

Seven Elements of Music



- I. RHYTHM
- II. PITCH
- III. TIMBRE
- IV. DYNAMICS
- V. ARTICULATIONS
- VI. FORM
- VII. TEXTURE

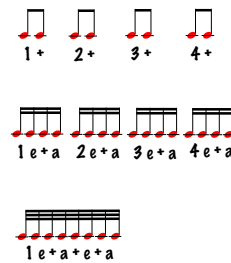
RHYTHM (1) The pattern of music's movement in time. (2) A particular pattern of short and long durations.

- **Meter** Recurring patterns of strong and weak beats, dividing musical time into regularly recurring units of equal duration.
 - **Duple** A METER with two strong beats.
 - **Triple** A METER with three strong beats.
 - **Quadruple** A METER with four strong beats.
 - **Time Signature** Sign or numerical proportion, such as 3/4, placed at the beginning of a piece, section, or MEASURE to indicate the METER.
 - **Simple** A TIME SIGNATURE where each beat is divided into two parts.
 - **Compound** A TIME SIGNATURE where each beat is divided into three parts.
- **Tempo** Speed of performance, or relative pace of the music.

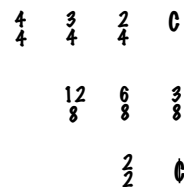
RHYTHM EXAMPLES



COUNTING



COMMON TIME SIGNATURES

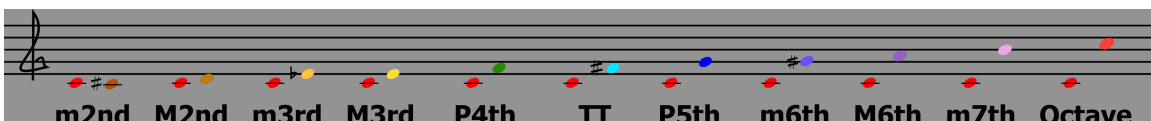
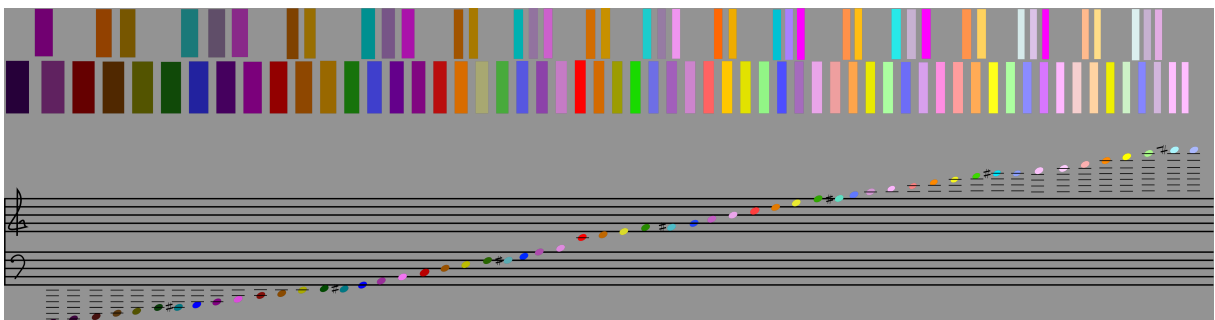


PITCH The property of a sound and especially a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it : Highness or lowness.

- **Interval** Distance in PITCH between two notes.
 - **Melody** (1) Succession of PITCHES perceived as a coherent line. (2) Tune. (3) Principal part accompanied by other parts or chords.
 - **Phrase** A unit of MELODY or of an entire musical texture that has a distinct beginning and ending and is followed by a pause or other articulation but does not express a complete musical thought.
 - **Counterpoint** The combination of two or more simultaneous melodic lines according to a set of rules.
- **Chord** Three or more simultaneous PITCHES heard as a single entity. In tonal music, three or more notes that can be arranged as a succession of thirds, such as a triad.
 - **Harmony** Aspect of music that pertains to simultaneous combinations of PITCHES, the INTERVALS and CHORDS.
 - **Harmonic Progression** A logical succession of CHORDS with a sense of direction; especially, the succession of chords used to accompany a MELODY.

Tonality The system, common since the late seventeenth century, by which a piece of music is organized around a TONIC NOTE, CHORD, and KEY, to which all the other notes and keys in the piece are subordinate.

