

## Baroque and Classical Music

Baroque and classical music are similar but not the same. Here's a rough guide to both types...

### Baroque Composers Used Major and Minor Scales

**Baroque**  
1600–1750

- 1) From about 1600, Western composers stopped writing modal (p.21) music.
- 2) Instead they used major and minor keys to write tonal music. This was a big change. In Western countries, most music is still tonal, hundreds of years later.
- 3) Modulating (switching between keys — see p.38) turned out to be a good way of creating contrast in music.
- 4) Composers developed new structures for organising music using modulation and contrast, e.g. binary, ternary and rondo forms (see next page).

### Baroque has a Recognisable Sound

Baroque music's pretty easy to recognise. These are the main things to look out for in the Listening:

- 1) The dynamics change suddenly. Each bit is either loud or soft. You won't hear any gradual changes in volume — no crescendos or diminuendos. This is called terraced or stepped dynamics.
- 2) The melody's built up from short musical ideas (called motifs), so you get a fair bit of repetition.
- 3) The harmonies are simple, with a fairly narrow range of chords — mainly I and V.
- 4) The melody is packed with ornaments, added in to make it sound more interesting (see p.83).
- 5) The texture's often contrapuntal (polyphonic — see p.39).

### Most Baroque Music had a Basso Continuo

- 1) A basso continuo is a continuous bass part. It's played throughout a piece, and the chords are based on it.
- 2) It was often played on an organ or harpsichord (harpsichords were popular Baroque instruments). It could also be played by more than one instrument — e.g. cellos, double basses and bassoons.
- 3) Other Baroque instruments are the flute, recorder, oboe, bassoon and orchestral strings (violins, violas, cellos and double basses).



### Baroque Turned into Classical Music

Classical music grew out of Baroque, so it's similar but not the same.

- 1) Classical tunes are very balanced. They tend to have equal four-bar phrases, split into a two-bar question and a two-bar answer.
- 2) Classical music uses fewer ornaments.
- 3) Classical composers still wrote in binary, ternary, and rondo forms, but they also came up with a new structure called sonata form (p.91).
- 4) The dynamics are more subtle, using crescendos and diminuendos, not just changing suddenly.
- 5) New instruments and groups changed the sound:

- The piano was invented in about 1700. It became much more popular than the harpsichord because you could vary the dynamics. Classical composers include the piano in a lot of their music.
- The clarinet was invented around this time too.
- Orchestras got bigger — they had more woodwind, trumpets and horns, and larger string sections.

**Classical**  
1750–1820

### What was life like before the piano was invented...

In the listening exam they might ask who wrote the piece on the CD. If you're stuck, try one of these: Baroque — Bach, Handel, Vivaldi or Purcell; Classical — Mozart, Haydn or Beethoven.

## Baroque Choral Music

Baroque composers wrote a lot of choral music — some of it's still performed today.

### Choral Music is Sung by Choirs and Soloists

Choral music can be sacred (religious) or secular (non-religious).

#### SACRED MUSIC

MASS	Part of the <u>Catholic church service</u> set to music.
REQUIEM	Mass for the <u>dead</u> .
CHORALE	A <u>hymn</u> .
ORATORIO	Religious version of an <u>opera</u> , often telling <u>Bible stories</u> .
CANTATA	Vocal pieces made up of two or three <u>arias</u> , separated by <u>recitatives</u> (see below).

#### SECULAR MUSIC

OPERA	A <u>story</u> set to music with <u>singing</u> and <u>acting</u> . Most operas were divided up into three parts (or ' <u>Acts</u> '). The main types of Baroque opera were: <u>Opera Seria</u> (serious, often mythological themes), <u>Opera Buffa</u> (lighter, more everyday themes) <u>Opéra Comique</u> (like Opera Buffa, but with some spoken recitatives), <u>Operetta</u> (not big enough to be a proper opera).
CANTATA	You can get secular cantatas as well.

### Operas, Oratorios and Cantatas Have 3 Main Types of Song

#### 1) ARIA

An aria is a solo vocal piece (backed by the orchestra). It gives the main characters the chance to show what they're thinking and feeling. In England and France, they could be called 'airs' instead.

