



Government of **Western Australia**  
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

## **MUSIC GLOSSARY**

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**FOR THE WACE MUSIC SYLLABUSES**

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## Glossary

For the purposes of the WACE Music syllabuses, the following definitions will apply.

Notes:

- musical terms with commonly accepted definitions (e.g. forte, allegro, falsetto) have not been included in this glossary
- some definitions vary according to musical style. These variations have been highlighted where deemed appropriate
- this glossary is a support resource for the syllabuses and does not constitute an exhaustive list of terms that students are required to comprehend and apply in their schoolwork and examinations.

### 12-bar blues

Standard chord progression and musical form used in jazz and contemporary music. In its simplest form (there are many variations) the progression uses the primary triads from the major key in the following pattern: I | I | I | I | IV | IV | I | I | V | IV | I | I.

### accent

An emphasis placed on a particular note or series of notes. Indicated by a symbol above or below the note (e.g.  $\hat{\cdot}$   $\hat{\cdot}$   $\bar{\cdot}$ ) or an abbreviation, such as *sf*.

### accidental

A symbol placed before a note to indicate an alteration of its pitch. A sharp (#) raises a note one semitone, a double sharp (x) raises a note two semitones, a flat (b) lowers a note one semitone, a double flat (bb) lowers a note two semitones and a natural (n) restores a note to its original pitch.


### accompaniment

A part in a musical work that usually provides harmonic support and rhythmic structure for the main melody or lead. It also describes the composed music, arrangement, or improvised performance that accompanies and supports the soloist or main melodic part. The accompaniment can be provided by a single instrument or part, or an entire ensemble.

### Alberti bass

Accompaniment pattern where a three-note chord is broken up and played in the order: lowest, highest, middle, highest. Named after Domenico Alberti who used this accompaniment style extensively.

### alto clef

The clef () used by some instruments/parts (most often the viola). It indicates that 'middle C' is located on the third line of the staff.

### anacrusis

An incomplete bar at the beginning of a musical work or phrase. The remaining value of this incomplete bar is accounted for in the final bar. Also referred to as upbeat or pick-up.

**arpeggio**

A type of broken chord where the notes of the block chord are played in ascending or descending order. The process of converting a block chord to an arpeggio is referred to as arpeggiation.

**arrangement**

The process of making creative choices to modify a music work. For example, it could be arranged for and performed by a different combination of voices or instruments, or arranged/performed in a different musical style.

**articulation**

The way a note is sung or played. **See** accent, *legato* and *staccato*.

**atonal**

Term used to describe a musical work that has no clear tonic or tonal centre.

**augmentation**

Lengthening the durations of all the notes in a melody by the same factor (e.g. doubling).

**augmented**

May refer to:

- interval: a major or perfect interval that is widened by one semitone (e.g. C-E#)
- triad: a major triad with the fifth degree raised by one semitone (e.g. C-E-G#).

**balance**

The consideration of the volume of voices and/or instruments in a musical work or ensemble to achieve an overall sound that is clear. For example, accompanying parts may be softened to ensure a lead part can be clearly heard.


**bar**

The pitches, rhythms and rests occurring between two bar lines on a musical staff. The length of a bar is usually determined by the time signature/metre. Also referred to as measure.

**bar line**

Vertical lines that divide the musical staff into bars of certain length, usually in accordance with a time signature.

**bass clef**

The clef used by lower instruments/parts, also called the F clef () as it indicates the location of the F note on the staff.

**beat**

The unit of measurement of rhythmic pulse in music. Beats are organised and emphasised according to time signature and tempo.

**binary**

Organisation of a musical work into two contrasting sections (AB), both of which are usually repeated. The sections can be the same length (simple binary: AB) or different lengths (extended binary: AB/AB). A small part of the A section may return (rounded binary:  $\parallel$ : A  $\parallel$ : B A  $\parallel$ ).

**blend**

The adjustment of the timbre of different voices/instruments within an ensemble, in order to achieve a group sound in which no one part dominates the others.

**blues scale**

A six-note scale, comprising a minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, augmented 4<sup>th</sup>/diminished 5<sup>th</sup>, perfect 5<sup>th</sup> and minor 7<sup>th</sup> (e.g. C E $\flat$  F G $\flat$  G B $\flat$ ). This scale is prevalent in jazz and contemporary music.

