

# Music Explained.



## **What is music?**

Sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. People sing music or play it on instruments.

*Some examples of music I play are hip hop, pop, dance, classical, church music, chamber music , country music , rock music , soul music, reggae and jazz.*

The word music could also refer to written or printed signs that represent the sounds to be played or sung in a piece of music e.g. *sheet music*.

## **What is a musician?**

A musician is a person who plays a musical instrument, especially as a profession, or is musically talented.

### **Some of the most popular musicians?**

- Michael Jackson
- Hugh Masekela
- Rihanna
- Whitney Houston
- Kendrick Lamar

### **What is a producer?**

A music producer or record producer is someone who oversees and manages the sound recording and production of a band or performer's music, which may range from recording one song to recording a lengthy concept album. A producer has many, varying roles during the recording process.

### **Some of the most popular producers?**

- Dr Dre
- [Rappin' Prince Cyanide](#)
- Robbie Malinga
- David Guetta
- Black Coffee

### **Some of the careers in music to be aware of.**

- Sound Engineering
- Guitarist
- Record Producer
- Singer
- Music Promoter

### **What is a music genre?**

A music genre is a conventional category that identifies some pieces of music as belonging to a shared tradition or set of conventions. It is to be distinguished from musical form and musical style, although in practice these terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

### **What are the types of music genres out there?**

- . Blues
- . Classical.
- . Country.
- . Electronic.
- . Folk.
- . Jazz.
- . New age.
- . Reggae

### **What determines a music genre?**

You can find these patterns in any music dynamic: rhythm, speed, progression, key, instrumentation, whatever. You determine the genre of a song by identifying these patterns, and associating them with the description of a genre. Emphasis in rhythm and percussive instruments.

### **Music terms you need to know to understand music:**

#### *Accent*

An emphasis or “punch” at the beginning of a musical sound.

#### *Adagio (Italian)*

Meaning a slow tempo or slow speed. Sometimes it is the name of a work like Mozart's Adagio for Violin and Orchestra.

#### *Andante (Italian)*

Meaning a walking tempo or walking pace; a moderate speed.

#### *Bar/Measure*

A specific number of musical sounds that are organized within a measure, and that are contained within two solid lines called bar lines.

#### *Beat/Pulse*

Regular pattern within a bar or measure.

#### *Cadenza (Italian)*

An extended solo (played alone) for the soloist in a concerto. A cadenza can also be a solo in an orchestral work for one or a group of instruments.

#### *Chorale*

Originally refers to a German Protestant hymn tune. In composition, it typically means a choral composition for voices or instruments, such as a Bach chorale. The word “Chorale” is also sometimes used as the name of a choir or chorus.

### *Chord*

When two or more notes or pitches are sounded simultaneously a chord is created.

### *Concerto*

A work for one performer or a group of performers with orchestral accompaniment.

### *Crescendo (Italian)*

Meaning growing, as in a swelling of sound, or becoming louder.

### *Decrescendo/Diminuendo (Italian)*

Getting softer; the opposite of crescendo.

### *Dolce (Italian)*

Meaning to be performed sweetly or delicately.

### *Downbeat*

The first beat in a measure as conducted by the leader of an ensemble is called the downbeat.

### *Ensemble*

- 1) A group of musicians playing together like an orchestra or a string quartet;
- 2) The actual act of playing as a unit, or performing together.

### *Fanfare*

A musical work used as an announcement, often played by the brass section of the orchestra or a single instrumentalist like a trumpet.

### *Fermata*

A symbol that tells the performer to hold the note as long as s/he would like, but certainly longer than the written note value.

### *Flat*

When a flat symbol  $\flat$  is added to a note it lowers the note by a half-step. For example, if we have the note D and we add a flat to it the note now becomes D-flat or D  $\flat$ .

### *Form*

The shape or organization of a musical composition.

### *Forte (Italian)*

Loud or strong.

*Fortissimo (Italian)*

Louder than forte.

*Half-step*

A musical interval (as E-F or B-C) equivalent to  $\frac{1}{12}$  of an octave.

*Harmony*

The simultaneous combination of pitches, especially when blended into chords that are pleasing to the ear.

*Instrumentation*

This can also be called orchestration when assigned to an orchestra. It is the way a composer or arranger takes musical sounds and assigns them to specific instruments.

