

# COMMON MUSICAL TERMS

- accelerando (accel.)** - gradually faster  
**adagio** - very slow  
**agitato** - agitated; rapid  
**alla** - in the style of  
**allargando** - gradually slower and broader  
**allegretto** - light and moderately quick, but not as fast as allegro  
**allegro** - rapid; lively  
**al fine** - to the finish  
**andante (and<sup>te</sup>)** - moderately slow, but moving  
**andantino** - a little quicker than andante  
**anima, con** - with animation; spirited  
**a poco** - a little; gradually  
**a tempo** - in time; (generally implies a return to original rate of speed)  
**ben** - well (such as "ben marcato" - well marked)  
**brio, con** - with spirit; brilliant  
**calando** - gradually slower and softer  
**cantabile** - in a singing style  
**chalumeau** - applied to clarinet, signifies low register  
**chromatic** - by semi-tones  
**clarion** - applied to clarinet, signifies high register  
**coda** - the final added measures of a musical composition  
**con** - with  
**crescendo** - gradually louder  
**da capo** - from the beginning  
**dal segno** - from the sign (♩) )  
**diminuendo** - gradually softer  
**dolce** - sweetly  
**duet** - composition for two performers  
**energico** - energetically  
**etude** - a study  
**fermata** - hold or pause  
**fine** - the end  
**forte** - loud (*f*)  
**fortissimo** - very loud (*ff*)  
**forza** - force  
**forzando** - forcefully accented  
**fuoco** - fire; energy  
**giocoso** - joyfully  
**grandioso** - grand or noble style  
**grave** - very slow and solemn  
**grazia, con** - with graceful style  
**larghetto** - slow, but not as slow as largo  
**largo** - very slow  
**legato** - smooth and connected  
**leggiero** - lightly  
**lento** - very slow  
**l'istesso** - the same  
**maestoso** - majestically  
**marcato** - marked; with emphasis  
**marcia** - march style  
**marziale** - martial  
**meno** - less  
**mezzo** - medium; half  
    **mezzo-forte** - medium loud (*mf*)  
    **mezzo-piano** - medium soft (*mp*)  
**moderato** - moderate  
**molto** - very  
**morendo** - dying away  
**mosso** - motion; movement  
**moto** - motion; movement  
**non troppo** - not too much  
**opus** - a work  
**ottava** - an octave (8va)  
    **ottava alta** - octave higher  
    **ottava bassa** - octave lower  
**pesante** - with emphasis; heavily  
**pianissimo** - very softly (*pp*)  
**piano** - softly (*p*)  
**piu** - a little  
    **piu lento** - a little slower  
    **piu mosso** - a little faster  
**poco** - a little  
    **poco animato** - a little more animated  
    **poco meno** - a little less  
    **poco a poco** - little by little (gradually)  
**presto** - very fast  
**primo** - first  
**rallentando** - gradually slower  
**religioso** - in solemn style  
**ritardando** - gradually slower (*rit.*)  
**scherzando** - light, playful style  
**segno** - the sign (♩) )  
**sempre** - always; continually  
**senza** - without  
**sforza** - forced; emphasized  
**simile** - the same; (continue in similar manner)  
**smorzando** - dying away  
**solì** - more than one performer in unison  
**solo** - a composition or passage for one performer  
**sostenuto** - sustained  
**spirito, con** - with spirit, brilliance  
**staccato** - separated, detached style  
**stringendo** - gradually faster  
**subito** - suddenly  
**tacet** - silent  
**tempo** - time  
**tempo di valse** - waltz time  
**tenuto** - sustain full value  
**valse** - waltz  
**veloce** - very fast  
**vivace** - vivacious; lively  
**vivo** - lively; brisk