Music terms and signs

Glossary - Eduqas GCSE Music

Dynamics

pp	*p*	*mp*	*mf*	*f*	*ff*
PIANISSIMO	PIANO	MEZZO PIANO	MEZZO FORTE	FORTE	FORTISSIMO
very soft (v.quiet)	soft (quiet)	moderately soft	moderately loud	loud	very loud

crescendo (cresc.)	diminuendo (dim.)
gradually getting louder	gradually getting quieter

Tempo

LARGO	LENTO/ ADAGIO	ANDANTE/ MODERATO	ALLGRETTO	ALLEGRO/ VIVACE	PRESTO
v.slow	slow	walking pace/ moderate	quite fast	quick/lively	very quick

- **Accelerando:** gradually getting faster
- **Rallentando/ritardando:** gradually getting slower
- **A tempo:** return to the original speed
- **Ritenuto:** in slower time
- **Rubato:** rhythms are played in a more free/flexible way ('robbed time').

Time values

NOTE	NAME	LENGTH (duration)	REST
	Semibreve	4 beats	
	Minim	2 beats	
	Crotchet	1 beats	
	Quaver	½ beats	
	Semiquaver	¼ beats	

A dot after the note increases its length by half:

NOTE	NAME	LENGTH (duration)	REST
	Dotted minim		
	Dotted crotchet		

Groups of quavers/semiquavers are usually beamed together:

Terms and signs

#	Sharp	Raises a note by a semitone.
♭	Flat	Lowers a note by a semitone.
♮	Natural	Cancels a previous sharp or flat for a note.
	Staccato	Detached.
	Slur	Play smoothly.
	Tie	Hold the notes for the full value of the tied notes.
<	Accent	Emphasize the note (play forcefully).
⌢	Pause	Hold the note longer.
sfz	Sforzando	Sudden stress/ accent.

Music terms and signs

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Key signatures
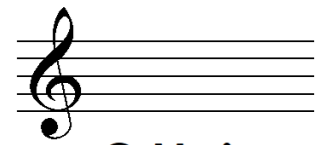
C Major

G Major   D Major   A Major   E Major

F Major   Bb Major   Eb Major   Ab Major

F C G D A E B

Order of sharps # →   ← Order of flats *b*

time signature
treble clef   barline   repeat sign
stave
bar
bass clef   notes on the lines   notes in the spaces
key signature

Treble clef notes
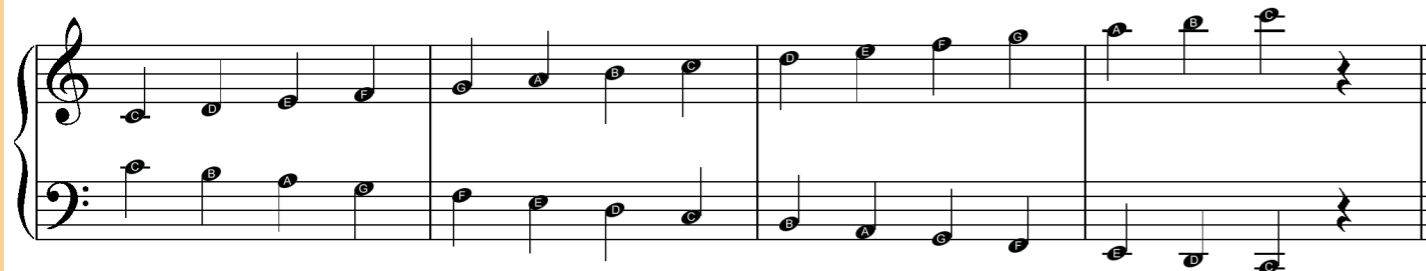
Bass clef notes

Time signatures

Two crotchet beats per bar: simple duple

Two dotted crotchet beats per bar: compound duple

Three crotchet beats per bar: simple triple

Three dotted crotchet beats per bar: compound triple

Four crotchet beats per bar: simple quadruple

Four dotted crotchet beats per bar: compound quadruple

3

A triplet is when three notes are played in the time of two.