#### 2) RECITATIVE

A recitative is a song which tells the story and moves it along. The rhythm of the words tends to imitate the rhythm of normal speech.

#### 3) CHORUS

A chorus is sung by the chorus (a choir). Choruses are usually written for SATB choirs (Sopranos, Altos, Tenors and Basses). Most Baroque choirs were all male — the highest parts would be sung by boy sopranos (also called trebles, see p.76).

### Oratorios are Religious Versions of Operas

- 1) Oratorios often tell Bible stories, or tales with a religious or moral theme.
- 2) They're not usually acted out with scenery and costumes (like operas are).
- 3) They normally have an instrumental accompaniment.
- 4) They can be performed in concert halls as well as churches.

### Anyone for a sing-song then...

Make sure you know the difference between sacred and secular music, and can give examples of each. Being able to describe the different types of songs in operas, oratorios and cantatas will be useful too.


## The Classical Orchestra

After Baroque came Classical music. You need to know what a Classical orchestra was like.

### Orchestral Music was Written for Wealthy Audiences

- 1) The Classical period began around 1750. Then, composers worked for royalty and aristocrats. They were paid to write music for official events, church services and plain old entertainment. Composers had to write music that their patrons (employers) would approve of.
- 2) Later in the Classical period, society changed. Middle-class people had more money and wanted entertainment. Public concert halls were built, where people could go to listen to music.
- 3) Famous Classical composers like Haydn and Mozart worked for patrons, but they also put on concerts in the new concert halls.
- 4) By the 1800s, composers could earn quite a bit of money from ticket sales at concert halls. This gave them more freedom — they could write for the tastes of concert-goers instead of just pleasing their patrons.

### Orchestras Grew During the Classical Period

- 1) At the start of the Classical period, composers wrote for smallish orchestras — mainly strings, with horns, flutes and oboes. There'd be two horns and one or two woodwind.
- 2) Later on, the woodwind section grew — clarinets were invented during the Classical period, and were included in the orchestra. Mozart was the first composer to use the clarinet in a symphony. Bassoons were introduced too.
- 3) Trumpets were added to the brass section, and timpani were included in the percussion section.
- 4) In some early Classical music, there'd be a harpsichord (see p.62), but after a while composers stopped using it. The harpsichord was there to fill in the harmonies, but it wasn't really needed once the extra woodwind had been added.
- 5) This is a fairly typical layout for a later Classical orchestra: 

TIMPANI		
FRENCH HORNS		TRUMPETS
FLUTES	OBOES	CLARINETS BASSOONS
SECOND VIOLINS	VIOLAS	DOUBLE BASSES
FIRST VIOLINS		CELLOS

### Classical Orchestras Mostly Used Stringed Instruments

- 1) The most important section in a Classical orchestra is the strings. They're the dominant sound in most Classical music. The violins generally play most of the tunes.
- 2) The wind instruments play extra notes to fill out the harmony. When they do get the tune, they mostly double the string parts.
- 3) You do hear the occasional wind solo. Orchestral pieces called concertos (p.89-90) feature one or two solo instruments accompanied by an orchestra.
- 4) In later Classical music, the woodwind section started to have a more independent role. They'd sometimes play the tune alone, and there'd be more solos. The strings were still really important though.

**You've got to know how it all fits together...**

Orchestras grew in size because composers in the Classical period began to include more parts for different instruments. This gave rise to a greater variety of music later in the Classical period.

## The Classical Style

A whole page about the features of Classical music... enjoy.

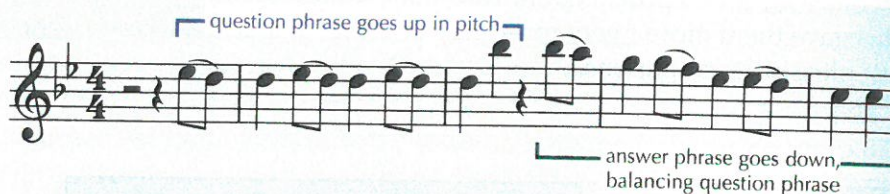
### Classical Melodies Have a Clear, Simple Structure

Classical music sounds clearer and simpler than music from other periods. This is partly because the tunes are structured in a very straightforward way, with short, balanced 2- or 4-bar phrases.

