

Basic Music Vocabulary

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A cappella	Singing without accompaniment
Accent	Emphasis on a note, word, or phrase
Articulation	The way a sound is started and ended
Attack	The beginning of a sound
Breath	One cycle of inspiration/expiration
Chord	Two or more pitches sounding together
Chromatic	Moving in half-steps
Compound meter	Meter that is made up of simple meters 2/4+3/4
Counting	Mentally breaking down a rhythm into divisions
Diatonic	Moving within a key without changes
Diction	Correct and clear pronunciation of consonants
Dipthong	Two or more vowel sounds blended together
Dynamics	Relative loudness or softness
Embouchure	Mouth position in brass and woodwinds
Harmony	The system of moving from chord to chord
Homophonic	A style where all parts have the same rhythm

Intonation	Being in tune with accompaniment or others
Keymajor	Based on a scale of w/w/h/w/w/h steps
Keyminor	Based on a scale of w/h/w/w/h/w/w steps
Melody	Pitches in sequence that form a pattern
Meter	The division of time into units
Phrase	Notes played or sung in one breath
Pitch	The highness or lowness of sound measured in Hz.
Placement	Vocal termwhere the sound is placed in the head
Polyphonic	Where each part has an independent rhythm
Posture	Sitting/standing correctly and efficiently
Pulse	Feeling where the beat is
Release	How a sound is ended
Rhythm	How a sound is placed in time
Sacred	Music that is written for spiritual or religious use
Secular	Music that is written for entertainment
Slur	Playing a series of pitches without tonguing
Solfege	Italian system of pitch and interval ear training
Тетро	The speed at which a regular pulse is repeated
Tone color/Timbre	The relative brightness or darkness of a sound
Tongue	To start a sound with the tongue on reed or mthpce
Unison	Everyone on the same pitch

Don't see a term here? Email me and we'll add it in