- **Tonic** (1) The first and central pitch of a major or minor scale. (2) The main KEY of a piece or movement, in which the piece or movement begins and ends and to which all other keys are subordinate.
- **dominant** In TONAL music, the NOTE and CHORD a perfect fifth above the TONIC.
- **Key** In TONAL music, the hierarchy of PITCHES, CHORDS, and other pitch elements around a central note, the TONIC. There are 12 Major keys and 12 minor keys.



TIMBRE Characteristic color or sound of an instrument or voice, e.g., the difference in quality of sound from a clarinet and a trumpet.

- **Instrumentation** A list of instruments utilized in a piece of music.
- **Orchestration** The art of choosing which instruments to use for a given piece of music. The sections of the orchestra historically were separate ensembles: the stringed instruments for indoors, the woodwind instruments for outdoors, the horns for hunting, and trumpets and drums for battle or royal ceremony. Once entirely dependent on what was available or customary, composers began to explore the musical potential of instrumental combinations with the advent of the modern orchestra in the mid- to late 18th century.

Symphony in B flat

I

Paul Hindemith
1951

I Moderately fast, with vigor (♩ 88-92)

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DYNAMICS Music symbols which affect the level of loudness or softness.

- **Crescendo** A gradual increase in loudness.
- **Decrescendo** or **Diminuendo** A gradual decrease in loudness.
- **Fortissimo** Very loud.
- **Forte** Loud.
- **Mezzo-Forte** Moderately loud.
- **Mezzo-Piano** Moderately soft.
- **Piano** Quietly or softly.
- **Pianissimo** Very softly.
- **Forte-Piano** Indicates loud immediately followed by quiet.
- **Subito** In Italian “suddenly” used to indicate a sudden change in dynamic. It often appears abbreviated, e.g., “sub. F”.

ARTIULATIONS A musical symbol which affects the attack, sustain, or release of a note.

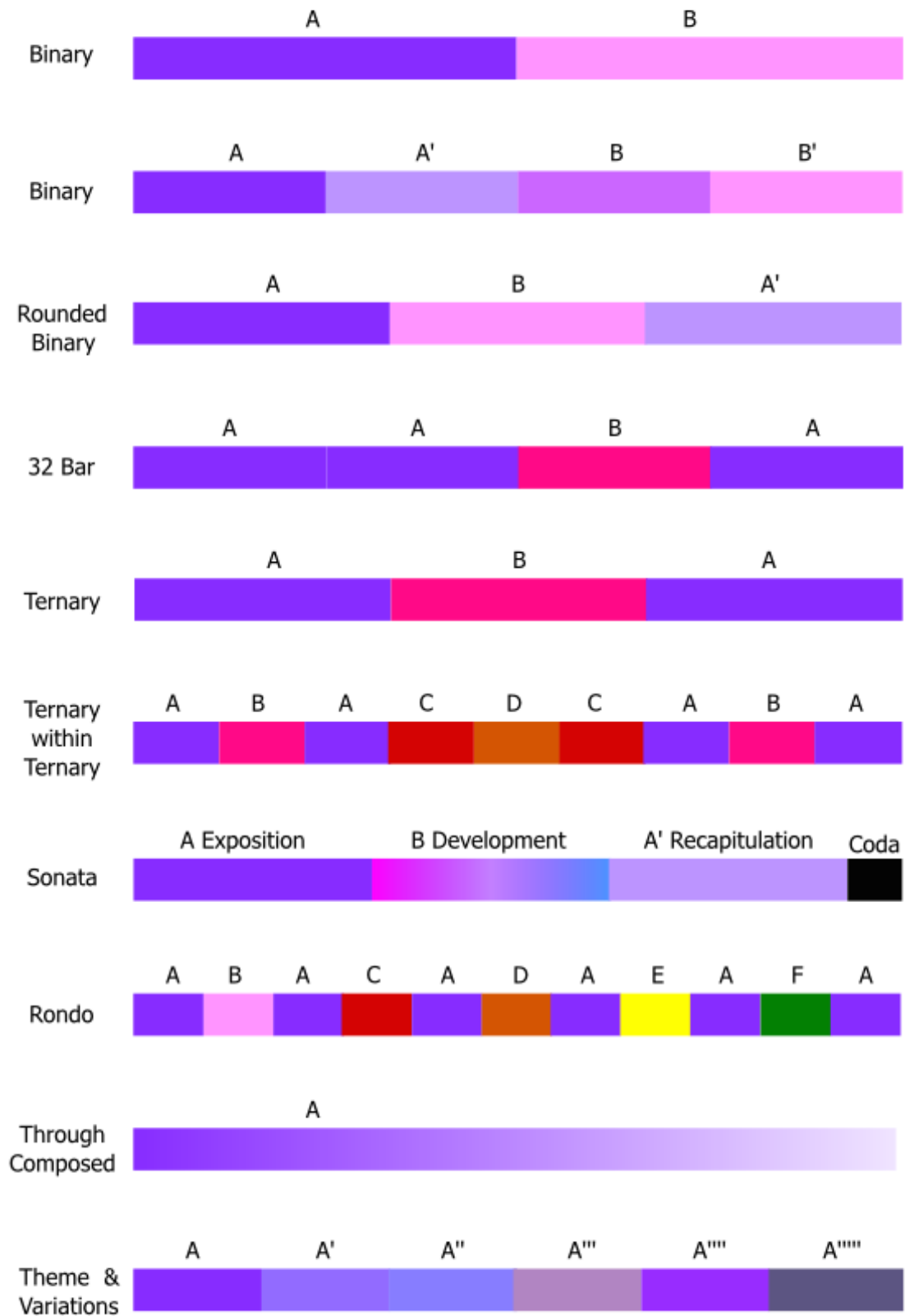
- **Staccato** Signifies a note of shortened duration.
- **Staccatissimo** Signifies a note of extremely shortened duration.
- **Tenuto** Hold the note in question its full length, or with a slight stress.
- **Accent** To emphasis a particular note.
- **Slur** A symbol indicating that the notes it embraces are to be played without separation.
- **Marcato** Play the note or passage more forcefully then the surrounding music.

