

# ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

## CONTEXT

- **Affection:** The prevailing mood in a Baroque movement.
- **Bossa nova:** 'New trend'- One of the most popular musical styles of the 50s and 60s in Brazil. Mixes elements of samba with jazz.
- **Chamber music:** Music for a small group of musicians, usually a string section and limited number of wind players.
- **Classical era:** The period between 1750 and 1825.
- **Film score:** The complete set of original music to accompany a film, forming part of the film's soundtrack.
- **Incidental music:** Music to be performed as part of a play.
- **Main Title:** Heard during the opening credits, sets the mood for the film
- **Pathetique:** A mood that is moving/emotional.
- **Patronage:** A system where composers were commissioned and earned money from a wealthy person. (patron)
- **Romantic era:** The predominant style in the 1800s.
- **Samba:** National dance style of Brazil, known for energetic drumming and syncopated rhythms.
- **Secular:** Music used for a non-religious occasion.
- **Session musician:** Freelance musician hired to play on recording sessions.
- **Underscoring:** Background music, played under spoken dialogue.

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## STRUCTURE

- **Answer:** In a fugue, the subject repeated in response to its initial appearance, usually a 4th or 5th higher or lower.
- **Build:** Long crescendo and thickening of texture in electronic music.
- **Breakdown:** Sounds drop out prior to a build.
- **Countersubject:** The melody after the subject or answer has been sounded.
- **Coda:** The closing section.
- **Da capo aria:** A song with a ternary structure (ABA).
- **Development:** The central section of sonata form.
- **Exposition:** The first section of a movement in sonata form.
- **Fugue:** A musical form consisting of exposition, middle section and final section. The music is contrapuntal.
- **Fusion:** The blending of two or more musical styles, usually from different cultures.
- **Ground bass:** A constantly repeating bass pattern above which a melody unfolds. Popular in the Baroque.
- **Loop:** Short section of music constantly repeated using technology.
- **Movement:** An independent section in a longer piece of music.
- **Recapitulation:** The final section of sonata form.
- **Subject:** The short main theme of the fugue.
- **Sonata form:** A common structure in the Classical era and later. Consists of subjects, expositions, development, recapitulation and coda.
- **Ternary form:** ABA. Three sections where the first is repeated at the end.
- **Transition:** A section used to take the music from one key to another by modulation. Acts like a 'bridge'.

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## TECHNOLOGICAL EFFECTS

- **Distortion:** Effect that increases volume, sustain, and noise on an electric guitar.
- **Flanger:** An effect creating a swirling sound.
- **Low pass filters:** A filter that passes low frequencies.
- **Multi-tracking:** Recording on separate tracks for editing individually.
- **Overdrive:** A guitar effect that produces a deliberately distorted sound.
- **Overdubbing:** Recording a part over previously recorded music.
- **Pad:** Synthesiser sound designed to be used in chords.
- **Panning:** Giving sounds different levels in the right and left speakers.
- **Reverb:** An effect that creates the impression of being in a physical space.
- **Samples:** A short segment taken from an existing recording for reuse in a new composition.
- **Synthesiser:** Electronic instrument that creates sounds by modifying existing sounds.
- **Wah-wah:** A filter effect in which the peak is swept up and down the frequency range in response to the player's foot movement on a rocker pedal.



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## MELODY

- **Anthem:** An uplifting song with a strong, memorable melody.
- **Angular:** Movement by leaps.
- **Appoggiatura:** A 'leaning' note. An expressive dissonance that moves by step to resolve onto a note of the current chord.
- **Auxiliary figure:** A form of melodic decoration that falls between two identical notes. It can be higher or lower.
- **Compound interval:** An interval extending over more than an octave.
- **Conjunct/scalic:** Movement by step.
- **Fanfare:** A celebratory piece for brass instruments often marking the opening of an important event or ceremony.
- **Leitmotif:** A musical idea that is associated with a person, object, place or emotion.
- **Melisma:** When several notes are sung to the same syllable.
- **Mordent:** An ornament played as a rapid wiggle from the printed note to the note above and back.
- **Motif:** A short distinctive melody or rhythm used in different ways to form longer passages of music.
- **Ornaments:** Notes that decorate a melody.
- **Ostinato:** A rhythmic, melodic or harmonic pattern repeated many times in succession.
- **Passagework:** A constantly moving passage, often in patterns of quick notes.
- **Sequence:** The immediate repetition at a different pitch of a melody.
- **Syllabic:** One note per syllable
- **Variant:** A phrase whose shape resembles the original.
- **Vocalisation:** Wordless singing using a vowel syllable.
- **Word painting:** How the music reflects the meaning of a word or phrase in a text.

