



MTO 28.2 Examples: Stroud, Codetta and Anthem Postchorus Types in Top-40 Pop from 2010 to 2015

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)
<https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.22.28.2/mto.22.28.2.stroud.html>

Example 2. Chorus-Postchorus Design for Two Types of Postchoruses

	Chorus	Postchorus
Codetta-Type Postchorus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasizes the song's central message• High point or climax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contains a significant hook• Emphasizes closure
Anthem-Type Postchorus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasizes the song's central message• Builds in energy or intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contains a significant hook• High point or climax

Example 3. Numbers of Unambiguous and Ambiguous Postchoruses Found in Top-40 Songs from 2010 to 2015

Year	Total Songs	Unambiguous Postchoruses	Ambiguous Postchoruses	Songs Without Postchoruses
2010	249	8 (3.2%)	23 (9.2%)	218 (87.6%)
2011	252	15 (6.0%)	27 (10.7%)	210 (83.3%)
2012	211	17 (8.1%)	27 (12.8%)	167 (79.1%)
2013	228	8 (3.5%)	11 (4.8%)	209 (91.7%)
2014	210	4 (1.9%)	14 (6.7%)	192 (91.4%)
2015	185	11 (5.9%)	13 (7.0%)	161 (87.0%)
SUM	1335	63 (4.8%)	115 (8.5%)	1157 (86.7%)

Example 4. Examples of Formal Ambiguity in Some Songs with Postchoruses

Song	Ambiguous Postchorus
“Lights” by Ellie Goulding (2010)	Postchorus material appears for the first time after Chorus 2, a typical position for a bridge. Then it reappears as a “bridge to nowhere” at the end of the track, after Chorus 3.
“Till the World Ends” by Britney Spears (2011)	There are multiple formal interpretations of sections in this song, one of which is a similar design to “Lights,” where the postchorus material may be initially heard as a bridge since it does not appear after Chorus 1. In this particular track, the design of the Prechorus–Chorus unit may also be heard as a Chorus–Postchorus or as a Chorus–Dance Chorus using Barna’s (2020) terminology.
“Call Me Maybe” by Carly Rae Jepsen (2012)	Ambiguity here arises for the same reason as “Lights”: the postchorus only comes after Chorus 2, where it can be heard as Part 1 of a two-part bridge, and after Chorus 3, potentially also heard as a “bridge to nowhere” at the end.
“Chandelier” by Sia (2014)	This postchorus appears after both of the 2 choruses, and the plummet in the vocal register from chorus to postchorus clearly articulates a formal divide even as the backing track does not change. The repetition of short melodic units, emphasis on tonic in the vocal melody, and use of a “chorus” effect in the vocals (which gives the effect of multiple singers) in this postchorus are similar to other postchoruses in this study. On the other hand, this track does not have a traditional bridge, so the postchorus here might also be interpreted as a bridge, especially since there are only 2 cycles through the verse-chorus unit.
“Want to Want Me” by Jason Derulo (2015)	This postchorus consistently appears after every chorus, with stylistic features consistent with other postchoruses in this study (repetition of a chorus-ending refrain, changes to the backing track from chorus to postchorus, extensive use of “ooh-ooh-ooh” vocables). However, the proportions are drastically different from many postchoruses in this study: this song’s chorus is 16 measures long, while the first two postchoruses are only 4 measures long. The final postchorus, which closes the song, is doubled in length to 8 measures.

Example 6. Formal Design of “Undo It”

Time	Section	Measures
0:00–0:12	Introduction	4
0:12–0:25	Verse 1	4
0:25–0:38	Prechorus	4
0:38–0:59	Chorus	7 (3+4)
0:59–1:11	Postchorus	4
1:11–1:25	Verse 2	4
1:25–1:37	Prechorus	4
1:37–1:58	Chorus	7 (3+4)
1:58–2:11	Postchorus	4
2:11–2:23	Bridge	4
2:23–2:43	Chorus	7 (3+4)
2:43–2:55	Postchorus+Chorus	4

