

# MELODY

**Register**– how **high or low** the notes are

**Range** – the distance from the lowest note to the highest: **wide or narrow**

**Sequence** – a pattern that repeats, **ascending or descending**

**Scalic** (moving in a scale) or **broken chord** (moving in chord shapes)  
movement

**Steps** (going to a **next-door note**) or **leaps** (**jumping** to a note further away)

**Ornaments** (extra notes added to **decorate**)

Melodic **ostinato/riff**: a **repeating pattern**

# ARTICULATION

**Strummed** – on a guitar or ukulele, playing **all the notes of a chord**

**Finger-picking** – on guitar or uke, playing individual notes **one at a time**

**Sustained** – notes that are **held on**

**Stab** – a **short, accented chord**

**Staccato** – **short, detached** notes

**Legato** – notes that join **smoothly** together

**Slurred** – on a voice/wind instrument, going from one pitch to another **without articulating** the new note

**Pizzicato** – on a violin or cello, **plucking** the string

**Arco** – on a violin or cello, using the **bow**

**Accents** – notes that are **louder** than the surrounding notes

# **D**DYNAMICS

**Pianissimo** – very quiet

**Piano** - quiet

**Mezzopiano** – fairly quiet

**Mezzoforte** – fairly loud

**Forte** - loud

**Fortissimo** – very loud

**Crescendo** – getting louder

**Diminuendo** – getting quieter

# TIME/TEMPO

Number of **beats in a bar** - how the pulse is divided up; the **number we count up to**. Written as a **time signature**.

Tempo - **speed**

Accelerando – getting **faster**

Rallentando – getting **slower**

# **S**TRUCTURE

How many **sections**

What **order**

Which sections are the  
**same**

**Ternary** form: **ABA**

**12-bar blues**

**Pop song structure:**

intro/verse/chorus/bridge/

outro

# HARMONY

Major or minor – **major sounds happy, minor sounds sad**

Inversions – when you **flip the order of the notes** in a chord

Consonant – **not clashy**

Dissonant - **clashy**

Key change

Added notes in chords such as 7<sup>th</sup> in G7

Harmonic rhythm – **how often the chords change**, i.e. once per bar

Drone/pedal note – a **long note under or over** the rest of the music

'Blue' notes - notes from **outside the scale** being used, put in to sound **jazzy**

# INSTRUMENTS

**Strings:** violin/viola/cello/double bass /harp  
**played by plucking or bowing**

**Woodwind:**

flute/oboe/clarinet/bassoon/piccolo or  
saxophone **played by blowing into a  
mouthpiece**, which may have a **reed**

**Brass:** trumpet/horn/trombone/tuba **played  
by buzzing lips on a cup-shaped  
mouthpiece**

**Percussion:** timpani/snare/cymbals/  
xylophone (and many others) **played by  
hitting or shaking**

**Voices:** soprano/alto/tenor/bass

**Keyboards:** piano/harpsichord/organ/  
synthesiser

**Rock/pop:** electric/acoustic guitar/ bass  
guitar, drumkit, loops/samples

# RHYTHM

**Duration: long or short notes**

**Even or uneven** rhythms – whether the notes are the **same length**, or **long-short-long-short**

**Dotted** rhythms – a **long-short-long-short** pattern

**Triplets** – ‘**doppity**’

**Syncopation** – **off the beat**

On a particular **beat of the bar** – 1<sup>st</sup> beat, ‘2+’ and so on

**Rests/pauses** – **silences** in the music

Rhythmic **ostinato/riff** – a rhythmic **pattern that repeats**



# TEXTURE

**Note** (1 note at a time) or **chord** (**2+ notes at once**)

**Bass** – the **lowest part**

**Melody** – the **tune**

**Thick texture** (**lots of things** happening at once)

**Thin texture** (**not many things** happening at once)

**Melody + accompaniment** – a **tune with a backing**

**Countermelody** – an **extra tune** over the top of the main tune

**Parallel motion** – notes moving in the **same direction**

**Contrary motion** – notes moving in the **opposite direction**

**Unison** – everyone **sings/plays the same** thing

**Imitation** – one part plays something **similar** to another

**Call & response** – a musical **question and answer**