

## The Main Characteristics of Renaissance Music

1. Music still based on modes, but gradually more accidentals creep in.
2. Richer texture in four or more parts. Bass part is added below the tenor.
3. Blending rather than contrasting strands in the musical texture.
4. Harmony. Greater concern with the flow and progression of chords.
5. Church music. Some pieces were intended for 'a cappella' performance. Mainly contrapuntal. Lots of imitation. Some church music was accompanied by instruments - for example polychoral pieces in antiphonal style (Antiphonal - Questions and Answers, Stereo Effect).
6. Secular music (none-religious music. Sacred music is to do with the church) There was lots of vocal pieces and dances, and lots of instrumental pieces (However a lot of the instrumentals were in a vocal style, but sonic were suited to instruments. Vocal music was by far the more important.)
7. The characteristic timbres of Renaissance musical instruments - many forming families.

## The Main Characteristics of Baroque Music

1. The Basso Continuo (Figured Bass).
2. One mood throughout the entire piece.
3. Important String sections.
4. Modes were replaced by the Major/Minor key system.
5. Many different forms are used (e.g. Binary, Fugue)
6. Many types of music, e.g. The Chorale, Opera, the Dance Suite.
7. Energetic rhythms (Exuberance), long melodies, many ornaments, contrasts (especially dynamics, but also in timbres)

## The Main Characteristics of Classical Music

1. Less complicated texture than Baroque (more homophonic).
2. Emphasis on beauty, elegance and balance.
3. More variety and contrast within a piece than Baroque (dynamics, instruments, pitch, tempo, key, mood and timbre).
4. Melodies tend to be shorter than those in baroque, with clear-cut phrases, and clearly marked cadences.
5. The orchestra increases in size and range. The harpsichord falls out of use. The woodwind becomes a self-contained section.
6. The piano takes over, often with Alberti bass accompaniment.
7. Importance was given to instrumental music - sonata, trio, string quartet, symphony, concerto.
8. Sonata form was the most important design.

## The Main Characteristics of Romantic Music

1. Freedom of form and design. It was more personal and emotional.
2. Song-like melodies (lyrical), as well as many chromatic harmonies and discords.
3. Dramatic contrasts of dynamics and pitch.
4. Big orchestras, due mainly to brass and the invention of the valve.
5. Wide variety of pieces (i.e. songs up to five hour Wagner operas)
6. Programme music (music that tells a story)
7. Shape was brought to work through the use of recurring themes.

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8. Great technical virtuosity.
9. Nationalism (a reaction against German influence)