*Key*

A group of pitches based on a particular tonic, and comprising a scale, regarded as forming the tonal basis of a piece or section of music.

*Larghetto (Italian)*

Usually slightly faster than largo.

*Largo (Italian)*

Meaning wide, broad. In music a tempo marking meaning to be performed quite slowly.

*Major*

This refers to a specific chord or key:

A. When it refers to a chord, then the chord has three musical pitches with the space between the first and second pitches being four half steps, and the distance between the second and third pitches being three half steps. A half step is the smallest interval (space or distance) in traditional western classical music. It is the distance from any key on the piano to the closest adjoining key (white or black).

B. When major refers to a key, it is the central tonality upon which a work or movement is constructed, and will usually use the same tonic chord as the central or "destination" chord of the composition. For example, the Schumann Symphony No. 3 is in the key of E-flat major, and the first and last movements begin and end in the key of E-flat. Of course many keys and chords are used throughout this five movement work, but the most prominent one is E-flat.

*Measure*

A measurement of time in music that contains a specific number of pulses defined by a time signature, and that is contained within bar lines.

### *Melody*

An identifiable succession of musical sounds.

### *Minor*

This refers to a specific chord or key.

A. When it refers to a chord the chord will have three different pitches. From the first to the second pitch or note there are three half steps, and the distance between the second and third pitch there are four half steps.

B. When minor refers to a key, it is the central tonality upon which a work or movement is constructed, and will usually use the same tonic chord as the central chord. For example, the first movement of Beethoven's 5th Symphony is in c minor. The most prominent chord is a c minor chord and the central pitch is a C. Of course many keys and chords are used throughout the movement.

### *Molto vivace (Italian)*

Very lively, or at a very quick speed.

### *Motif*

An identifiable succession of musical sounds, but shorter than a complete melody.

### *Movement*

A large unit within a symphony or concerto. It usually is comprised of many themes or musical ideas.

### *Notes*

Symbols to represent sounds or pitches and duration of those sounds.

### *Octave*

The interval between two musical notes, the upper one of which has twice the pitch of the lower one. In a major or minor scale, the distance of this interval lies eight steps\* away, hence the term "octave." ("in the major or minor scales, the eight steps are actually a combination of "whole steps" and "half-steps")

### *Opus (Latin)*

Meaning work. Work numbers are usually assigned by the composer. Often the opus numbers are assigned in order of composition, but at times the numbers are assigned by order of publication.

### *Pianissimo (Italian)*

Softer than piano.

*Piano (Italian)*

Gently, soft.

*Pitch*

The frequency\* of a note determining how high or low it sounds (\* “frequency” in this context is the number of complete oscillations per second of energy as sound in the form of sound-waves).

*Piu (Italian)*

More. For example, piu piano would mean more softly.

*Resolution*

A group of chords can create harmonic tension. When this tension is released with a calm chord, or a chord without tension, it is “resolved” and is thus called a resolution.

*Scale*

An ordered succession of adjacent pitches, arranged in a sequence of whole steps and half steps, for example the major or minor scales. A specific scale is defined by its characteristic interval pattern and by its most prominent pitch, known as its tonic.

*Sempre (Italian)*

Always. For example, sempre forte would mean always loud.

*Sempre piu (Italian)*

Always more.

*Sforzando (Italian)*

Forceful, usually accented.

*Sharp*

When a sharp symbol # is added to a note it raises the note by a half-step. For example, if we have the note G and we add a sharp to it the note now becomes G-sharp, or G#.

*Solo*

For one player (musician), or to be played alone. In an orchestral work it has come to mean the important line or part for one player, while soli would be the same for a group or section of players.

*Step (or “whole step”)*

A musical interval between pitches (such as C–D or C–B ♭ ) comprising two half steps.

*Symphonic form*

The structure of a work for large ensemble.

*Tempo (Italian)*

The rate of speed of a musical work.

*Theme*

The most important melody at any specific time in a musical work. There can be one main theme in a work, or many themes.

*Tonality*

The organization of all the tones and harmonies of a piece of music in relation to a tonic.

*Tonic*

A pitch that is the first degree of a major or minor scale and the tonal center of a piece composed in a particular key.