Example 7. Formal Design of “Party Rock Anthem” by LMFAO (2011)

Time	Section	Measures
0:00–0:29	Introduction	16
0:29–0:44	Chorus 1	8
0:44–0:59	Chorus 2	8
0:59–1:13	Postchorus 1	8
1:13–1:28	Verse 1	8
1:28–1:43	Verse 2	8
1:43–1:58	Chorus 3	8
1:58–2:12	Chorus 4	8
2:12–2:16	“Shufflin’ ”	~2
2:16–2:31	Postchorus 2	8
2:31–2:46	Verse 3	8
2:46–3:15	Bridge	16
3:15–3:30	Chorus 5	8
3:30–3:45	Postchorus 3	8
3:45–3:49	“Shufflin’ ”	~2
3:49–4:21	Outro	16

Example 11. Formal Design of “I Need Your Love” by Calvin Harris ft. Ellie Goulding (2012)

Time	Section	Measures
0:00–0:07	Introduction	4
0:07–0:23	Chorus	8
0:23–0:39	Postchorus	8
0:39–0:56	Postchorus	8
0:56–0:59	link	2
0:59–1:15	Verse 1	8
1:15–1:30	Prechorus	8
1:30–1:45	Chorus	8
1:45–2:00	Postchorus	8
2:00–2:16	Verse 2	8
2:16–2:31	Prechorus	8
2:31–2:47	Chorus	8
2:47–3:02	Postchorus	8
3:02–3:17	Bridge	8
3:17–3:32	Chorus	8
3:32–3:48	Postchorus	8

Example 13. Formal Design of “La La La” by Naughty Boy ft. Sam Smith (2013)

Time	Section	Measures
0:00–0:31	Introduction	16
0:31–0:46	Verse 1	8
0:46–1:02	Prechorus	8
1:02–1:17	Chorus	8
1:17–1:32	Postchorus	8
1:32–1:48	Verse 2	8
1:48–2:03	Prechorus	8
2:03–2:18	Chorus	8
2:19–2:34	Postchorus	8
2:34–2:49	Bridge	8
2:49–3:05	Chorus	8
3:05–3:20	Chorus	8
3:20–3:35	Postchorus	8

Example 15. Formal Design of “Animals” by Maroon 5 (2014)

Time	Section	Measures
0:00–0:21	Intro/Chorus	8
0:21–0:41	Verse 1	8
0:41–1:01	Prechorus	8
1:01–1:22	Chorus	8
1:22–1:42	Verse 2	8
1:42–2:02	Prechorus	8
2:02–2:22	Chorus	8
2:22–2:43	Postchorus	8
2:43–3:05	Bridge	8+2
3:05–3:25	Chorus	8
3:26–3:49	Postchorus	8

Example 17. Producers and Songwriters for the Tracks in this Study

Track	Artist(s)	Songwriters	Producer(s)
“Roar”	Katy Perry	Katy Perry, Lukasz Gottwald (Dr. Luke), Max Martin, Bonnie McKee, Henry Walter (Cirkut)	Dr. Luke, Max Martin, Cirkut
“Undo It”	Carrie Underwood	Kara DioGuardi, Marti Frederiksen, Luke Laird, and Carrie Underwood	Mark Bright
“Party Rock Anthem”	LMFAO	David Jamahl Listenbee (GoonRock), Stefan Gordy (Redfoo), and Skyler Gordy (Sky Blu)	GoonRock, Redfoo
“I Need Your Love”	Calvin Harris ft. Ellie Goulding	Calvin Harris and Ellie Goulding	Calvin Harris
“La La La”	Naughty Boy ft. Sam Smith	Shahid Khan (Naughty Boy), Al-Hakam El-Kaubaisy (Komi), Frobisher Mbabazi, Sam Smith, James Napier, James Murray, Mustafa Omer, Jonny Coffey	Naughty Boy, Komi, Mojam (James Murray and Mustafa Omer)
“Animals”	Maroon 5	Adam Levine, Johan Schuster (Shellback), Benjamin Levin	Shellback