

## 3 against 2

One line of music may be playing quavers in groups of two whilst at the same time another line of music will be playing triplets. Other note values can be similarly used.

## Acciaccatura

An ornament which sounds like a crushed note played very quickly on the beat or just before it.

## Added 6th

Root, 3rd and 5th of a chord with the 6th added. This chord is used frequently in jazz and popular music.

## Augmentation

An increase in the length of notes. The music will sound slower when imitated or repeated.

## Basso continuo

Sometimes referred to as continuo. In the Baroque period, the continuo part consisted of a bass line (basso continuo) played by cello, bass, viola da gamba or bassoon. In addition the harpsichord, organ or lute player was expected to fill in harmonies built on that bass line. Sometimes figures were written under the bass line indicating the chords the composer would like played. This was called figured bass.

<p>Chamber music</p>	<p>Music written for a small instrumental ensemble with one player to a part.</p>
<p>Coloratura</p>	<p>Term for high, florid vocal singing involving scales, runs and ornaments. Sometimes these passages were written down, but often were extemporised by the performer.</p>
<p>Concertino</p>	<p>In a Concerto grosso this is the name given to the small, solo group of instrumentalists as opposed to the main group, the Ripieno.</p>
<p>Concerto grosso — ritornello</p>	<p>A type of concerto in which a group of soloists (concertino) is combined and contrasted with a larger group (ripieno).</p>
<p>Da capo aria</p>	<p>An aria in Ternary form (ABA) used in opera and oratorio in the 17th and 18th centuries. The third section is not written out but the instruction Da capo (from the beginning) is given instead. The repeat of the A section was performed with the solo ornamented.</p>

## Diminished 7th

A chord consisting of three intervals of a minor 3rd built one on top of the other, the interval between the lower and top note being a diminished 7th. This can be a very useful chord for modulation to distant keys.

## Diminution

A decrease in the length of notes. The music will sound faster when imitated or repeated.

## Dominant 7th

Chord built on the dominant (5th) note of a key which adds the 7th note above its root. It is sometimes written as V7 or, in the key of C major, G7(GBDF).

## Harmonic minor scale

Scale which shares the same key signature as its relative major but raises the 7th note by a semitone.

## Harmonics

The high eerie sounds produced on a bowed string instrument by lightly touching the string at certain points. On a guitar these will sound bell-like.

# Impressionist

A term borrowed from painting in which brief musical ideas merge and change to create a rather blurred, hazy and vague outline. Debussy was an important composer of this style.

Whole-tone scales were often a feature of this style of music.

Paintings were often hazy and blurred - creating an 'impression' rather than showing clear lines. Impressionist music is similar in that it doesn't have clearly defined strong melody lines, but aims to create atmosphere.

# Interrupted cadence

A cadence is formed by two chords at the end of a phrase. An interrupted cadence is usually formed by the chords V-VI. (In the key of C major, chords G to A minor.) This is known also as the surprise cadence as the listener may be expecting V-I which has a more final sound.

# Interval

The distance in pitch between two notes, eg C - F is a 4th. The excerpt contains all the intervals starting on C and using all the white notes on a keyboard for one octave.

# Irregular time signatures

Often in modern or rhythmically based ethnic music, groupings of notes change, but the underlying pulse remains constant. Groupings of two and three produce irregular accents and metres. (Extended definition - Sometimes composers in the 20th century try to destroy the feeling of a regular down beat by changing the time signature frequently. Stravinsky often used this technique, particularly in 'The Rite of Spring'.

# Jazz funk

A combination of jazz improvisation and the amplified instruments and character of Rock.

## Lied

This term (the German word for song) refers specifically in the Romantic era to works for solo voice and piano. The text is in German, the structure of the verses is strophic and through composed. An important feature is that the voice and piano are equally important.

## Mass

In the Renaissance era the Mass was a sacred choral work using the five main sections of the Roman Catholic church liturgy. Features of the Mass include Latin text and polyphonic texture, and it is usually sung a cappella. Originally used in church worship, but in later years became a large-scale work for chorus, soloists and orchestra.

## Melodic minor scale

Scale which shares the same key signature as its Relative major but raises the 6th and 7th notes by a semitone ascending, and similarly lowers them descending.

## Mode/modal

Usually refers to any of the early scales called modes, eg Dorian mode. It can also be used more generally as a reference to major mode (in a major key) or minor mode (in a minor key). Term used to describe music based on a mode, a type of early scale used before major and minor keys were developed. Modes are used in jazz and pop music for improvising.

## Mordent

An ornament which sounds the main note, the note above and then the main note again. An inverted mordent sounds the main note, the note below and then the main note again.

## Musique concrete

Recorded natural sounds which are transformed using simple editing techniques such as cutting and re-assembling, playing backwards, slowing down and speeding up.

## Obbligato (instrumental)

A prominent solo instrument part in a piece of vocal music.

## Oratorio

Usually a story from the Bible set to music for soloists, chorus and orchestra. It may include recitatives, arias, duets and chorus. It is performed without acting or stage design.

## Passacaglia

Variations over a ground bass.

## Plagal cadence

A cadence is formed by two chords at the end of a phrase. A plagal cadence is the subdominant to tonic chords ( IV-I ). In the key of C major, chords F to C.

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## Plainchant

Also known as Plainsong and Gregorian chant. Unaccompanied melody set to words of the Roman Catholic liturgy, such as the Mass. Plainchants are modal and have no regular metre. They follow the rhythm of the Latin words.

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## Recitative

A type of vocal writing where the music follows the rhythm of speech. It is used in operas and oratorios to move the story or plot on.

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## Relative major/minor

A change from minor to major key with the same key signature found three semitones higher, eg D minor to F major. A change from major to minor key with the same key signature found three semitones lower, eg C major to A minor.

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## Ripieno

In Baroque music, especially Concerto grosso, the term means the main group of instrumentalists as opposed to the small/solo group which was known as the Concertino.

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## Ritornello

Little return. A 17th-century term for a brief introduction or interlude in a vocal composition, or for a brief instrumental passage between scenes in a 17th-century opera. In a Concerto grosso, the ritornello is the main theme played by the Ripieno group (the orchestra) and sometimes by Concertino (the soloists). The ritornello may return frequently throughout the movement, similar to a Rondo.

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## Sonata

A work for solo piano, or a solo instrument accompanied by piano, in three or four movements. (E.g. Flute Sonata = Flute + Piano)

## Sonata form — exposition

Sonata form is sometimes known as first movement form. This term is used to describe the structure of the first movement of many sonatas, symphonies and often overtures. It falls into three sections: exposition, development and recapitulation. The exposition introduces two contrasting themes in related keys.

## Soul music

A style of Afro-American popular music including elements of blues and gospel and conveying strong emotions.

## String quartet

A chamber music ensemble consisting of first and second violins, viola, and cello. The string quartet is one of the most prominent chamber ensembles in classical music, with most major composers, from the late 18th century onwards, writing string quartets.

## Subject

The main theme in a composition, the main themes in sonata form, or the main theme on which a fugue is based.



Through-composed

A vocal/choral composition in which there is little or no repetition of the music.

Tierce de picardie

The final chord of a piece of music in the minor key is changed to major.

Time changes

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Tremolando

Trembling,  
quivering.