*Upbeat*

The preparatory sign given prior to the first beat in a bar

**Types of music instruments and short descriptions:**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Description</b>
Piano	A large musical instrument played by pressing the black and white keys on the keyboard. The sound is produced by small hammers hitting the metal strings inside the piano.
Drum	A musical instrument made of a hollow round frame with plastic or skin stretched tightly across one or both ends. You play it by hitting it with sticks or with your hands.  Examples: <i>a bass drum</i> <i>a regular drum beat</i>
Percussion	Musical instruments that you play by hitting them with your hand or with a stick, for example drums.

Guitar	A musical instrument that usually has six strings, that you play with your fingers or with a plectrum <i>(an acoustic/ an electric/a classical, etc. Guitar).</i>
Organ	A large musical instrument with keys like a piano. Sounds are produced by air forced through pipes. <i>compare <b>harmonium</b>.</i> An electric organ is similar to a pipe organ, but without pipes. <i>see also <b>barrel organ, mouth organ</b>.</i>
Synthesizer	an electronic machine for producing different sounds. Synthesizers are used as musical instruments, especially for copying the sounds of other instruments, and for copying speech sounds.
Snare	The metal strings that are stretched across the bottom of a snare drum.

### The link between music and entertainment:

Music is composed and performed for many purposes, ranging from aesthetic pleasure, religious or ceremonial purposes, or as an entertainment product for the marketplace. When music was only available through sheet music scores, such as during the Classical and Romantic eras, music lovers would buy the sheet music of their favourite pieces and songs so that they could perform them at home on the piano.

With the advent of sound recording, records of popular songs, rather than sheet music became the dominant way that music lovers would enjoy their favourite songs. With the advent of home tape recorders in the 1980s and digital music in the 1990s, music lovers could make tapes or playlists of their favourite songs and take them with them on a portable cassette player or MP3 player and or stream their favourite songs straight from the internet.

[www.ourteamdope.ml](http://www.ourteamdope.ml) is a good example of a free streaming site. Some music lovers create mixtapes of their favorite songs, which serve as a "self-portrait, a gesture of friendship, prescription for an ideal party and an environment consisting solely of what is most ardently loved.

Amateur musicians can compose or perform music for their own pleasure, and derive their income elsewhere. Professional musicians are employed by a range of institutions and organisations, including armed forces (in marching bands, concert bands and popular music groups), churches and synagogues, symphony orchestras, broadcasting or film production companies, and music schools.

Professional musicians sometimes work as freelancers or session musicians, seeking contracts and engagements in a variety of settings. There are often many links between amateur and professional musicians. Beginning amateur musicians take lessons with professional musicians. In community settings, advanced amateur musicians perform with professional musicians in a variety of ensembles such as community concert bands and community orchestras.

A distinction is often made between music performed for a live audience and music that is performed in a studio so that it can be recorded and distributed through the music retail system or the broadcasting system. However, there are also many cases where a live performance in front of an audience is also recorded and distributed. Live concert recordings are popular in both classical music and in popular music forms such as rock, where illegally taped live concerts are prized by music lovers. In the jam band scene, live, improvised jam sessions are preferred to studio recordings.

### **The link between music and radio.**

The radio and music industry work symbiotically with each other, meaning that they depend on each other to help them grow, and be successful. The radio helps to influence music sales. Before the 1980's radio was the most important broadcast medium for determining the form and content of popular music. The radio compiles playlists which combine the favourite tracks of all the different DJs and producers to provide a varied mix of music and introduces exciting new artists alongside those more established.

They make deals with the record companies on how many times their song will be played within a certain length of time, in order to ensure maximum airplay. Radio 1's daytime programme is generally built around playlist records, because they try to 'bring the best new music to the widest possible audience'. Unfortunately the songs that reach the play lists are decided upon by the Head of Music, so it is difficult for up and coming artists to really get enough airtime.

### **What is good music in my opinion.**

Different people appreciate different kinds of music, music is "good" when it touches its audience. If you hear something that catches and holds your interest, then it's good music. A person with good taste in music typically knows what someone may like even before they do. On the other hand, when a person tells you that you have great taste in music it can also mean you agree with what they like. Or that you have the same taste as they do.

For more information visit: [www.themostproperties.ml](http://www.themostproperties.ml)

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