Here's an extract from Haydn's *Clock Symphony*:



And here's a bit from Mozart's *Symphony No. 40* in G minor, with the same balanced question and answer phrasing:



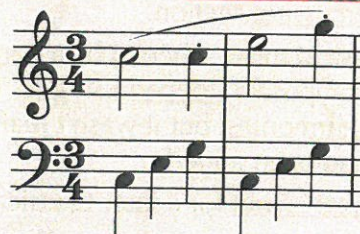
### Classical Textures are Mainly Tune and Chords

- 1) Most Classical music has just one tune with accompanying chords. This makes the tune really stand out. It's called homophonic texture (see page 39).
- 2) These accompanying chords can be played in different ways:

These are block chords...



... and these are broken chords



- 3) Polyphony — where several tunes weave in and out of each other — is used too, but not so often.

### Classical Music Uses Major and Minor Keys

Classical music's always in either a major or minor key — the tonality is major or minor.

Bright, cheery bits are in major keys and gloomy, sad bits are in minor keys. And...

...Classical harmony is what's known as diatonic — nearly all the notes belong to the main key.

### The Beat is Obvious and Easy to Follow

- 1) The metre in Classical music is very regular. You can happily tap your foot in time to the music.
- 2) The tempo stays constant — the speed of the beat stays pretty much the same all the way through, without massively speeding up or slowing down.

### Classical style — a wig, tailcoat and breeches...

Knowing these key features is useful if you're asked to describe music from the Classical period.

Make a list of them all, then learn it. Keep going back over it to check you know them off by heart.

## Classical Structures

Almost done with concertos — then it's on to symphonies and sonatas.

### Classical Concertos Have a Standard Structure

All concertos follow the same basic plan.

The three movements traditionally have the following characteristics:

<b>FIRST MOVEMENT</b>	sonata form	brisk and purposeful
<b>SECOND MOVEMENT</b>	ternary or variation form	slower and song-like
<b>THIRD MOVEMENT</b>	rondo, variation or sonata form	fast and cheerful

Check out Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto* — it has 3 movements: *Allegro, Andante, Allegro*.

### A Symphony is Played by a Full Orchestra

- 1) A symphony is a massive piece. They can last more than an hour and have real impact because they use the full orchestra.
- 2) Symphonies usually have four movements (but some have three, and they can have more than four). The contrast between the movements is important.
- 3) At least one of the movements is in sonata form (see next page) — usually the first, and sometimes the last.
- 4) Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven all wrote symphonies.

### Sonatas are for One or Two Instruments

- 1) Sonatas are mostly written for one instrument, but there are some sonatas for two instruments and a few for two types of instrument, each type playing different parts.
- 2) A sonata usually has three or four movements, with breaks in between them.
- 3) A sonata has a similar structure to a symphony — it has one or more movements in sonata form.

### Classical Composers Wrote Overtures and Suites Too

- 1) An overture is a one-movement piece for orchestra.
- 2) Overtures are written as introductions to larger works like operas and ballets.
- 3) They use ideas, moods and musical themes from the main work to prepare the audience.
- 4) Classical orchestral suites are another offshoot of ballets and operas.
- 5) A suite is an orchestral arrangement of the music used to accompany the action on stage, put together as a separate piece of music and played at concerts.

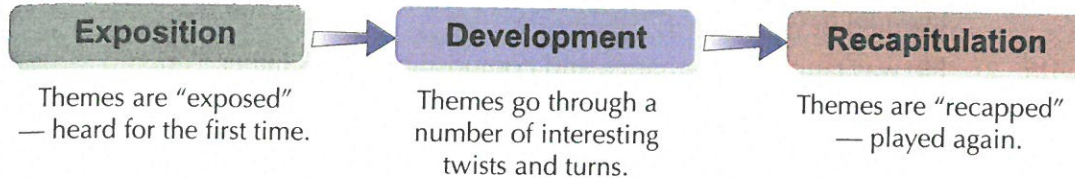
### Classical composers churned out a lot of music...

