

Baroque Period

It was during the Baroque period that the orchestra first began to take shape. Here are some typical features of the Baroque Orchestra.

- A firm basis of **strings** to which composers would add other instruments: one or two **flutes** (or recorders), **oboes**, **bassoons**, perhaps **horns**, **trumpets and timpani**.
- The sound of **organ or harpsichord BASSO CONTINUO**— a bass line in which the player was expected to fill in the harmonies. Sometimes figures were written under the bass line indicating the chords the composer would like played. This was called **figured bass**.

Musical characteristics of Baroque music

- The use of **harpsichord basso continuo** provides foundation, providing a strong, purposeful bass that causes the music to press forward throughout.
- Modes now replaced by **major-minor keys**
- **long flowing melodic lines** often using **ornamentation** (decorative notes such as trills and turns)
- Lots of polyphonic **textures** contrasting with homophonic passages
- Contrast between loud and soft created by **contrasting solo and ensemble**
- **Terraced dynamics** - sudden changes in the volume level, sometimes creating an echo effect

Main styles of music

Vocal

Opera, Oratorio, Mass

Recitative, Aria, Choruses

Instrumental

Solo concerto, Concerto grosso

Sonata, Passacaglia

Main forms/ structure

- *Binary (A B form or AA BB)*
- *Ternary (including da capo aria) – A B A or AA B AA*
- *Variations on ground bass (Passacaglia)*
- *Ritornello (recurring theme)*

Key signatures & Chords for Higher

C major	G major	F major	A minor

C major

A musical staff in C major (no key signature) with a treble clef. It shows three chords: I (C major), IV (F major), and V (G major). The notes are labeled with letter names (C, D, E, F, G, A, B) and accidentals (sharp, flat, natural). Below the staff, the Roman numerals I, II, IV, V, and VI are listed with their corresponding labels: TONIC, SUB DOM, and DOMINANT.

I II IV V VI

TONIC SUB DOM DOMINANT

G major

A musical staff in G major (one sharp) with a treble clef. It shows three chords: I (G major), IV (C major), and V (D major). The notes are labeled with letter names (G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G) and accidentals (sharp, flat, natural). Below the staff, the Roman numerals I, II, IV, V, and VI are listed with their corresponding labels: TONIC, SUB DOM, and DOMINANT.

I II IV V VI

TONIC SUB DOM DOMINANT

F major

A musical staff in F major (one flat) with a treble clef. It shows three chords: I (F major), IV (B-flat major), and V (C major). The notes are labeled with letter names (F, G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F) and accidentals (sharp, flat, natural). Below the staff, the Roman numerals I, II, IV, V, and VI are listed with their corresponding labels: TONIC, SUB DOM, and DOMINANT.

I II IV V VI

TONIC SUB DOM DOMINANT

A minor

A musical staff in A minor (no key signature) with a treble clef. It shows three chords: I (A minor), IV (D major), and V (E major). The notes are labeled with letter names (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A) and accidentals (sharp, flat, natural). Below the staff, the Roman numerals I, II, IV, V, and VI are listed with their corresponding labels: TONIC, SUB DOM, and DOMINANT.

I II IV V VI

TONIC SUB DOM DOMINANT

Bass clef notes

For additional practice on bass clef notes click [HERE](https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/note/neoyqy01r54ynyyny)
[https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/note/neoyqy01r54ynyyny](https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/note/ng1yqy01r54ynyyny)

<https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/note/ng1yqy01r54ynyyny>

<https://4four.io/start/Ar5pj>

<https://4four.io/start/A3e6p>

Cadences

Cadence quizzes

A **cadence** is formed by two chords at the end of a passage of music.

- **Perfect cadences** sound as though the music has come to an end. A perfect cadence is formed by the chords V - I.
- **Interrupted cadences** are 'surprise' cadences. You think you're going to hear a perfect cadence, but you get a minor chord instead.
- **Imperfect cadences** sound unfinished. They sound as though they want to carry on to complete the music properly. An imperfect cadence ends on chord V.
- **Plagal cadences** sound finished. Plagal cadences are often used at the end of hymns and sung to "Amen". A plagal cadence is formed by the chords IV - I.

Sometimes the final cadence of a piece in a minor key ends with a major chord instead of the expected minor. This effect is known as a **Tierce de Picardie**.