JS Bach: Badinerie

Form and structure:

The piece is in **Binary** form (**AB**).

Section A is 16 bars long.

Section B is 24 bars long.

Each section is repeated (**AABB**).

Harmony:

Diatonic; mixture of root position and inverted chords; uses V7 chords and a Neapolitan sixth chord.

Imperfect and perfect cadences are clearly presented throughout. Both sections end with a **perfect cadence**.

Melody:

The movement is based on **two musical motifs**.

Both motifs begin with an **anacrusis**. Motif X is entirely **disjunct** whilst motif Y **combines disjunct and conjunct** movement.

Typical **ornaments and compositional devices** of the period are used including **trills, appoggiaturas** and **sequences**.

Dynamics:

Mostly *forte* throughout, although no markings appear on the score.

On some recordings, **terraced dynamics** (sudden changes) are included.

Metre and rhythm:

Simple duple time – 2/4 – with two crotchet beats in every bar.

Uses **ostinato rhythms** which form the basis of two short musical ideas (X and Y), consisting almost totally of **quavers and semi-quavers**.

Background details:

Composed by **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685 – 1750), one of the main composers of the **Baroque** era in music.

Badinerie is the last of seven movements from a larger piece called **Orchestral Suite No.2**.

The piece was composed between **1738-1739**.

Instrumentation:

Flute, string orchestra and harpsichord.

The score has five parts (flute, violin 1, violin 2, viola and cello). The harpsichord player reads from the cello line and plays the notes with their left hand whilst filling in the chords with their right hand.

Texture:

Homophonic: melody and accompaniment.

The flute and cello provide the main musical material; however, the 1st violin participates occasionally.

The 2nd violin and viola provide harmony with less busy musical lines.

Tonality:

Section A begins in **B minor** (tonic) and ends in **F# minor** (dominant minor).

Section B begins in **F# minor** (dominant minor) and ends in **B minor** (tonic).

Section A modulates from B minor through **A major** before arriving at F# minor.

Section B modulates from F# minor through **E minor, D major, G major** and **D major** before arriving at B minor.

Tempo:

The tempo is **Allegro** (quick, lively, bright), although not marked on the score.

Musical forms and devices

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Baroque era (1600-1750)

- Harpsichord
- Ornaments
- Terraced dynamics
- Basso continuo
- Small orchestra (mostly strings, plus some wind)
- Suite, sonata, oratorio, chorales, trio sonata
- **Bach, Handel, Vivaldi**

Classical era (1750-1810)

- Slightly larger orchestra
- Piano introduced
- Alberti bass
- String quartets
- Symphony, solo sonata, solo concerto
- Balanced, regular phrases
- **Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven**

Romantic era (1810-1910)

- Lyrical, expressive melodies
- Large orchestra
- Wider range of dynamics
- Richer harmonies and use of chromatic chords
- Programme music
- Opera symphony
- **Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Schumann, Dvorak, Brahms, Verdi, Wagner**

Scales and chords

A **CHORD** is a group of two or more notes played at the same time. A **TRIAD** has three notes. A **CHORD SEQUENCE/ PATTERN** is a series of chords. **DIATONIC HARMONY** is based on the chords of major/minor scales.

Primary chords I, IV, V
Secondary chords ii, iii, vi, vii

C Major Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
TONIC	SUPERTONIC	MEDIANT	SUBDOMINANT	DOMINANT	SUBMEDIANT	LEADING NOTE	TONIC

C Major Triads

I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii	I
C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B°	C

C Major Scales

Blues Scale in C

A Minor (Harmonic) Scale

Major pentatonic — G A B D E G
Minor pentatonic — G Bb C D F

Chromatic Scale on C

Form and structure

BINARY   A B
Two sections: A usually ends in a related key (e.g. dominant or relative minor), but B returns to the tonic. B will contain with some change/contrast.

TERNARY   A B A
Three sections: section B provides a contrast (e.g. new tune key change). A may return exactly or with some slight changes.

RONDO   A B A C A
A longer form: A returns throughout the piece, with contrasting sections called 'episodes', containing new ideas and using different keys.

MINUET AND TRIO   II: AB: II II:CD :II AB
The minuet was a type of graceful dance from the 17-18th century, and was often used as the 3rd movement in symphonies in the Classical era. The minuet had two repeated sections, the trio had two new repeated sections, with a return to the minuet at the end (no repeat).

VARIATIONS   A a A 𝒜
The main theme (tune) is repeated and developed a number of times in a variety of different ways.

STROPHIC   A A A
A simple form where the song uses the same melody over and over.

Devices

Repetition	A musical idea is repeated exactly.
Imitation	An idea is copied in another part.
Sequence	Repetition of an idea in the same part at a higher/lower pitch.
Ostinato	A short, repeated pattern or phrase.
Drone	A long held or constantly repeated note(s).
Arpeggio/ broken chord	The notes of a chord played individually.
Alberti bass	A broken chord accompaniment (I,V,iii,V) common in the Classical era.
Anacrusis	An 'up-beat' or pick-up before the first strong beat.
Dotted rhythms	A rhythm using dotted notes (gives a 'jagged' or 'bouncy' type of effect).
Syncopation	Off beat accents.
Conjunct	Notes that move in steps.
Disjunct	Notes that move in leaps/ intervals.
Regular phrasing	Balanced parts of a melody (like the phrases in a sentence) e.g. four bar phrases.

Cadences
The two chords at the end of a phrase

Perfect	V-I	Strong ending – sounds 'finished'; a musical full stop.
Plagal	IV-I	Sounds finished but 'softer'; Amen.
Imperfect	I-V, ii-V, vi-V	Sounds unfinished.
Interrupted	V-vi	Moves to an unexpected chord; 'surprise'.

Toto: Africa

Soft rock

Form and structure:

The piece is in **strophic** or **verse-chorus** form.

Intro	Verse 1 / Verse 2	Chorus 1 / Chorus 2	Link 1 / Link 2	Instrumental	Chorus 3	Outro
1 – 4	5 – 39 / 14 – 39	40 – 57	58 – 65	66 – 82	40 – 92	93 – 96
4 bars	35 bars / 26 bars	18 bars	8 bars	17 bars	22 bars	4 bars

Metre and rhythm:

Simple duple time – 2/2 (split common time) – with two minim beats in every bar.

Uses distinctive **ostinato rhythms** for both riffs, consisting almost totally of **quavers**, with constant use of **syncopation**.

Vocal rhythm looks complex but follows the natural rhythm of the lyrics.

Background details:

Composed by band members **David Paich** and **Jeff Porcaro**.

Recorded by the American rock band Toto in **1981** for their fourth studio album entitled **Toto IV**.

Released in **1982** and reached number one in America on 5 February **1983**.

Genre: **soft rock**.

Harmony:

Diatonic; mixture of root position and inverted chords.

Riff a can be heard during the intro, verses, link sections, instrumental and outro. This riff uses a three-chord pattern: **A** – **G♯m** – **C♯m**.

Choruses use a standard chord pattern: **vi** (F♯m) – **IV** (D) – **I** (A) – **V** (E).

The **harmonic rhythm** (the rate of chord change) is mostly once per bar.

Melody:

Mostly **conjunct** (moving in step) with a **wide vocal range**.

Riff b uses the **pentatonic scale** (interpreted through E major):

Vocal improvisations occur towards the end of the song.

Texture:

Homophonic: melody and accompaniment.

Tonality:

The majority of the song is in **B major** whilst the choruses are all in **A major**.

Tempo:

The tempo is **moderately fast**.

Instrumentation:

Rock band: drum kit with additional percussion, lead and bass guitars, synthesisers, male lead vocals and male backing vocals.