Classical composers were real masters of form and structure. They liked their music to be carefully constructed and beautifully balanced, with helpful hints to what was coming next. How kind of them.

## Classical Structures

Sonata form is a really important structure in Classical music — most sonatas and symphonies had at least one movement in sonata form.

### A Piece in Sonata Form has Three Main Sections



- 1) The exposition has two contrasting themes. It ends in a different (but related) key to the one it started in.
- 2) The development keeps the piece interesting — the themes are taken through lots of variations.
- 3) The recapitulation pulls it all together again — the themes from the exposition are repeated. They’re usually changed a bit — the composer might add ornaments (see p.83) or shorten them.
- 4) Composers sometimes use bridge sections between the themes and links between the main sections. They usually add a coda to finish off the piece neatly as well.

### Musical Signposts Tell You What’s Coming Next

The most obvious clue that a new section is starting in Classical music is a change of key. Classical composers were also keen on dropping advance hints that a new section was about to start. These hints are called musical signposts. They’re not all that easy to spot at first, but with a bit of practice you should get the hang of it:

- 1) Bridge passages lead smoothly into the new theme and also help prepare the new key.
- 2) Cadences (p.36-37) clearly mark the end of a phrase or section, and they come at the end of a piece too. When they do, the chords used in the cadence are repeated several times, to let the audience know it’s all over.

### There are Standard Forms for 4-Movement Compositions

Sonatas and symphonies all follow the same basic plan. These are the traditional forms used by composers for each of the movements.

*This one’s left out of sonatas in three movements.*

<b>FIRST MOVEMENT</b>	sonata form	brisk and purposeful
<b>SECOND MOVEMENT</b>	ternary or variation form	slower and songlike
<b>THIRD MOVEMENT</b>	minuet or scherzo	fairly fast and dance-like
<b>FOURTH MOVEMENT</b>	rondo, variation or sonata form	fast and cheerful

*It’s complicated, but that’s no excuse for not knowing it...*

Sonata form is very sophisticated. Don’t get muddled up between sonata form and sonatas. Sonatas use sonata form for the first movement, and sometimes the last one too, but not the second.

## Mozart — 1st Movement from Symphony No. 40 in G minor

Make sure you're familiar with the first movement of Mozart's *Symphony No. 40* — listen to it over and over again until you can whistle it in your sleep.

### Mozart was an Austrian Composer



- 1) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria in 1756. He died in Vienna in 1791.
- 2) He was taught performance and composition by his father, Leopold Mozart, who was also a composer.
- 3) Wolfgang showed his musical talent at a very young age — he composed his first piece of music when he was just 5 years old. By the time he was 10 he had toured Europe, performed for kings and queens and written his first opera.
- 4) He went on to write over 600 pieces of music, including operas, masses, symphonies and concertos. He also wrote smaller works, like chamber music and string quartets.
- 5) He's still considered to be one of the greatest composers that ever lived.

### He Wrote Lots of Symphonies

- 1) Mozart wrote over 40 symphonies in his short life.
- 2) He wrote most of his symphonies before he was 25, then took a break from them — he could make more money from composing concertos, and get a better reputation from writing operas.
- 3) He returned to symphonies later on — Symphony No. 40 was written in 1788. It's one of only two of his symphonies in a minor key (Symphony No. 25 and Symphony No. 40, both in G minor).
- 4) He wrote Symphony No. 40 and two others in just 6 weeks.

### Symphony No. 40 was Written for a Small Orchestra

- 1) This symphony is written for a fairly small orchestra — there's no percussion at all, and the only brass instruments are the French horns (there are no trumpets).
- 2) The original version didn't have clarinets because they'd only just been invented. Mozart wrote another, later version that included them.

### It has Four Movements

Like most symphonies, *Symphony No. 40 in G minor* has four movements. What's unusual is that Mozart uses sonata form (see p.91) for three movements, instead of just one or two. The names of the movements are just the tempos.

FIRST MOVEMENT *Molto Allegro* (very fast) — sonata form.

SECOND MOVEMENT *Andante* (walking pace) — sonata form.