**bridge**

A section that links two or more sections of a musical work, also called a transition passage, in which new musical material is usually introduced. Bridge also refers to the B section in AABA form. In contemporary music, sometimes also referred to as middle 8.

**cadence**

A progression of chords (usually two) that is used to end a phrase, section or musical work.

**call and response**

A melodic or rhythmic pattern consisting of alternating sections of calls – or questions – usually improvised by a leader, and responses that are sung or played by an individual or group. The response, or answer, is different from the improvised call and is usually not an echo.

**canon**

A compositional technique where a melody is exactly imitated by one or more voices/instruments after a specified duration (e.g. after two beats, or a whole bar).

**chant**

The repetitive rhythmic speaking or singing of words or sounds, using a limited pitch set.

**chord**

A collection of two or more notes played simultaneously. Root position refers to the standard organisation of the tonic note with two notes stacked above (usually a third and a fifth above the tonic). A first inversion chord contains the same notes, but starts on the third and a second inversion chord starts on the fifth. Chords can have added notes, such as a seventh, and can be identified and described using Roman numerals (e.g. V, I, I $\flat$ ) or chord names (e.g. C major, Cmaj, C<sup>9</sup>, C/E).

**chorus**

May refer to:

- musical form: a section of a song that is usually repeated after each verse. The chorus usually remains unchanged, alternating with verses, which often feature different lyrics. In jazz, a chorus is usually a single statement of the harmonic/melodic pattern that repeats throughout with some variation (**see** head)
- group of musicians: a large group of singers, such as an opera or orchestral chorus.

**chromatic**

May refer to:

- notes: notes not belonging to the diatonic scale, or the prevailing scale in a musical work
- harmony: chords with one or more notes not belonging to the prevailing scale in a musical work
- scale type. **See** chromatic scale.

**chromatic scale**

A twelve-note scale with all notes a semitone apart.

**circle of fifths**

A representation of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale, arranged to show closely related keys (those that share mostly common notes, e.g. C major and G major). In composition, the circle of fifths can be employed to select a suitable key for modulation or a series of modulations. Also referred to as the circle of fourths and the cycle of fourths/fifths.

**clef**

Symbol usually placed at the beginning of each musical staff to indicate the location of a particular note. **See** alto clef, bass clef, tenor clef and treble clef.

**coda**

A section that occurs in addition to the defined form to finish a musical work.

**compositional devices**

Techniques that composers use to create, develop, manipulate and enhance their musical ideas. **See** Alberti bass, augmentation, call and response, diminution, double-time, half-time, imitation, inversion, ostinato, pedal, riff and sequence.

**compound time**

Compound time (e.g.  $\frac{6}{8}$   $\frac{9}{8}$   $\frac{12}{8}$ ) is organised into dotted beats that subdivide evenly into three or six.

**consonance**

The effect of stability and agreement made by certain combinations of musical sounds. The concept is subjective, relative to the musical context and changes over time. The opposite of dissonance.

**contemporary music**

Contemporary music encompasses popular music from the 1950s to the present day. It is predominantly commercial in nature and is constantly evolving through the influence of youth culture and the emergence of new artists and styles.

**cover (version)**

In contemporary music, one artist's performance or recording of the work of another. A cover, or cover version, is typically varied in its interpretation, rather than aiming to replicate the original performance. Similar to an arrangement in jazz or western art music.

**culture**

The values, attitudes, customs, practices, language and conventions commonly shared by a particular group that form a part of their group identity and contribute towards a sense of shared understanding.

**diatonic**

Intervals, chords, harmonies and musical passages made up of the notes of the prevailing key. The opposite of chromatic.

**diminished**

May refer to:

- interval: a minor interval that is narrowed by one semitone (e.g. A-C $\flat$ )
- triad: a minor chord with the fifth degree lowered by one semitone (e.g. C-E $\flat$ -G $\flat$ ).

**diminution**

Shortening the durations of all the notes in a melody by the same factor (e.g. halving).

**dissonance**

The effect of tension or disturbance made by certain combinations of musical sounds. The concept is subjective, relative to the musical context and changes over time. The opposite of consonance.


**dotted note**

A dot after a note or rest extends the note or rest by half its original value. For example, a dotted minim (♩.) has a value of three crotchet beats and a dotted crotchet (♩.) has a value of one and a half crotchet beats.

**double-time**

A compositional device in jazz (sometimes employed in other music contexts) when rhythm values are halved (i.e. twice as many notes are played compared to standard time) without altering the pace of the chord changes. The effect is most prominent in the percussion and occasionally the bass.

