

DICTIONARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

Term	Meaning	Sign
Accent <i>ah</i> -CHENT	Play this note louder.....	_____
Accidental (Eng.) Ak-sih-dehn-tahl	Sharp, flat, or natural not in the key signature.....	_____
Alberti Bass <i>ahl</i> -BEHR-tee BAHS	Outlines the notes of a chord from bottom - top - middle - top.....	_____
Arpeggio <i>ahr</i> -PED-joh	The notes of a chord played up or down the keyboard.....	_____
<i>a tempo</i> <i>ah</i> TEHM-poh	return to the original tempo.....	_____
Binary Form (A B) (Eng.) By-nehr-ree Fohrm	Form with 2 sections where each usually repeats.....	_____

blocked chord..... Tones of a chord played at the same time..... _____

(Eng.) BLOK'D Kohrd

broken chord..... Tones of a chord played separately.... _____

(Eng.) BROH-ken Kohrd

chord..... Three or more tones sounding together..... _____

(Eng.) KOHRD

chromatic scale..... 12-note scale composed of half steps..... _____

(Eng.) kroh-MEH-tik SKAYL

coda..... Ending section..... _____

COH-dah

common time..... 4/4 Time..... _____

(Eng.) CAH-mun TYM

cut time..... 2/2 Time; the half note gets 1 beat..... _____

(Eng.) CUHT tym

Da Capo al Coda... Return to the beginning and play
to the sign to jump to the Coda..... _____
dah CAH-poh ahl COH-dah

Dominant..... Step 5 of the scale..... _____
(Eng.) DOH-mih-nent

Dynamics..... The louds and softs of music..... _____
(Eng.) dy-NEH-miks

Fermata hold this note longer than usual..... _____
fehr-MAH-tah

Flat..... Indicates one half step lower..... _____
(Eng.) FLAT

half step..... Any key to the very next key in the
chromatic scale..... _____
(Eng.) HAF steph

Interval..... The distance between two keys,
including the keys being played..... _____
(Eng.) IN-ter-vahl

key signature..... the sharps or flats of any scale,
appearing at the start of a piece..... _____

(Eng.) KEE sihg-nuh-chur

leading tone..... Scale step 7, one half step below
the tonic note..... _____

(Eng.) LEE-ding TONE

ledger lines..... Short lines used to extend
the staff..... _____

(Eng.) LED-ger lynz

legato..... play smoothly and connected..... _____

leh-GAH-toh

major scale..... seven-note scale with half steps
between steps 3-4 and 7-8..... _____

(Eng.) MAY-johr SCALE

natural..... Cancels a sharp or flat, it is always
a white key..... _____

(Eng.) NAT-chur-ahl

octave..... Interval which spans 8 letter names,
Ex. Middle C to Treble C..... _____

(Eng.) OK-tav

opus Work. Compositions are often given opus numbers..... _____

OH-poos

ostinato..... A repeating musical pattern..... _____

oh-stee- NAH-toh

phrase..... A 'musical thought'; phrases are a way to break a piece into sections..... _____

(Eng.) FRAYS

poco little..... _____

POH-coh

primary chords..... I, IV, and V chords, the most common in music..... _____

(Eng.) PRY-mayr-ree kohrds

ritardando gradually slow down..... _____

ree-tahr- DAHN-doh

sforzando A sudden, strong accent..... _____

sfohr- TSAHN-doh

sharp..... Indicates one half step higher..... _____
(Eng.) sharp

slur..... play the notes over or under the slur
(Eng.) SLUR as legato..... _____

sonatina..... An instrumental piece, often with
soh-nah-TEE-nah several movements..... _____

staccatto..... short and detached..... _____
stah-CAHT-toh

swing rhythm..... Eighth notes played in a long-short
pattern; dotted eighth notes
connected to 16th notes..... _____
(Eng.) SWING rithm

tempo..... The speed of a piece of music..... _____
TEHM-poh

tenuto mark..... Hold note for full value, press
gently into the key..... _____
teh-NOO-toh

ternary (ABA)..... A musical form with three sections,
A B A..... _____
(Eng.) TER-nehr-ree

theme..... Melody. A piece may have several
themes..... _____
(Eng.) THEEM

time signature..... The numbers at the beginning of a
piece. The top tells how many beats
in a measure and the bottom tells
which note gets one beat..... _____
(Eng.) TYM sihg-nah-chur

tonic..... Scale step 1..... _____
(Eng.) TOH-nik

transpose..... Playing a piece of music in a
different key than what is written..... _____
(Eng.) trans-POZ

triplet..... three eighth notes to a quarter note.... _____
(Eng.) TRIP-let

waltz..... a dance in 3/4 time..... _____
(Eng.) WAHLTZ

whole step..... Comprised of 2 half steps..... _____

accelerando..... accelerating the tempo..... _____
aht-che-leh- RAHN-doh

accompaniment..... parts that accompany a melody..... _____
ah-COME-pan-ee-mehnt

al fine..... the end..... _____
ahl-FEE-neh

enharmonic..... a note that can be written two
different ways, i.e. F# Gb..... _____
ehn-har-MON-ik

mesto..... sad..... _____
MEHS-toh

poco a poco..... little by little..... _____
POH-coh a POH-coh