Dynamics:

Most of the song is *mezzo-forte* (moderately loud) whilst the choruses are *forte*.

Film Music

Area of study 3 - Eduqas GCSE Music

Some film **SOUNDTRACKS** include specially composed **SCORES**, either for orchestra (e.g. composers like John Williams, Ennio Morricone) or songs written especially for the film (e.g. Disney films). Other films use pre-existing music e.g. popular songs from the era/place in which the film is set.

STRINGS	WOODWIND
• Violin	• Flute
• Cello	• Clarinet
• Viola	• Oboe
• Double bass	• Bassoon
• Harp	• Saxophone
BRASS	**KEYBOARDS**
• Trumpet	• Piano
• Trombone	• Electronic keyboard
• French horn	• Harpsichord
• Tuba	• Organ
PERCUSSION	• Synthesizer
• Bass drum	**OTHER**
• Snare drum	• Electric guitar
• Triangle	• Bass guitar
• Cymbal	• Spanish/classical guitar
• Drum kit (untuned)	• Traditional world instruments
• Timpani	
• Glockenspiel	
• Xylophone (tuned)	

Musical elements

Film composers use the **MUSICAL ELEMENTS** (tempo, texture, dynamics, timbre, tonality, rhythm, melody, harmony) to create mood and atmosphere to help to tell the story and enhance the action.

For example:
In a **sad, reflective scene,** a composer might use slow tempo, minor tonality, soft dynamics, legato, homophonic texture, long sustained notes, and a conjunct melody.

An **exciting car chase scene** in a thriller might have a fast tempo, busy, polyphonic texture, dissonant chords, loud dynamics, syncopated rhythms, a disjunct melody and short riffs.
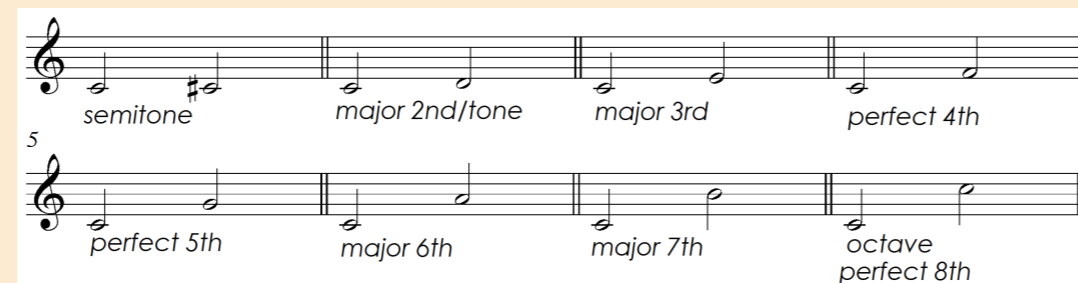
A scene where the **superhero 'saves the day'** might use a major tonality, brass fanfares, loud dynamics, accents, 4^{ths} and 5^{ths} (intervals).

Composers will often use **CONTRASTS** to create effect (e.g. using a wide range of pitch from very high to very low).

Intervals

Film composers often use intervals to create a particular effect (e.g. a rising perfect 4th sounds 'heroic', and a semitone can sound 'menacing').

An **interval** is the distance between two notes.

semitone   major 2nd/tone   major 3rd   perfect 4th
perfect 5th   major 6th   major 7th   octave perfect 8th

Rising interval: moving upwards (ascending)
Falling interval: moving downwards (descending)

Specific instrumental terms

Pizzicato	Plucking the strings.
Divisi	Two parts sharing the same musical line.
Double stopping	Playing two strings at the same time.
Arco	Using a bow to play a stringed instrument.
Tremolo	A 'trembling' effect, moving rapidly on the same note or between two chords (e.g. using the bow rapidly back and forth).
Tongued	A technique to make the notes sound separated (woodwind/brass).
Slurred	Notes are played smoothly.
Muted	Using a mute to change/dampen the sound (brass/strings).
Drum roll	Notes/beats in rapid succession.
Glissando	A rapid glide over the notes.
Trill	Alternating rapidly between two notes.
Vibrato	Making the notes 'wobble' up and down for expression.

