



Melody

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The main tune of a song or a piece of music

Rhythm

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The beat of the music

Harmony

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Two or more notes being played at the same time

Tempo

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The speed at which a piece of music is played





Dynamics

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The volume of a piece of music

Monophonic Texture

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A single line of melody with no harmonic accompaniment

Homophonic Texture

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A melody with accompaniment, usually chordal support

Polyphonic Texture

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Two or more melodies weaving together





Symphony

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A piece of music composed for an orchestra

Suite

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A collection of short musical pieces

Theme

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A simple melody, often in binary or ternary form

Overture

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Music played before the main music in an opera, oratorio or play





Concert Overture

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A one-movement orchestral piece played in a concert

Prelude

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The orchestral introduction to a musical or opera

Intermezzo

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Music played between the scenes of an opera

Episode

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Contrasting passage of music between the main theme





Folk Song

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Traditional songs reflecting everyday life in that culture

Art Song

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When a poem is set to music

Ballad

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A song that tells a story

Popular Music

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Music that reflects the fashion of the day





Negro spiritual

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Hymns and gospel songs sung by black Christians in the U.S

Blues song

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An African-American style of music that laments injustice

Jazz song

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A genre of music that developed from Negro spirituals and blues songs

Syncopation

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An off-beat rhythm in which emphasis is placed on a weak beat





Plainchant

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An early form of church music sung by monks in a church

Motet

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An unaccompanied piece of sacred choral music

Chorale

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A German congregational hymn tune that comes in four parts

Carols

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A song telling the story of the birth of Jesus





Opera

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A drama set to music

Operetta

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A light opera

Oratorio

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A religious text set to music

Cantata

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A short vocal work for soloists, a chorus, and instrumentalists





Musical

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Modern operettas that are influenced by popular culture

Descant

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A second melody added above the main melody

Ostinato

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A short musical pattern repeated throughout the song

Quodlibet

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When two or more tunes are sung simultaneously





Two-part song

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Song arranged for
two voices

Canon

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A song where the
melody is repeated
after an interval by
one or more voices

Round

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A canon for two or
more voices with no
end

Counterpoint

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When one voice
imitates another





Ornamentation

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Improvisation or
embellishment on the
original tune

Collector

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People who preserved
old harp tunes by
notating from the
original musicians

Sean Níos

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A traditional Irish
style of
unaccompanied
singing

Aisling

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Patriotic songs that
encourage people
to fight for freedom

