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- Elements
 - pitch - how high or low
 - rhythm (tempo) - the speed of the music
 - dynamics - how loud or soft
 - melody - the tune
 - harmony - chord - combinations of notes sounded together
 - timbre (tone, quality, color) - quality or tone color of sound; (pronounced "tam-ber") it's what makes a trumpet sound different from a piano and a harp sound different from a clarinet
 - texture - refers to how many layers of sound are heard at once, to what kind of layers they are (melody or harmony), and to how they are related to each other
- Voices
 - soprano - highest female vocal
 - alto (contralto) - lowest female vocal
 - tenor - high male vocal
 - baritone - middle male vocal
 - bass - lowest male vocal
 - countertenor - higher than a tenor (sounds like a mezzo-soprano singer)
 - SATB - soprano, alto, tenor, bass
- Sections of the Orchestra and Instruments
 - strings - violin, viola, cello, double bass
 - woodwinds - piccolo, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, oboe, English horn, bassoon, contrabassoon
 - brass - trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba
 - percussion - timpani (kettledrums), glockenspiel, xylophone, celesta, chimes, snare drum (side drum), bass drum, tambourine, triangle, cymbals, gong (tam-tam)
 - keyboard instruments - piano, harpsichord, organ, accordion
 - pizzicato - plucked string
 - vibrato - throbbing, expressive tone with small pitch fluctuations
 - tremolo - rapidly repeated tones
- Notations
 - Treble clef (G clef) - relatively high ranges (♩)
 - Bass Clef (F clef) - relatively low ranges (♭)
 - staff - set of five horizontal lines; notes are positioned on it, above it, or below it; when above or below it, they are placed on or by ledger lines
 - ledger lines - short, horizontal lines placed above or below the staff; see also, "staff"
 - lines and spaces treble clef: E **F** G **A** B **C** D **E** F

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- lines and spaces bass clef: G **A** B **C** D **E** F **G** A
- great staff - grand staff - a combination of the treble and bass staves
- measure or bar line - vertical line on a staff that separates the measures
- sharp - higher than the note by a half-step (#)
- flat - lower than the note by a half-step (b)
- natural - cancels the sharp or flat (n)
- key signature - indicates the key of a piece of music, using sharp or flat signs immediately following the clef sign at the beginning of the staff
- time signature - meter signature - shows the meter of a piece
- whole note (○), whole rest (⌋) - note or silence lasting for a whole measure
- half note (◡), half rest (⌋) - note or silence lasting for half as long as a whole note
- quarter note (♩), quarter rest (⌋) - note or silence lasting for half as long as a half note
- eighth note (♪), eighth rest (⌋) - note or silence lasting half as long as a quarter note
- sixteenth note (♩), sixteenth rest (⌋) - note or silence lasting half as long as an eighth note
- major scale - steps: whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half
- minor scale - steps: whole, half, whole, whole, half, whole, whole
- chromatic scale - all the white and black keys in one octave on the piano
- meter - the organization of beats into regular groups
- 4/4 (C) - quadruple meter - four beats per measure, quarter note gets the beat
- 3/4 - triple meter - three beats in a measure, quarter note gets the beat
- 2/4 - duple meter - two beats in a measure, quarter note gets the beat
- 2/2 (C) - two beats in a measure, half note gets the beat
- 3/8 - three beats in a measure, eighth note gets the beat
- 6/8 - six beats in a measure, eighth note gets the beat
- Dynamics
 - piano (*p*) - soft
 - pianissimo (*pp*) - very soft
 - mezzo piano (*mp*) - moderately soft
 - forte (*f*) - loud
 - fortissimo (*ff*) - very loud
 - mezzo forte (*mf*) - moderately loud
 - crescendo (◁) - gradually louder
 - decrescendo (▷) - gradually softer
 - diminuendo - same as decrescendo
 - syncopation - when an accented note comes where we normally would

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not expect one; an offbeat note is accented, the stress comes between two beats

- scat - scat singing - vocalization of a melodic line with nonsense syllables
- interval - the distance (in pitch) between two tones
- octave - a note that is double (or half) the frequency of another
- chord - combination of three or more tones sounded at once
- triad - the 1-3-5 of a scale
- arpeggio - broken chord - when individual tones of a chord are sounded one after another

symbols:

