

Musical Terms

Accelerando- gradually faster
Adagietto- slow, not quite adagio speed
Adagio- very slow
Agitato- agitated, rapid
Al fine- to the finish
Alla- in the style of
Allargando- gradually slower and broader
Allegretto- light and moderately quick
Allegro- rapid, lively
Andante- moderately slow, but moving
Andantino- slightly faster than andante
Animato- spirited
A poco- a little, gradually
Assai- very
A tempo- in time; original rate of speed
Brillante- brilliantly
Brio, con- with spirit- brilliantly
Callando- slow down, get softer
Cantabile- in a singing style
Chromatic- semi-tones; half steps
Coda- final added measures- end
Con- with
Crescendo- gradually louder
D.C.- Da Capo- from the beginning
D.S.-Dal segno- from the sign
Diminuendo- gradually softer
Dolce- sweetly
Etude- a study
Fermata- hold or pause
Forte- loud
Fortissimo- very loud
Forza, con- with force
Forzando- forcefully, accented
Fuoco, con- with fire, energy
Furioso- furiously
Giocoso- joyfully
Grandioso- grand or noble

Grave- very slow and solemn
Grazioso- gracefully
Larghetto- slowly
Largo- very slow, more than larghetto
Legato- smooth and connected
Leggiero- lightly
Lento- very slowly
Maestoso- majestically
Marcato- with emphasis
Meno- less
Mezzo- medium; half
Moderate- moderately
Molto- very
Morendo- dying away
Mosso- motion, movement
Moto- motion, movement
Non troppo- not too much
Opus- musical work, composition
Ottava- (8 va.)- octave- higher or lower
Pesante- heavily, with emphasis
Piano- softly
Piu- more
Poco- a little
Poco a poco- little by little
Prestissimo- very, very fast
Presto- very fast
Primo- first
Rallentando- gradually slower
Religioso- in solemn style
Ritardando- gradually slower
Ritenuto- steady pace, slower
Rubato- rob time, no set note value
Scherzo- playfully- light and lively
Scherzando- light, playful style
Segno- the sign
Sempre- always, continually
Senza- without
Sforzando- forced, with emphasis
Simile- the same manner
Smorzando- dying away

Soli- 2 or more perform; in unison
Solo- passage played by 1 performer
Sordino- mute
Con Sordino- with mute
Senza Sordino- without mute
Sostenuto- sustained
Spirito, con- with spirit
Staccato- separated, detached
Stringendo- gradually faster
Subito- suddenly
Tacet- silent
Tempo- time or speed
Tempo di valse- waltz tempo
Tenuto- sustain full value
Valse- waltz
Veloce- very fast
Vivace- vivacious- very fast
Viva- lively