THIRD MOVEMENT *Allegretto* (in between *andante* and *allegro*) — minuet and trio form (see p.80).

FOURTH MOVEMENT *Allegro assai* (very, very fast) — sonata form.

### Mozart wrote operas, masses, symphonies, concertos...


If you're reading this book, it's a safe bet that you will have heard of this Mozart chap. If not, then this is the page for you. Read it, learn it, and then cover it up and try to write a mini-essay on it...

## Mozart — 1st Movement from Symphony No. 40 in G minor

This movement is in sonata form. Make sure you know the three different sections of this form (see p.91).

### Bars 1-100 are the Exposition

#### FIRST SUBJECT (BARS 1-28)

- 1) The first idea lasts from bar 1 to bar 9 (there's no introduction), then the second idea is heard in bars 9-14. 
- 2) The first three notes of the first idea are repeated throughout the first subject — the second idea starts with these notes but a 6th higher.
- 3) This movement is marked *p* (piano) at the start, which is very unusual for a Classical symphony — they normally have a loud opening.
- 4) It's in G minor, but it modulates (changes key) to B♭ major when the subject is repeated in bars 20-28.

#### TRANSITION or BRIDGE PASSAGE (BARS 28-43)

- 1) This section is *f* (forte) all the way through, with lots of *sfz* (sforzandos) from bar 34.
- 2) This section begins in B♭ major, but extra chromatic notes (notes that don't fit in the key) add tension.
- 3) The violins play a descending sequence from bars 30-33, over a lower string tremolo with sustained notes from the upper woodwind.

#### SECOND SUBJECT (BARS 44-72)

- 1) The second subject's in B♭ major, though Mozart uses a lot of chromatic notes in this bit.
- 2) The strings play the theme first, then the woodwind repeat it at bar 52.
- 3) Mozart uses ornaments (see p.83) for the first time here — the woodwind play trills in bar 65.

#### CODETTA (BARS 72-100)

- 1) A codetta is like a mini coda — it's used to finish off the exposition section.
- 2) There's lots of imitation (see p.82) between the clarinet and the bassoon.
- 3) The key changes back from B♭ major to G minor at the end of this bit.
- 4) The whole of the exposition is repeated.

### The Development Section is Bars 101-164

- 1) The harmonies are more chromatic in this bit.
- 2) The development section begins in F♯ minor, but it explores many different keys — e.g. bars 118-128.
- 3) From bar 140, Mozart uses lots of pedal points (see p.86).

All the music in the development section is based on the first idea from the exposition.

### Bars 164-299 are the Recapitulation

- 1) The first subject (bars 164-184) is exactly the same as in the exposition.
- 2) The bridge passage is much longer this time — it lasts from bar 184 to bar 227. It passes through quite a few keys — including E♭ major, F minor and D major. It's polyphonic — in bars 202-210, there's a sequence being played in canon between Violin I and the lower strings.
- 3) The second subject (bars 227-260) is shared between the woodwind and the strings. Now it's in G minor, and there are some ascending chromatic notes in the bass parts from bar 245.
- 4) The coda (bars 260-299) is an extended version of the codetta. It finishes with four G minor chords — it's really obvious that the movement's finished.

### A codetta is a baby coda...

Make yourself really familiar with this movement — pay attention to the different features of each bit.



## Opera and Oratorio

Opera and oratorio are forms you'll need to know for listening. If you write a whole oratorio for your composition, the examiners will be so impressed they'll probably fall down in a faint. Very undignified.

### Operas are Like Plays Set to Music

- 1) The main characters are played by solo singers.
- 2) The main characters are supported by a chorus and an orchestra.
- 3) The story is acted out — usually with lavish sets, costumes and special effects.
- 4) In some operas every single word is sung — in others there's a bit of talking from time to time.
- 5) Some operas have really serious, tragic themes. Others are more light-hearted and comic. These are the names for the main types.
- 6) The words of an opera are called the 'libretto'. This is often written by a 'librettist' working alongside the composer.

