

Style Comparison: Renaissance - Baroque - Classical

Period	Harmony	Melody	Rhythm	Timbre/Dynamics	Texture	Form
Renaissance (1450-1600) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Des Prez • Palestrina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modal • Carefully regulated dissonances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conjunct and relatively unarticulated; • Tone painting • Vocally derived 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth, regular flow; • Meter generally unstressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily vocal • Homogeneous instrumental families • Dynamics not indicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polyphonic, imitative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined by text • Cantus firmus
Baroque (1600-1750) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monteverdi • Vivaldi • J. S. Bach • Handel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional harmony • Fast to moderate harmonic rhythm • Short-range tonal goals • Much sequencing (circle of 5ths) • Rich harmonic vocabulary (lots of 7th chords) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinning out of melodies • Motivically derived • Much ornamentation • Much disjunct motion based on triad • Single thematic (motivic) idea per movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous motion with a rigid beat or more irregular, recitative-like motion • Clearly articulated meter • No distinction between beats 1 & 3 • Hemiola at cadences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbral contrast (concerto principle) • Basso continuo normal • Terraced dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonic counterpoint • Soprano-bass polarity • Melody & accompaniment • Familiar style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrumental and vocal forms • Binary and ternary forms
Classical (1750-1820) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haydn • Mozart • Beethoven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional harmony • Slower harmonic rhythm • Long-range tonal goals • Limited harmonic vocabulary • Modal inflections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More balanced phrases than Baroque, marked by rests and cadences • antecedent/ consequent phrase structure • Contrasting themes of simple character within a single movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion more varied than Baroque with considerable pauses. • Themes varied by rhythm • Primary accents on first beats of measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of modern orchestra dominated by strings • Decline of basso continuo • Graduated and terraced dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melody & accompaniment: Alberti bass • Counterpoint used in thematic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale tonal structures (sonata form, rondo, binary, ternary) • Thematic development (theme and variations)

Style Comparison: Romantic - Impressionism - Modern - Post Modern

Period	Harmony	Melody	Rhythm	Timbre/Dynamics	Texture	Form
Romantic (1820-1900) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schubert • Schumann • Chopin • Brahms • Wagner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional and linear harmony • Harmony as color • Harmonic rhythm even slower than Classical • Tonal goals include mediant relationships • Expanded harmonic vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, lyrical/passionate melodies with large expressive leaps • Expressive use of non-chord tones • Less-regular phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater freedom of pulse: wide range of motion • Tempo Rubato • Cross rhythms, hemiola, syncopation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timbre is equally important musical parameter • Greatly expanded orchestra • Virtuoso soloists • Wide range of dynamics • Meticulous dynamic indications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophonic textures • Linear counterpoint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greatly expanded classical forms • Program music
Impressionism (1890-1915) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debussy • Ravel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-functional tertian harmony with much use of extended tertian chords • Harmony for color • Planing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exotic Scales: whole tone, pentatonic, octatonic • short melodic fragments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluidity of motion • Metric ambiguity (blurring of barline) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exotic orchestration • Subtle timbral contrasts • Soloistic use of instruments • Piano is important means of expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophonic textures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectional forms derived from means other than tonality • Some use of classical formal models
Modern (1900-1970) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stravinsky • Bartok • Schoenberg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend towards atonality, polytonality, or pandiatonicism • “Emancipation of dissonance” • Harmony derived from serial techniques • Redefinition of functional tonality in “Neo-classicism” • Unique, innovative sonorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme ranges • Disjunct motion • Asymmetrical phrase structure • Melodies derived from serial techniques • Return to modality and folk material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremes of pace and motion • Extreme use of syncopation and irregular accents • Changing and additive meters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased importance of percussion • Extreme timbral contrasts • Unique, innovative instrumentation and timbres • Extreme dynamic contrasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremes of density and transparency • Sound mass • Contrapuntal textures especially in serial pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms derived from program • Return to traditional processes (e.g., fugue) and formal structures (classical forms) • Symmetrical structures (e.g., arch form) • Unique forms determined by unusual means (e.g., texture, timbre)
Post Modern (1970-present) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reich • Glass • Adams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to simple diatonic harmony • Influence of popular music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diatonic melodies • “Phase” music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perpetual motion • Strong pulse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional orchestration • Popular and jazz ensembles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophonic • Layers of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, gradually evolving changes define the formal parameters