FORM The shape or structure of a COMPOSITION or MOVEMENT.

-Included below is a non-exhaustive list of common musical forms-

- **Binary Form** A FORM comprised of two complementary sections, each of which is repeated. The first section usually ends on the DOMINANT or the relative major, although it may end on the TONIC or other KEY; the second section returns to the tonic.
- **Ternary Form** A FORM in three main sections, in which the first and third are identical or closely related and the middle section is contrasting, creating an ABA pattern.
- **Rounded Binary Form** BINARY FORM in which the latter part of the first section returns at the end of the second section, but in the TONIC.
- **Variations (variations form)** FORM that presents an uninterrupted series of variants (each called a VARIATION) on a theme; the theme may be a MELODY, a bass line, a HARMONIC plan, or other musical subject.
- **Sonata Form** FORM typically used in first movements of sonatas, instrumental chamber works, and symphonies during the classical and romantic periods. An expansion of ROUNDED BINARY FORM, it was described in the nineteenth century as consisting of an exposition, development, and recapitulation based on a limited number of THEMES.
- **Twelve-bar Blues** Standard formula for the blues, with a HARMONIC PROGRESSION in which the first four-measure PHRASE is on the TONIC, the second phrase begins on the subdominant and ends on the tonic, and the third phrase starts on the DOMINANT and returns to the tonic.
- **Verse-refrain** form A FORM in vocal music in which two or more stanzas of poetry are each sung to the same music (the verse) and each is followed by the same refrain.

Musical Forms



TEXTURE The combination of elements in a piece or passage, such as the number and relationship of independent parts (as in MONOPHONY, HETEROPHONY, POLYPHONY, or HOMOPHONY), groups, or musical events (as in relatively dense or transparent sonorities).

- **Monophony** Consisting of a single unaccompanied MELODIC line.
- **Homophony** Musical TEXTURE in which all voices move together in essentially the same RHYTHM, as distinct from POLYPHONY and HETEROPHONY. See also MELODY AND ACCOMPANIMENT.
- **Heterophony** Music or musical TEXTURE in which a MELODY is performed by two or more parts simultaneously in more than one way, for example, one voice performing it simply, and the other with embellishments.
- **Polyphony** Music or musical TEXTURE consisting of two or more simultaneous lines of independent MELODY.