**duplet**

In compound time, two notes played in the time of three of the same value (e.g. .

**dynamics**

The relative volume (loudness) of sound.

**elements of music**

The most important components or building blocks of music. **See** dynamics, expression, form/structure, harmony, key, melody, pitch, rhythm, tempo, texture, timbre and tonality.

**enharmonic**

May refer to:

- notes: enharmonic equivalents are the alternative ways of naming the same pitch (e.g. C#, Db)
- intervals: enharmonic intervals are those that differ in name, but not in pitch (in the context of equal temperament). For example, a major third, A to C#, and a diminished fourth, A to Db.

**ensemble**

May refer to:

- groups: a group of musicians or instruments (e.g. orchestra, choir, concert band, rock band or jazz band)
- musicianship: the degree to which a group of musicians plays with appropriate balance, blend and coordination of articulation and expression.

**expression**

The aspects of musical performance associated with the personal response or interpretation of the performer. In musical works, expression is specified in varying degrees by the composer.

**See** expressive elements.

**expressive elements**

Particular kinds of emphasis or colour applied to notes that alter or enhance the overall sound and interpretation of music. **See** articulation, dynamics, tempo and timbre.

**form/structure**

The plan or design of a musical work. Often defined by identifying sections of the work and describing the similarities and differences between sections. **See** 12-bar blues, binary, rondo, sonata, song form, strophic, ternary, theme and variations, and through-composed.

**guide tones**

In jazz harmony, the third and seventh scale degrees of each chord in a harmonic progression. The thirds and sevenths determine whether a chord is major, minor, dominant, etc. Guide tones are useful for creating accompaniment lines (such as long notes to be played by a horn section) or as a basis for melodic improvisation.

**guitar chord symbol**

Symbol illustrating the finger position of a chord on the fretboard of a guitar. Includes the chord name and the illustration, e.g.

**half-time**

A compositional device in jazz (sometimes employed in other music contexts) when rhythm values are doubled (i.e. half as many notes are played compared to standard time) without altering the pace of the chord changes. The effect is most prominent in the percussion and occasionally the bass.

**harmonic/chord progression**

A sequence of chords that is the basis for a musical work.

**harmonising**

May refer to:

- performing: singing or playing in such a way as to form harmony with the melody notes
- composing and arranging: the process of assigning chord notes to different parts of a musical ensemble, or solo instrument capable of performing multiple simultaneous notes. The chords may be listed explicitly, or may be inferred from the melody.

**harmony**

The simultaneous sounding of two or more notes or pitches and the resulting relationship between them. As an element of music, harmony primarily refers to the chords and/or chord progression/s that are the basis of a musical work.

**head**

In jazz, the melody and its accompanying harmonic progression, usually notated as a single staff for the melody with chord symbols above. The head typically alternates with sections of improvisation which are based on the head's harmonic progression. Also referred to as chorus.

**homophonic**

Musical texture describing a single melodic layer supported by accompaniment.

**hook**

A memorable melodic or rhythmic pattern or idea that is repeated several times throughout a musical work, common in jazz and contemporary music.

**imitation**

The repetition of a melody, phrase or idea by a different voice or instrument.

**improvisation**

Spontaneously extending and varying music ideas in response to initial material or responses invented by other performers in an ensemble.



**interval**

The distance between two pitches (e.g. minor 2<sup>nd</sup>, semitone or half step). Intervals may be described as:

- compound: intervals greater than an octave (e.g. 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>)
- harmonic: where the two pitches sound simultaneously
- melodic: where the two pitches sound one after another.

**intonation**

The accuracy of pitch when playing or singing, or the pitch accuracy of a musical instrument.

**introduction**

The beginning of a musical work. May be related to the musical material of the following sections, but not necessarily. Also referred to as intro. Not all musical works include an introduction.

**inversion**

Refers to intervals, chords and melodic patterns that can be turned and played upside down. For example, an inverted interval is when the lower note is moved to become the top note, and an inversion in a chord is when the positioning of the notes changes so that the bottom note becomes the top note. In the ATAR Music syllabus, inversion as a 'compositional device' refers to the inversion of a melody after its initial statement in a musical work.

**irregular metre**

Irregular metre (e.g.  $\frac{5}{8}$   $\frac{7}{4}$ ) is any organisation of beats into bars that do not divide into either two or three.

**jazz**

A musical style with its origin in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the United States of America (USA). It is a fusion of African and European musical traditions. Jazz has a heavy reliance on syncopation, swing rhythms, extended chord vocabularies and improvisation.

**key**

The set of pitches and the tonic/home note (or scale) that are the basis of a musical work, or part of a work.

**key signature**

The pattern of sharps and flats in a certain order that are placed next to the clef at the beginning of a musical work to indicate the key or scale on which the work is based.

**legato**

Playing or singing smoothly and well connected. Often indicated in musical notation with a slur.

**major**

The characteristic of an interval, chord or musical work when based on the notes of the major scale.

**major scale**

A seven-note scale with a particular ordering of pitches and intervals: *d r m f s l t d'*, T T S T T T S (e.g. C Major: C D E F G A B C).

**melody**

An organised succession of sounds and silences that relate together to create a distinct musical phrase or idea.

**middle 8**

A section in a musical work that is eight bars in length and features musical material that contrasts from the preceding sections. In song form, a middle 8 is similar to a bridge and appears between two instances of a song's chorus. In thirty-two bar (AABA) form, the middle 8 is the contrasting B section.

**minor**

The characteristic of an interval, chord or musical work when based on the notes of a minor scale.

**minor scale**

A group of seven-note scales. Some common types of minor scale are:

- **natural minor** or aeolian mode: *l t d r m f s l' or T S T T S T T*  
(e.g. E natural minor/aeolian: E F# G A B C D E),
- **harmonic minor**, containing a raised 7<sup>th</sup>: *l t d r m f s i l' or T S T T S T +½ S*  
(e.g. E harmonic minor: E F# G A B C D# E),
- **jazz minor**, containing a raised 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>: *l t d r m f i s i l' or T S T T T T S*  
(e.g. E jazz minor: E F# G A B C# D# E), and
- **melodic minor**, containing a raised 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in the ascending octave, which are lowered in the descending octave: *l t d r m f i s i l' s f m r d t l or T S T T T T S | T T S T T S T*  
(e.g. E melodic minor: E F# G A B C# D# E D# C# B A G F# E).

**mixed metre**

The use of more than one metre, frequently alternating from one to another (e.g. alternating bars of three-four and four-four).

**mode**

A group of scales which use the same set of notes as the major scale, in the same order, starting from one of its seven degrees.

**modulation**

The process of changing from one key to another during a musical work. Modulation occurs as a process and is not simply an instantaneous switch from one key to another. May or may not involve a change of key signature.

**monophonic**

Musical texture describing a single melodic layer, or several parts playing in unison or octaves.

**motif**

A short musical idea. A phrase or melody will usually contain several motifs. Most commonly associated with melody, but can also be a rhythmic or harmonic idea. Similar to riff.

**ostinato**

A repeating pattern, either rhythmic, melodic or a combination of both, that usually has an accompanying role.

**outro**

A section that occurs in addition to the defined form to finish a musical work. Similar to coda, referred to most often in contemporary music and jazz.

**pedal**



A note repeated or sustained (usually in the bass part) while the harmony in the other parts changes. When pedal appears in a voice other than the bass, it is usually referred to as an inverted pedal. Also referred to as pedal note and pedal point.

**pentatonic scale**

A five-note scale with a particular combination of intervals. The major pentatonic scale can be derived from the major scale by omitting the fourth and seventh degrees. The minor pentatonic scale can be derived from the same set of notes, commencing on the sixth degree. For example, C major pentatonic:

*d r m s l d'*, C D E G A C; A minor pentatonic: *l d r m s l'*, A C D E G A.

**percussion notation**

Series of symbols used by non-pitched percussion instruments to represent specific instruments (e.g. bass drum and snare drum) rather than notes on a pitched instrument. Indicated by the symbol  or .

**perfect**

May refer to:

- interval: the quality of intervals of a unison, fourth, fifth and octave
- cadence: a chord progression of V-I (or V-i) that ends a section or musical work.

**phrase**

A musical sentence or thought. An inexact term, phrases can vary greatly in length. In traditional notation, usually indicated by a slur.

**pitch**

The highness or lowness of sound. Pitch occurs horizontally (as in a melody) and vertically (as in harmony). May also be used to refer to a single musical sound or note. **See** pitch nomenclature.

**pitch nomenclature**

The various methods for naming pitches or notes, particularly in relation to scales.