Listen to the cadences in this piece:

Perfect
cadence (V-I)

Imperfect
cadence (I-V)

Interrupted
cadence (V-VI)

Perfect
cadence (V-I)

Plagal cadence
(IV-I)

Tierce de Picardie

Example in C minor

Piece is expected to finish on C minor chord

Picardy third - E flat is raised a semitone to create a C major chord

TEXTURE

UNISON

Everyone plays or sings the same notes at the same time, either at the same pitch or in octaves.

HOMOPHONIC

A melody with accompaniment or chords, where all parts largely move together in harmony

POLYPHONIC/ CONTRAPUNTAL

Two or more melodic lines that interweave and create a more complex texture. There is often **IMITATION**.

A CAPPELLA

Voices singing with no instrumental accompaniment

UNISON

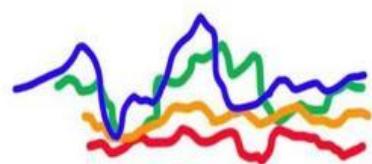


HOMOPHONIC

- chordal

- melody with accomp.

POLYPHONIC/ CONTRAPUNTAL



- Listen to unison, homophonic and polyphonic textures in Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbT7eTS16T8>
- Try the texture quizzes here: https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7_n5_texture_quiz.htm
- Listen to the following extracts of vocal music from and complete the box below. Put a tick in the relevant columns.

	VOCAL TEXTURES			ACCOMPANIMENT	
	UNISON	HOMOPHONIC	POLYPHONIC	ACCOMPANIED	A CAPPELLA
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

WORD SETTING

SYLLABIC

Mainly one syllable per note.

A musical score for a soprano voice. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The time signature is common time (indicated by a '4'). The vocal line consists of six notes: a quarter note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a eighth note, a quarter note, and a eighth note. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in a cursive font: "I am singing the word real - ly".

MELISMATIC

Lots of notes to one syllable.

A musical score in 4/4 time with a treble clef. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics "Gloria" and "a" are written below the staff, with "Gloria" spanning the first four measures and "a" at the end of the fifth measure. The notes for "a" are highlighted with a red box.

- Test yourself on melismatic/ syllabic word setting
<https://www.liveworksheets.com/w/en/music/1608185>

SEQUENCE

A pattern of notes repeated at a higher or lower pitch

The image shows a musical score for 'The Star-Spangled Banner' in G major (two sharps) and common time. It features two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The score is divided into three endings: melodic (1st), harmonic (2nd), and melodic (3rd). The melodic endings consist of a single measure of eighth-note patterns, while the harmonic ending consists of a single measure of eighth-note chords. The bass staff provides harmonic support with sustained notes and eighth-note patterns.

Descending tonal melodic sequence

Glo...

5

ri - a, Ho - san - na in ex - cel - sist

- Test yourself on sequence

https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7_n3_sequence.htm

ANACRUSIS

An upbeat at the start of a piece/ phrase

one beat anacrusis (pickup)

3 1 2 3

1 2

last measure is minus anacrusis amount (one beat)

A musical score for 'Happy Birthday' in 3/4 time, treble clef. The melody consists of a single line of music with a dotted half note, a quarter note, a quarter note, a half note, and a half note. Below the music, the lyrics 'Ha-py Birth-day to you,' are written in a cursive font.

- Test yourself on ANACRUSIS

https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7_n4_anacrusis.htm

ORNAMENTATION

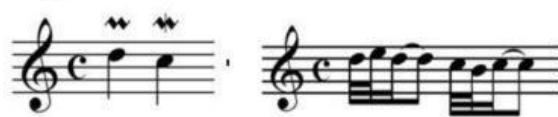
These all come under the category of MELODIC concepts. Ornaments are "frills" or embellishments made on notes. Baroque music used a lot of ornaments, so it is important to be able to recognise them.

An ornament is basically a historic shorthand method of indicating how a single note can be made more interesting. The ornaments you need to know for Higher are:

Trill



Mordents



Acciaccaturas

(also called grace notes)

Turns



1. Trill - a rapid shake between an added note and the main note

2. Mordent - a single movement from the main note then down or up then back to the main note

3. Acciaccatura (grace note) - a quick movement from an unaccented added note to the main note

4. Turn - a quick movement around a note, usually up, down and up again (the note, the note above, the note, the note below, and the note)

Try the following quiz: https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7_higher_ornaments_1.htm