

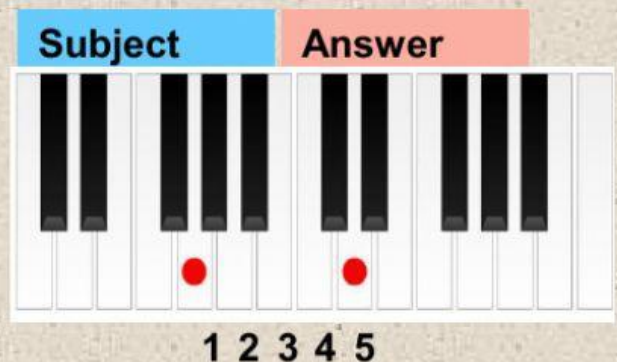
Fugue

A **FUGUE** is a **polyphonic** and highly imitative piece based on a main theme, called a **SUBJECT**. It is used mainly in Instrumental music but can also be found in Vocal music.

The first section is known as the **EXPOSITION**.
e.g. Bach *Organ Fugue in G minor*



The subject is then imitated by another part called the **ANSWER**, usually in the dominant (ie a 5th higher or a 4th lower)



- A **REAL ANSWER** is an accurate note for note repeat of the subject,
- A **TONAL ANSWER** is one where certain notes are altered to fit harmonically with the other parts.

While the **ANSWER** is heard, the **COUNTER SUBJECT**, a new theme, begins in the first part. This overlapping texture creates counterpoint. In between repeats of subject and answer themes are small sections called **EPISODES**.

Subject

The musical notation for the Subject is written on a single staff in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody begins with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes D and E. This is followed by a dotted quarter note F-sharp, which is tied to the next measure's eighth note F-sharp. The subsequent measures contain eighth and sixteenth notes, ending with a whole note G.

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. The score is written for two staves, likely representing a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the upper staff, featuring a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over a group of notes. The lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with a mix of quarter and eighth notes. The music is presented on a light-colored, aged paper background.

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. It features two staves: a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The melody is written in eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass line consists of quarter and eighth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.



Episode – downward sequence



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akPjhsL_tRM&t=45s&ab_channel=MitchBoucher-Composer

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEo5YHYWnK8&ab_channel=ChristopherPalmer

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAFETgpt9PA&ab_channel=UnderstandingMusic

Fugal textures can be seen in other types of music.
Listen to a **vocal** fugue – *And with his stripes* (Messiah)
NB - Listen out for the leap of a **diminished 7th** on the word 'stripes'

Hedwig's Fugue

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-fd8tWN8lw&ab_channel=ChristianPerrotta

Stretto

- Statements of the subject pile up in quick succession. One voice begins a subject before the previous voice has finished its own rendition of the subject, thus creating an overlap. This often occurs in the final section of the fugue.

e.g. *Bach Fugue no 1 in C major*

Subject



Now listen to the subject overlapping in stretto

A musical score for the stretto section of Bach's Fugue No. 1 in C major, starting at measure 14. The score is written for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Each voice part is shown on a staff. Red rectangular boxes are drawn around the subject in each voice, illustrating how the subject overlaps in quick succession. The Soprano part begins the subject in measure 14, followed by the Alto in measure 15, the Tenor in measure 16, and the Bass in measure 17. The boxes show that each voice begins the subject before the previous voice has finished its rendition, creating a dense, overlapping texture.

Variations in Fugue Subject

- **Inversion**-each melodic interval is turned upside down
- **Retrograde**-Beginning with the last note and ending with the first
- **Augmentation**-Original time values are lengthened
- **Diminution**-shortened time values

Bach Fugue in C minor book 2 no2

Subject



Augmented subject



Inverted subject



Retrograde subject



Diminution subject



Bach Fugue in C# minor – book 2 no3

Subject



Subject inverted



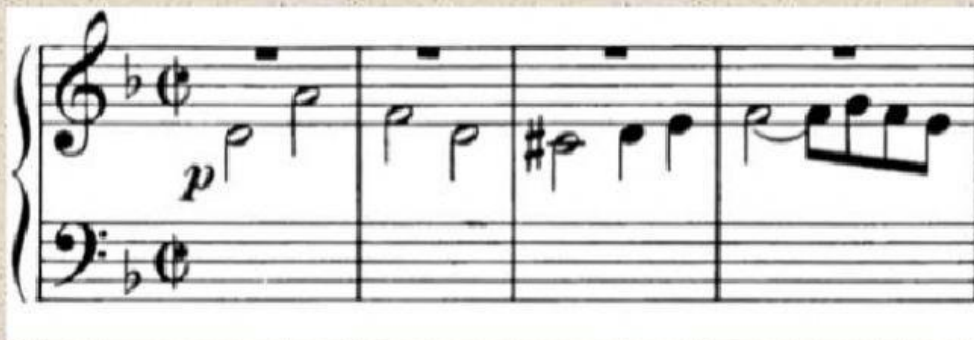
Subject augmented



Fugue no 9 in Dm - The Art of Fugue

The Art of Fugue is collection of fugues and four canons based on this main theme:

Play from 0:00



Fugue No. 9 has it's own distinctive **subject**, beginning with an octave leap:

Play from 26:01



Listen to a recording of this **fugue** played on the harpsichord.

As the **fugue** progresses you will hear the main theme, heard in long notes (**augmentation**), played by solo string instruments, in counterpoint with the **fugue subject**:



Summary of Fugue

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFt7FAxdaBM&ab_channel=PolychoronProductions