<b>letter names, e.g. C major</b>	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
<b>scale degrees</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>solfège</b>	do	re	mi	fa	sol	la	ti
<b>technical names</b>	tonic	supertonic	mediant	subdominant	dominant	submediant	leading note

**polyphonic**

Musical texture describing two or more rhythmically and melodically independent layers combined together in equal importance.

**power chord**

A chord made up of the tonic and the fifth scale degrees (usually notated by the number five, e.g. C<sup>5</sup>). Most commonly associated with contemporary music. May be played inverted, making the interval a fourth, and/or with either or both notes doubled. Also referred to as a fifth chord.

**practice (noun)**

The application of music skills and knowledge to create, represent, communicate and respond.

**practise (verb)**

Regularly revising, developing and consolidating skills, techniques and repertoire as a class, an ensemble or an individual.

**pre-chorus**

A section in a musical work that precedes a chorus, usually associated with song form in contemporary music. The function of the pre-chorus is to build to, or prepare for, the chorus. The pre-chorus is often shorter than the surrounding sections and contains material that contrasts from both the verse and the chorus.

**primary triads**

Triads built on the first (tonic), fourth (subdominant) and fifth (dominant) scale degrees in any major or minor key. Major: I, IV, V and minor: i, iv, V.

**repertoire**

The collection of pieces, songs or musical works that a musician or group of musicians are able to perform.

**rhythm**











Organisation of sound and silence using beat, note values/durations and tempo. **See** rhythm nomenclature.

**rhythm changes**

Standard 32-bar AABA chord progression and musical form used in jazz, based on *I Got Rhythm* by George Gershwin. The A section is based on the progression I, VI, ii, V and the B section is based on the circle of fifths progression III<sup>7</sup>, VI<sup>7</sup>, II<sup>7</sup>, V<sup>7</sup>.

**rhythm nomenclature**

The various methods for naming rhythm units or duration of notes:

<b>British</b>	semiquaver	quaver	crotchet	minim	semibreve
<b>American</b>	sixteenth	eighth	quarter	half	whole
<b>beat value in <math>\frac{4}{4}</math></b>	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	2	4
<b>note</b>					
<b>rest</b>					

**riff**

Short, repeated musical idea that can be rhythmic, melodic or harmonic. Most often used in jazz and contemporary music. Similar to motif.

**rondo**

Organisation of a musical work into sections with one section repeating and alternating with contrasting sections (ABACA etc.).

**scale**

An ordered series of pitches with a particular combination of intervals, based around a tonic or home note. **See** blues, chromatic, major, minor, mode and pentatonic.

**score**

The notated form of a musical work. Scores can be handwritten, printed or digital. Sometimes referred to as sheet music. Common types of scores include:

- full score: a score containing every instrument/part in full (e.g. orchestral score, big band score). This type of score is uncommon for jazz and contemporary music works
- lead sheet: melody and its accompanying harmonic progression, usually notated as a single staff for the melody with chord symbols (e.g. C<sup>7</sup>) above. Most often used for jazz and contemporary music works
- piano score/reduction: a piano version of a musical work originally composed for an ensemble, or solo instrument other than piano. 'Reduction' implies that two or more parts have been combined into a single piano part, often requiring some modification to the original work
- piano, vocal, guitar (PVG): a score consisting of a piano part (sometimes a reduction), a vocal line (melody with lyrics) and guitar chord symbols and/or TAB. Most often used in contemporary music.

**secondary triads**

Triads built on the second (supertonic), third (mediant) and sixth (submediant) scale degrees in any major or minor key. Major: ii, iii, vi and minor: ii<sup>o</sup>, III, VI. Triads built on the seventh (leading note) or flattened seventh (subtonic) can be considered secondary triads, but are less commonly used.

**semitone**

An interval of a minor second, or half a tone (e.g. E-F).

**sequence**

A melodic, rhythmic or harmonic pattern. A melodic sequence is a pattern of notes that is repeated at a different pitch. It can also describe the process or product of arranging music digitally using software.

**simple time**

Simple time (e.g.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{4}{4}$   $\frac{2}{4}$ ) is organised into non-dotted, or simple, beats (e.g. crotchet or minim) that subdivide  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{4}{4}$   $\frac{2}{4}$  evenly into groups of two or four.