Grand opera	serious, set entirely to music
Opéra comique	some spoken dialogue
Opera buffa	comic opera
Opera seria	formal, serious opera

### In Opera There are Three Types of Singing

#### ARIA

- 1) An aria is a solo vocal piece, backed by the orchestra.
- 2) Arias are used to go into the emotions of the main characters.
- 3) The arias have the memorable, exciting tunes. They're challenging for the performers and let them show their vocal tone and agility.

#### RECITATIVE

- 1) Recitative is a half-spoken, half-singing style used for some conversations.
- 2) Recitativo secco is recitative that's unaccompanied or backed by simple chords.
- 3) Recitativo stromentato or accompagnato is recitative with orchestral backing. The accompaniment's used to increase the dramatic tension of the words.

**CHORUS** — A bit where the whole chorus sings together.

### Oratorio is the Religious Version of Opera

- 1) An oratorio has arias, recitatives and choruses just like an opera.
- 2) Oratorios usually have a religious theme. They're based on traditional stories, sometimes from the Bible.
- 3) Oratorios don't usually have scenery, costumes or action — they're not acted out.
- 4) Oratorios were written mainly for concert or church performance.

COMPOSER	LIVED	FAMOUS ORATORIO
Carissimi	1605-1674	Jephte
Handel	1685-1759	Messiah
Hadyn	1732-1809	The Creation
Berlioz	1803-1869	L'Enfance du Christ
Mendelssohn	1809-1847	Elijah
Elgar	1857-1934	The Dream of Gerontius
Walton	1902-1983	Belshazzar's Feast

## Smaller Vocal Pieces

These songs are shorter than operas, but you still need to know their forms.

### Lots of Music Was Written to be Sung in Church

#### CANTATA

Some things in a cantata are similar to oratorio. The performers are solo singers, a chorus and an orchestra. There's no scenery and no acting and they were written to be performed in a church or concert hall.

The difference is that the words are taken from books or poems — they're not specially written. Most cantatas have a religious theme — but not all of them.

#### CHORALE

Chorales are hymns. They have simple language and a melody that's easy to sing. J.S. Bach wrote lots of them. Here's a bit from a chorale he put in *St. Matthew's Passion*.



#### MOTET & ANTHEM

A motet's a short piece written to be performed by the choir in church. They're written for Roman Catholic churches and the words are often in Latin. Motets are polyphonic — see p.39.

An anthem is very similar to a motet except they're written for Protestant churches, so the words aren't in Latin.

#### MASS

The mass is the name of a Roman Catholic church service — these parts of the mass are sung by the choir, or the choir and soloists:

Musical settings of the Mass were originally written to be used in church, but nowadays they're played in concerts, too. The text is usually in Latin.

- Kyrie — *Lord have mercy...*
- Gloria — *Glory be to God on high...*
- Credo — *I believe in one God...*
- Sanctus — *Holy, holy, holy...*
- Benedictus — *Blessed is He...*
- Agnus Dei — *O Lamb of God...*

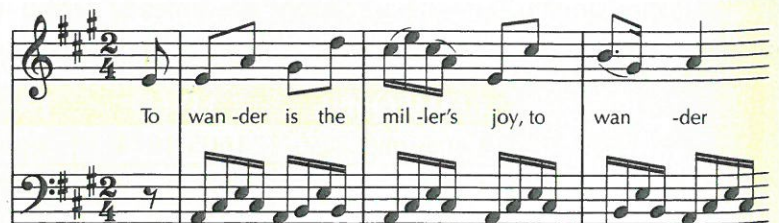
*(Some of them are quite long, so I've only given you the starting bits.)*

### Madrigals and Lieder are Non-Religious

Most madrigals were written in the 1500s and 1600s. They're about love or the countryside — or both. Most have no accompaniment and each person sings a different part. Madrigals often use imitation (see p.82).



A lied's a song for one singer and a piano. Both parts are equally important. The words really matter too — they're usually based on poems. Lieder were massively popular in the German Romantic period (late 18th to early 19th century) — there's more about them on p.100.



From *The Wandering Miller* by Schubert. He wrote over 600 lieder.

### They don't seem to have mentioned karaoke...

Several more types of music to learn about here, but then that's it for this section. Cover the page and see if you can remember them all — if not, back to the top of the page and read 'em again..