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## RHYTHM, METRE AND TEMPO

- **Accents:** Place a stronger attack on note.
- **Alla breve time:** 2/2 time signature.
- **Allegro di molto e con brio:** Quickly, with much vigour.
- **Anacrusis:** One or more notes that occurs before the first strong beat of a phrase.
- **A tempo:** Back to the original speed.
- **Compound quadruple time:** 12/8 metre. 4 dotted crotchet beats in a bar.
- **Fermata:** Pause on a note or rest.
- **Free time:** No established tempo.
- **Grave:** Very slow tempo.
- **Rallentando:** Slow down.
- **Riff:** A repeated pattern in popular music.
- **Rubato:** Tiny fluctuations in tempo for expressive effect.
- **Syncopation:** Emphasising beats of the bar that are normally unaccented.
- **Triplet:** 3 notes played in the time of 2.
- **Swung rhythm:** A pair of notes where the 1st is lengthened and 2nd is shortened.



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## PERFORMING FORCES

- **Arpeggiated chords:** A spread chord, normally from the bottom to the top.
- **Articulation:** The way the note is played, how it is attacked and prolonged.
- **Basso continuo:** A constantly repeating bass pattern above which a melody unfolds. Popular in the Baroque.
- **Bend:** A slight change in the pitch of the note while it is still sounding.
- **Bodhrán:** Hand held drum used in Irish traditional music.
- **Chest register:** The vocal technique usually used to sing in a low range. The area of resonance is the chest.
- **Concertino:** The group of soloists in a concerto grosso.
- **Concerto grosso:** Large scale composition for orchestra with a group of soloists.
- **Continuo:** A bass part played by one or more bass and/or chordal instruments in Baroque music.
- **Double stops:** Playing 2 notes at the same time on a string instrument.
- **Fill:** A brief improvised flourish to fill the gap between two phrases.
- **Fortepiano:** An early piano.
- **Glissando:** Slide from one note to another.
- **Harmonic:** A very high note on a string instrument produced by placing a finger on a string very lightly before plucking or bowing.
- **hurdy-gurdy:** String instrument with hand cranked wheel. Can produce drone sounds.
- **Improvisation:** A line that is not notated but freely chosen by the performer.
- **Kora:** A long necked harp, shaped like a lute, used in West African music.
- **Legato:** Play in a smooth and connected manner.
- **Mordent:** An ornament played as a rapid wiggle from the printed note to the note above and back.
- **Pull off:** Plucking the guitar string with the fretting hand.
- **Ripieno:** The accompaniment group in a concerto grosso.
- **Talking drum:** African drum with tonal variety, mimics patterns of speech.
- **Tenor:** A high male voice.
- **Tremolo:** The continuous, rapid repetition of a pitch or alternating pitches.
- **Sforzando:** An accent to be played with greater force.
- **Solo Concerto:** Concerto that has one soloist.
- **Stabbed chord:** Loud, detached chord.
- **Staccato:** Play in a short and detached manner.
- **Sustaining pedal:** Used to prolong a piano sound after the note is played.
- **Slides:** An ornament consisting of 2 notes that rapidly rise by step to the main note.
- **Uilleann pipes:** Type of Irish bagpipe used in folk music.
- **Vibrato:** Technique used to cause rapid variations in pitch.
- **Virtuosic:** A performance of outstanding technical ability.