Composers also use:

Theme	The main tune/melody.
Motif	A short musical idea (melodic or rhythmic).
Leitmotif	A recurring musical idea linked to a character/object or place (e.g. Darth Vader's motif in Star Wars).
Underscoring	Music playing underneath the dialogue.
Scalic	Melody follows the notes of a scale.
Triadic	Melody moves around the notes of a triad.
Fanfare	Short tune often played by brass instruments, to announce someone/something important; based on the pitches of a chord.
Pedal note	A long, sustained note, usually in the bass/lower notes.
Ostinato/riff	A short, repeated pattern.
Conjunct	The melody moves by step.
Disjunct	The melody moves with leaps/intervals.
Consonant harmony	Sounds 'good' together.
Dissonant harmony	Sounds 'clashy'.
Chromatic harmony	Uses lots of semitones/accidentals that's not in the home key.
Minimalism	A style of music using repetition of short phrases which change gradually over time.

Popular Music

Area of study 4 - Eduqas GCSE Music

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Popular music includes:

- **POP**
- **ROCK**
- **RAP**
- **HIP HOP**
- **REGGAE**

Plus many other genres, e.g. soul, ska, heavy metal, R&B, country, rock'n'roll.

FUSION: when two different styles are mixed together. This can be two styles of popular music e.g. 'rap metal', or could combine a popular music genre with other styles, folk-rock, gospel, world music, classical to create a new and interesting sound. **Jazz fusion** (jazz and pop) is a popular genre.

Instruments

ELECTRIC GUITAR:
- Lead guitar: plays the melody/ solos/riffs
- Rhythm guitar: plays the chords/ accompaniment.

BASS GUITAR: plays the bass line.
DRUM KIT: provides the beat.
LEAD SINGER: the main vocalist.
BACKING VOCALS: singers who provide harmony.

Pop/rock groups may also include **acoustic** (not electric) instruments e.g. trumpet, trombone, saxophone and/or electronic keyboards/synthesizers.

Features and techniques found in popular music

Riff	A short, repeated pattern.
Hammer on	Finger brought sharply down onto the string.
Pitch bend	Altering (bending) the pitch slightly.
Power chords	A guitar chord using the root and 5th note (no 3rd).
Distortion	An effect which distorts the sound (creates a 'grungy' sound).
Slap bass	A percussive sound on the bass guitar made by bouncing the strings on the fret board.
Fill	A short, improvised drum solo.
Rim shot	Rim and head of drum hit at same time.
Belt	A bright, powerful vocal sound, high in the chest voice.
Falsetto	Male voice in a higher than usual range.
Syllabic	One note sung per syllable.
Melismatic	Each syllable sung to a number of different notes.
A cappella	Voices singing without instrumental accompaniment.

The structure of a pop/rock song may include:

INTRO: short opening section, usually instrumental.
VERSE: same music but different lyrics each time.
CHORUS: repeated with the same lyrics each time (refrain).
MIDDLE EIGHT: a link section, often eight bars, with different musical ideas.
BRIDGE: a link/transition between two sections.
OUTRO: an ending to finish the song (coda).

*You may also hear a pre-chorus, instrumental interlude or instrumental solo.

*Strophic songs, 32 bar songs (AABA) and 12 bar blues are also found in popular music.

A typical rock ballad in verse-chorus form could follow the pattern:

- Intro
- Verse 1
- Chorus
- Verse 2
- Chorus
- MiddleEight
- Chorus
- Outro

Technology

Amplified	Made louder (with an **amplifier**).
Synthesized	Sounds created electronically.
Panning	Moving the sound between left and right speakers.
Phasing	A delay effect.
Sample	A short section of music that is reused (e.g. looped, layered).
Reverb	An electronic **echo** effect.