

verse

A section of a song that often has the same melody but different words. Some songs can have several verses.


vocals




The parts of the music that are sung.






Music Glossary of Terms





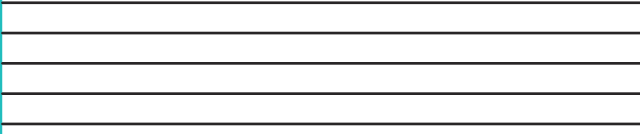

a cappella	To sing unaccompanied (without any instruments), either individually or as a group.
accelerando	Gradually getting faster. It is the opposite of <i>rallentando</i> .
adagio	At a slow speed.
allegro	At a quick speed.
andante	At a walking speed.
bars	Written music is usually divided into short sections called bars which have a specific number of beats in each one. They are shown by vertical lines going across the stave.
bass clef	This sign is at the start of a piece of music to let the performer know that the notes on the stave can be played by low instruments. 
beat	The steady pulse that keeps going through a piece of music and keeps you playing at a steady tempo. If the tempo changes during a piece of music, the pulse can speed up or slow down.




time signature	Two numbers that sit on top of each other at the start of a section of music. They show how many beats are in a bar and what note value each beat has. 
treble clef	This sign is at the start of a piece of music to let the performer know that the notes on the stave can be played by high instruments. 
triad	A three-note chord made up of a root (starting) note, a note that is a third above it and a note that is a fifth above it. 
tuned percussion	Instruments that play notes at specific pitches, such as a xylophone, chime bars or bells.
unison	Playing or singing the same notes together at the same time.
untuned percussion	Instruments that don't play different pitches but can be used in music to create pulse, rhythm and sound effects, such as drums, tambourines, claves and woodblocks.

syncopation	This is when a beat is emphasised when it normally wouldn't be or there could be a rest (pause) where there should be a note. Syncopation can be as simple as a person clapping on beats 2 and 4 of a piece of music, instead of beats 1 and 3.
tempo	How fast or slow the music is. The tempo can change during a piece of music.
ternary form	Music made up of three sections. The middle section usually contrasts with the outer two sections. Ternary form is often represented by the letters ABA.
texture	The effect of the melody, harmony and rhythm layered together. The texture can change within a piece of music.
timbre	Timbre (pronounced tam-ber) is the quality of a musical note. It is what makes a musical note sound different from another one. Words like round, brassy, sharp, or bright can be used to describe the timbre of a sound.





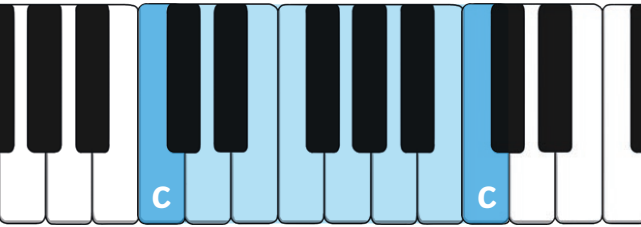
beat groupings	Groups of beats within a bar with a stronger first beat. They are often groups of two, three or four beats.
body percussion	Sounds produced using parts of the body, such as finger clicking, cheek pops and different vocal sounds.
call and response	Short phrases of music that sound like a question and its answer. Sometimes, individual performers and groups of performers might alternate singing or playing phrases to create this effect.
chord	A group of notes played together to create a musical effect. Some chords can sound harmonious but some can clash.
chord progression	A pattern of chords, played one after another.
chorus	A repeated section of a song.
crescendo	Gradually getting louder. It is the opposite of <i>decrescendo</i> .
crotchet	A one-beat note.  or 
crotchet rest	A one-beat pause. 




cuckoo interval	A difference in pitch between two notes which sounds like a cuckoo's call.
decrescendo	Gradually getting quieter. It is the opposite of <i>crescendo</i> .
dot notation	Dots used to show changes in pitch. It can be used to notate melodies.
drone	A sustained note or notes.
duet	A piece of music or song that is performed by two people.
duration	The length of a sound.
dynamics	How loud or soft music sounds. Dynamics can change during a piece of music. These are usually shown in the music as <i>p</i> (soft), <i>f</i> (loud), etc.
ensemble	A group of musicians, actors or dancers who perform together. The group could be any size or mix of instruments.
flat	In written music, this symbol lowers the pitch of a note by half a step. 
forte	Loud.
fortissimo	Very loud.

sharp	In written music, this symbol raises the pitch of a note by half a step. 
solo	A section of or a whole piece of music or song performed by one person.
staccato	When the notes sound short and spiky. It is the opposite of <i>legato</i> .
stave	A set of five horizontal lines and the spaces between them, used for notating music. 
staff notation	Note values, such as crotchets, quavers or minims, are placed on a set of five lines or the spaces between them to indicate their pitch. The higher the position of the note, the higher its pitch.
stick notation	A way of representing rhythms using sticks or lines. 

quaver rest	A half-beat pause. 
question and answer	Short phrases of music that sound like a question and its answer in a conversation.
rallentando	Gradually getting slower. It is the opposite of <i>accelerando</i> .
rest	A pause where no notes are played or held.
rhythm	Patterns of long and short sounds used in music. In songs, these can be based on the syllables in the lyrics.
round	A song (often in two, three or four parts) in which everybody sings the same melody but starts at different times. The overlapping parts create harmony.
scale	A set of notes ordered by their pitch.
semibreve	A four-beat note. 
semibreve rest	A four-beat pause. 

graphic notation/symbols/score	A way of writing music using pictures, marks or shapes to represent the different sounds.
harmony	A musical effect created by playing or singing two or more notes simultaneously.
improvisation	When a piece, or a part of a piece, of music is made up on the spot by one or more musicians.
interval	The difference in pitch between two notes.
key	A series of notes around which pieces of music and songs are written.
legato	When the music sounds smooth and flowing. It is the opposite of <i>staccato</i> .
major	Music based on a major scale which can make it sound happy. The simplest major scale can be played on a piano or keyboard using all the white notes, starting and ending on C.
melody	A tune or sequence of notes that makes sense on their own.
melody and accompaniment	A melody which has another line of music played with it.

mezzo	Moderately. This word can be added to <i>forte</i> or <i>piano</i> .
middle C	The note C which is in the middle of the piano or keyboard. 
minim	A two-beat note.  or 
minim rest	A two-beat pause. 
minor	Music based on a minor scale which can make it sound sad. The simplest minor scale can be played on a piano or keyboard using all the white notes, starting and ending on A.
octave	A distance between two notes of the same letter name. 
ostinato	A repeated musical rhythm or phrase.

partner song	Songs which are made by combining two or more complete melodies that could be sung separately. The melodies should be the same length and follow the same chord progression, e.g. 'She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain' and 'When the Saints'.
pentatonic scale	A scale made of five notes, e.g. C D E G A. It is often used in folk music.
phrase	A series of notes or a distinct rhythmic pattern that forms a section within a longer piece of music.
pianissimo	Very soft.
piano	Soft.
pitch	How high or low a note sounds.
pulse	The steady beat that keeps going through a piece of music and keeps you playing at a steady tempo. If the tempo changes during a piece of music, the beat can speed up or slow down.
quaver	A half-beat note.  or  Two joined together look like this  or 