**slur**

A curved line connecting two or more notes of different pitch and indicating that they are to be played or sung in a legato manner. For string players, it indicates that all the notes are to be played in the same single bow direction, and for wind and brass players, it indicates that only the first note is to be tongued.

**sonata**

A musical form consisting of three main sections: exposition, development and recapitulation. Two melodic themes (subjects) are introduced in the exposition, used as a basis for the development, and revisited in the recapitulation. Sometimes features an introduction and often includes a coda. Most often used in western art music.

**song form**

A musical form associated with works for voice and instruments in the various contemporary music styles from the 1950s onwards. Often referred to as verse-chorus form (e.g. verse 1, pre-chorus, chorus, verse 2, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge, chorus, chorus). Also known in jazz as AABA form.

**staccato**

Playing or singing notes short and detached, or separated, from each other. Represented in notation by a dot above or below the note head.

**staff/stave**

The five lines and four spaces on which music is written using notation.


**strophic**

A song in which the same musical material is repeated for each stanza of text (AAA, etc.). The opposite of through-composed.

**style**

Musical type or category. Style terms (e.g. jazz, bebop, classical, rock, grunge, flamenco) group music works primarily by the characteristic use of the elements of music. Some style terms are both style and era; for example, classical refers to both a time period (era) and characteristics of the music of that time period (style).

**swing**

In rhythm, the conversion of even subdivisions (usually the quavers) into long-short pairs. The ratio of the two notes may vary, but typically the first note is twice the duration of the second, so dividing the beat into thirds. Represented in notation by the symbol: . The opposite of swing is straight, where the quavers are to be performed evenly.

**syncopation**

The displacing of beats and the irregular accents resulting from weak beats being emphasised rather than strong beats.


**tab notation**

Form of notation that illustrates finger position on the strings of a fretted instrument (e.g. guitar) to represent pitch patterns, both melodic and harmonic. Can be combined with rhythmic notation symbols.

**tempo**

The speed or pace at which a musical work is performed. Can be indicated as a metronome marking indicating beats per minute (e.g. ♩=144, or 144BPM).

**tenor clef**

The clef (  ) used by some instruments/parts. It indicates that 'middle C' is located on the fourth line of the staff.

**ternary**

Organisation of a musical work into three sections, with a contrasting section in between two repeated sections (ABA).

**texture**

The layers of sound in a musical work, and the relationship between them. **See** homophonic, monophonic and polyphonic.

**theme and variations**

A musical form where a theme is used as the basis of a set of variations (AA<sup>1</sup>A<sup>2</sup>A<sup>3</sup>, etc.). The theme can be varied in many different ways; for example, by augmentation or diminution, or by changing the rhythm, tonality, key or dynamics.

**through-composed**

A song in which different musical material is used for each stanza of text (ABCD, etc.). The opposite of strophic.

**tie**

A curved line that joins two or more notes of the same pitch, indicating that they should be performed as one unbroken note of the combined value.

**timbre**

The particular tone, colour or quality that distinguishes one sound from another (e.g. violin from flute). Includes various instrumental techniques (e.g. muting, picking, flutter tonguing), vocal techniques (e.g. *false* *setto*, growling) and electronic effects (e.g. reverb, distortion).

**time signature/metre**

Indicates how many beats occur in a bar of music and how the rhythm is organised or grouped. **See** compound time, irregular metre, mixed metre and simple time.

**tonality**


The character of a musical work as determined by the key or scale upon which the work is based. **See** atonal, chromatic, major, minor, mode and pentatonic.

**tone**

May refer to:

- interval: the interval of a tone is defined as a major 2<sup>nd</sup>, or two semitones (e.g. C-D, E<sup>b</sup>-F)
- pitch: the terms tone, pitch and note are used interchangeably to mean a single musical sound
- timbre: **See** timbre.


**treble clef**

The clef used by higher instruments/parts, also called the G clef () as it indicates the location of the G note on the staff.

**triad**

A chord consisting of three notes: the root note and two notes stacked above (usually a third and a fifth above the root). Triads can have different combinations of major and minor thirds to create different qualities, such as major, minor, diminished or augmented.

**triplet**

In simple time, three notes played in the time of two of the same value (e.g. .

**unison**

Two or more instruments or voices singing or playing at the same pitch, or the same note at a different octave, simultaneously.

**verse**

**See** chorus.

**western art music**

Western art music involves the European tradition of art music and its development over time. This can include music composed outside of Europe, but still in the European art music tradition.