

	MEDIEVAL	RENAISSANCE	BAROQUE	CLASSICAL	ROMANTIC	MODERN
QUALITIES OF SOUND	Thin, light sound; medium register; variety of vocal and instrumental colour	richer fuller sound; medium registers with greater importance of bass level, moderate strength	wide variety of instrumental and vocal sonorities; contrasts between full and thin; greater range in registers; often greater strength and amount of sound	wide variety of instrumental and vocal sonorities; brilliant sound, transparent; much contrast between light and full; wide dynamic range, exploration of higher registers	In crease in fullness, richness and denseness of sound; concern with special colour effects; striking contrasts; widening range of pitch and dynamics	extremes of transparency and density; experiments in sonority effects; sharp contrasts of colour; tendency to reduce the 'sweetness' of sound
TEXTURE	3 to 4 parts, relatively equal; polyphonic action	3 to 6 or more parts, some chordal texture; principal texture remains polyphonic, fuller sound tends to disguise polyphony	polarity between soprano and bass; middle voices add fullness; some chordal texture, principally polyphonic action	2, 3 to many parts emphasis on principal melody, with some polyphony, some give-and-take	tendency toward amplification of lines by doubling; active part-writing, often with rich ornamentation, 3 or 4 to many parts	1, 2 to many parts, prominent polyphonic action, also give-and-take; also use of romantic classical and baroque textural layouts
CONSONANCE	4ths, 5ths, 8ves, unisons; consonance represents stability and arrival; open intervals	3rds, 6ths, 5ths and 8ves, unison, 4ths treated as dissonance at times, high concentration on consonance; triad sound	3rds, 6ths, 5ths, 8ves unison; 4th partial dissonance; consonances equals stability	some consonance values as preceding eras	same consonance values as before; lesser proportion of consonance than previously	consonance no longer a synonym for stability, although traditional ideas of consonance and dissonance still have considerable force
DISSONANCE	2nds and 7ths used ornamentally, with frequent clashes between lines, earliest polyphony. 3rds, 6ths treated as dissonance	preparation and resolution of dissonances; elimination of clashes	increase in amount and intensity of dissonance; many tritone dissonances	dissonance used for harmonic tension, for dramatic emphasis, often without preparation; many tritone dissonances	greater saturation of dissonance, often without intervening consonance; dissonance make rich sounds, and represent instability: tritone, 7ths, 9ths, altered intervals	as a rule, considerable saturation of dissonance, with dissonances frequently at points of arrival; functional distinction between consonance and dissonance disappears frequently
HARMONIC ACTION	Incidental cadences; few leading tones; light definition of tonal centre, little sense of harmonic progression	appearance of strong cadences at phrase endings; more leading tones; beginning of key sense; increase in feeling of harmonic drive	much stronger and more pervasive cadential action; full emergence of key sense; active compact harmonic flow with strong feeling of drive	saturation of cadential action; long-range definition, long range contrast of key; very strong harmonic drive	retention of classic cadence feeling with tendency toward deceptive and elided resolutions; rapid elusive shifts of tonal centre; harmonic colour an objective, weakened harmonic drives	partial abandonment of older chord types, substituted for older cadences; rapid shifts of tonal area; modal atonal, polytonal, tone-row, micro-tonal systems; little harmony drive
MOVEMENT	steady, moderate, gentle pace; some variation in manner of movement, mild accentuation by length	steady, moderate pace, considerable difference in manner in different styles; growing vigor of movement in secular and instrumental pieces; gentle accentuation	in early baroque: sharp contrasts and pace, often with uncertain flow. in late baroque: vigorous steady, "motoric", pace throughout a wide range of pace and manner present, growing vigor of accent	wide range of pace and manner; strongly influenced by typical song and dance manners, steady active pace with strong accentuation	wide range of pace and manner; appearance of imbalanced, unsteady qualities of movement; preference for slower pace, less vigorous accent	emphasis on active, percussively accented pace, with cross-rhythms and imbalance, often in rapidly paced music, wide range of pace and manner; uncertain, shifting pace often found
ARRIVAL	gentle, clear points of arrival; some leading-tone action polyphony, open and close cadences in dance.	Gentle points of arrival; strong cadences occasionally and at the end of a piece; well-defined caesuras and cadences in dance music	relatively few, but strong cadential points	clear frequent strong points of arrival; momentum often carries beyond, aiming for emphatic cadential points	obscure cadences disguised points of arrival more frequent	in neo-classic and folkloric music well defined points of arrival; in expressionistic music, uncertain sense of arrival
PHRASE STRUCTURE	relatively short phrases, symmetry in dance music	relatively short phrases in dance music; in polyphonic music continuous flow, covering cadences, extending phrases of movement; symmetry in dance music	in dance music symmetrically phrase structure; relatively short phrases of movement; in other music, continuous expansion, building broad phrases.	well-defined period structure in all forms and types; extension of period	In small pieces, clear periodisation in symmetrical structure; in larger pieces tendency toward asymmetrical phrase structure	as a rule asymmetrical phrase structure; some use of baroque continuous expansion and classical periodisation