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## TEXTURE

- **Antiphony:** Call and response. Music performed alternately by 2 groups.
- **Canon:** Contrapuntal device where the melody is overlapped by the same melody in another part starting a few notes later.
- **Colla voce:** Band follows the vocalist's tempo.
- **Contrapuntal:** A polyphonic texture where the parts play against each other and interweave.
- **Contrary motion:** Simultaneous melodic lines whose pitches move in opposite directions.
- **Dialoguing:** Motifs exchanged between different parts without overlapping.
- **Heterophonic:** Two or more instruments playing the same melody at the same time, with each embellishing it in a slightly different way.
- **Homophonic/melody dominated homophony:** Melody and accompaniment.
- **Homorhythm:** A type of homophonic texture where all parts have the same rhythm.
- **Imitation:** When a melody in one part is copied a few notes later in a different part.
- **Layering:** Different levels of repeating patterns are placed on top of each other. Entire layers drop in or out to provide contrast.
- **Monophonic:** A single line which can be played or sung by several people.
- **Pedal:** A sustained or repeated note sounded against changing harmonies.
- **Polyphonic:** When 2 or more different lines play simultaneously.
- **Solo:** An extended improvised melodic line played by a single instrument, over a chord sequence usually in the middle of the song.
- **Stretto:** Entries of the subject occur closer together than before, heightening the tension of the music.
- **Tutti:** A passage where all instruments are playing.
- **Unison:** More than one part playing the same melody at the same pitch.
- **Vamp:** A short repeated accompanying phrase.



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## HARMONY AND TONALITY

- **Alberti bass:** A figuration commonly used in the Classical period, made up of broken chords used as an accompaniment.
- **Bitonality:** When two different keys are used simultaneously.
- **Broken chords:** When the notes of a chord are played one at a time rather than simultaneously.
- **Cadence:** The end of a musical phrase, often harmonised by two chords.
- **Cadential 6/4:** A perfect cadence using chords IC-V-I.
- **Chromatic:** Notes that do not belong to the key or move by semitones.
- **Circle of 5ths:** A series of chords where the roots are a 5th higher or lower from the previous one.
- **Compound interval:** An interval extending over more than an octave. **Diatonic:** Notes that belong to the current key.
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- **Diminished 7th:** A 4 note chord comprising of minor third intervals.
- **Dominant:** The fifth degree of a scale.
- **Dissonance:** Sounds that are not pleasant when played together.
- **Dominant preparation:** A passage focused on the dominant chord to create expectation for a return to the tonic.
- **Enharmonic equivalent:** 2 notes or scales that are written differently but sound the same, eg. C# and Db.
- **Extended chord:** A chord with an added note such as a 9th or 11th.
- **Drone:** The term used in folk music for a pedal note. Sometimes consists of the tonic and dominant.
- **Figured bass:** A basso continuo part with figures and symbols to indicate the harmonies of the music.
- **Flattened 5th:** A 'blue note' used in jazz.
- **Functional harmony:** Music that uses cadences.
- **Harmonic pulse:** The rate at which chords change.
- **Imperfect cadence:** Chord I, II or IV to V. Sounds unfinished.
- **Interrupted cadence:** Chord V(7) followed by any chord except I. Sounds surprising.
- **Jazz harmony:** Chords used in jazz music. Usually extended chords with blue notes.
- **Modal:** A type of scale with 7 notes that is neither major or minor. Commonly used in folk music and jazz.
- **Non-diatonic:** Notes that don't belong to a key.
- **Parallel shift:** A succession of chords whose notes all move in the same direction.
- **Passing modulations:** When the new key only lasts for a few bars.
- **Pedal:** A sustained or repeated note sounded against changing harmonies.
- **Perfect cadence:** Chords V-I. A chord pattern that makes a phrase sound finished.
- **Quartal harmony:** Chords based on intervals of a 4th rather than the usual 3rds.
- **Relative minor:** The minor key based on the 6th note of the major scale.
- **Scalic:** Music based on scales ascending or descending in pitch.
- **Secondary dominant:** The dominant of the dominant.
- **Static harmony:** When the harmony remains on a single chord for a prolonged period of time.
- **Suspension:** A note that is held over to a chord in which it doesn't belong, creating a dissonance that is then resolved.
- **Tertiary relationship:** Chords moving in thirds
- **Tierce de picardie:** When a piece in a minor key ends with the tonic major chord.
- **Tritone:** An augmented 4th interval, considered the most dissonant interval.
- **Tonal:** Music that belongs to a key.
- **Turnaround:** A set of faster moving chords to get the music back to a repeated section.
- **Unrelated keys:** Keys that share very few similar notes. Eg, C major and F# major.