5. Where are you most likely to find a modulation in a binary-form piece?
6. What is the difference between simple binary and rounded binary?