

Elements of Music



What's the difference between sound and music? Compare an African drumbeat and the heartbeat. Both have rhythm and pitch, but the drumbeat is intentional, a deliberate organization of sounds for the sake of making music. Melody, rhythm, pitch, and repetition are employed to create a musical form and evoke an emotional response.

- Tempo:** Overall pace of the song; speed of the music. In a musical composition, tempo is usually described with Italian words such as *largo*, *adagio*, *allegro*, etc.
- Rhythm:** In songs, words usually match the rhythm. The origin of the word is Greek, meaning "flow." As meter pulsates a poem, rhythm organizes music in much the same way. The regular pulsations of the music are called the beat.
- Pitch:** High or low tones.
- Timbre:** Color of the sound. Each sound has a unique timbre.
- Dynamics:** Loudness or softness of the sound. Dynamics add emotional intensity. Italian words like *forte*, *pianissimo*, and *crescendo* give musician's clues on how loud a piece should be played or sung.
- Melody:** The tune. A series of musical tones or pitches falling into a recognizable pattern.
- Harmony:** The blending of tones or sounds played or sung simultaneously to make up chords.

Melody



twin - kle twin - kle lit - tle star how

