

# HIGHER MUSIC TECH

Timbre and Structure Higher  
concepts

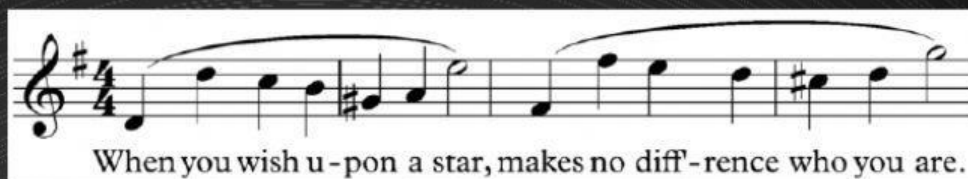
| Texture/structure/form | Timbre/dynamics                                        |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| through-composed       | accents<br>harmonics<br>phrase marks<br>staccato marks |
| strophic               | arco<br>pizzicato                                      |



## PHRASE MARKS/ SLURS

A phrase is a section in music that express a complete idea.

A phrase mark, better known as a slur, indicates that a passage of music should be played legato (smoothly). Phrase marks usually cover several notes or bars and can also be used as an instructions – e.g. to tell a wind/ brass player or singer where to breathe.



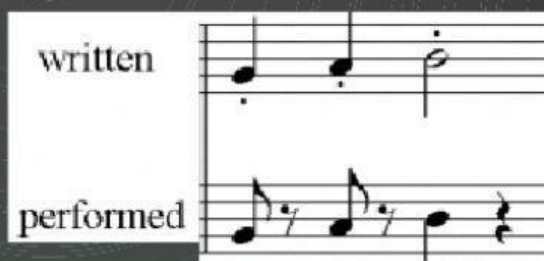
Phrase marks play a significant part in musical shape. It is usually placed on the note head side in order to avoid crossing over note stems.

For bowed instruments, a slur indicates one continuous motion of the bow for the duration of the slur. The bow changes direction at the end of each slur and articulation



## STACCATO

The notes are short and detached, with plenty of space between them – *opposite of legato*. It is notated by a dot above or below the note. This doesn't mean that the tempo or rhythm goes any faster. The tempo and rhythm are not affected by articulations; the staccato notes sound shorter than written only because of the extra space between them.



Staccato and legato slurs can be combined to give variety of articulation in a phrase:



Have a look at this summary of staccato/ legato:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zp4d97h/revision/2>



# ACCENTS

Accented notes are notes which sound louder than others. They are marked with a > sign above or below the note.



Listen to part of Stravinsky's 'Rite of Spring', which features accents, discords, time changes, staccato etc.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZtWAqc3qyk&ab\\_channel=puffthecat](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZtWAqc3qyk&ab_channel=puffthecat)

## Not Dynamics...

Articulation is **the way** the performer plays / sings the note, not how loud they do it. That would be Dynamics instead.

# ARTICULATION

(How the notes are played)

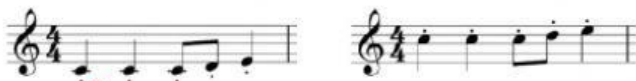
## More Than One...

You can write more than one type of articulation for the same note. For example:



## Staccato

Staccato means short and detached /seperated. *\*You will likely hear a gap between each note.*



Shown by writing a **dot** just above/below the head of the note.

## Accented

Give extra emphasis or force to the marked notes.



Shown by writing an **accent** above/below the head of the note.

## Legato

To play the music smoothly, without breaks between notes.

## Slurred

Playing the notes in a legato style, without breaks between notes.



Shown with a **slur** on the score.

**How?** Some examples:

**String Instruments** - Play the notes without changing the direction of the bow.



*\*Don't change direction until you've finished the slurred notes.*

**Brass & Wind Instruments** - Only tongue the first note, not the others.

## Glissando

A slide between two notes.

*\*You can glissando upwards or downwards*

Marked with a **glissando** on the score.



## Some Associated Markings On Vocal Music...

### Phrase markings

Slurs drawn onto the score to show singers what to sing in one breath.



### Syllabic

Where the music is written with one note per syllable.



### Melismatic

Where the music is written with more than one note per syllable.

*\*A slur is used to show the notes on one syllable.*



**LOOK**  
AT THIS

Have a look at this summary of articulation and complete the bitesize test:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82G3CU49iPQ&ab\\_channel=CHSMusicDept](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82G3CU49iPQ&ab_channel=CHSMusicDept)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvw6f/test>



# HARMONICS

Harmonics can be produced by a number of instruments. By lightly touching the string of a bowed stringed instrument at certain points for example, a high eerie sound is produced. On a guitar or harp these have a bell-like quality



Guitar harmonics explained:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru7HIGKMRNI&ab\\_channel=LouieZong](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru7HIGKMRNI&ab_channel=LouieZong)



Violin harmonics explained:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=681aylovC0k&ab\\_channel=ClassicFM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=681aylovC0k&ab_channel=ClassicFM)

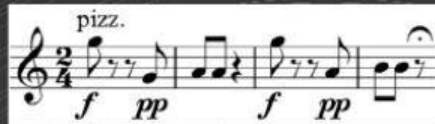


# ARCO

Instruction given to string players to use the bow. This term might be given to players after a passage using pizzicato.

# PIZZICATO

Pizzicato (abbreviation 'pizz.') is an instruction given to string players to pluck the strings instead of using the bow (arco).



Have a look at this summary of arco and pizzicato:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB7Ao4X2n1I&ab\\_channel=CHSMusicDept](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB7Ao4X2n1I&ab_channel=CHSMusicDept)



# STROPHIC

A song which has the same music repeated for verses/choruses, therefore the music will be heard repeating throughout the song, though the words may be different.



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8OXLgpBrSU&ab\\_channel=CHSMusicDept](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8OXLgpBrSU&ab_channel=CHSMusicDept)

## THROUGH COMPOSED

A vocal/choral composition in which there is little or no repetition in the musical structure i.e. where the composition is not structured as verse/chorus.



e.g. Schubert's lied. '*Erlkönig*' is through-composed. Listen to the way the singer changes his body language and tone of voice to portray the different characters (narrator, father, son and Erlkönig).



## THROUGH COMPOSED



The structure of through-composed songs is not confined to the romantic period, listen to 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen.



e.g. *Dreams* (Roy Orbison) – Here, the song never repeats a section. In two minutes and forty-eight seconds, it goes through seven movements with distinct melodies and chord progressions. The first two sections are sixteen bars each, but the other sections are only eight bars each.