

Choral Music



Choral Conducting Terms

Tempo Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|--|------------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| fastest, as fast as possible | | so schnell als möglich | prestissimo | |
| very fast | tres vite | äusserst schnell | presto | |
| fast, quickly | vite, vitement | schnell, behende | allegro | |
| "little allegro" | | | allegretto | |
| moderate | | gemässigt, mässig | moderato | |
| "little andante" | | | andantino | |
| moving, going | | gehend | andante | |
| "little adagio" | | | adagietto | |
| slow, with ease | | | adagio | |
| slow | | | tardo | |
| slow | lente, lentement | langsam | lento | |
| "little largo" | | | larghetto | |
| broad, large | large | breit | largo | |
| grave, solemn (character term, often used as tempo) | | | grave | |

Other Tempo Related Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---|--------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| time | | Zeitmass | tempo | |
| "just" (proper) tempo | | | tempo giusto | |
| the same tempo (beat remains the same even though the meter changes) | | dasselbe Zeitmass | l'istesso tempo | |
| slower ("less motion") | | etwas breiter | meno mosso | |
| suddenly slower | | | ritenuto | |
| at the breve, therefore, beat is the breve (cut time) | | | alla breve | |

Terms for Changing Tempo

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---|----------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| gradually slower | alongez, cedez | zurückhalten | ritardando | rit., ritard. |
| suddenly slower | | | ritenuto | riten. |
| slow down | ralentir | zurückhalten | rallentando | rall. |
| slowing down | retenant | zurückhaltentend | stendendo | |
| enlarging | élargant | breiter | allargando | |
| "sustaining" more than the value, therefore, slowing | | getragen | sostenuto | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| pressing on | pressez | drängend, dringend | pressando | |
| become faster | poussez | beschleunigt | accelerando, stringendo | |
| hurrying | empresé | eilend | incalzando | |
| without measure, therefore, freely | | | senza misura | |
| with measure, therefore, strictly | | | alla misura | |
| freely | librement | frei | a piacere | |
| stolen time, therefore, flexible | | | rubato | |
| at pleasure of performer | à volonté | | ad libitum | |

Modifying Words

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| very | trés | sehr | molto | |
| very, enough, rather | assez | | assai | |
| a little | un peu | etwas | un poco | |
| more | plus de | mehr | piu | |
| too | trop | | troppo | |
| but not too much | | | ma non troppo | |
| not too _____ | | | _____ non troppo | |
| always | toujours | immer | sempre | |
| suddenly | soudainment | plötzlich | subito | |
| little by little | peu á peu | allmählich | poco a poco | |
| similarly (continue in the same manner) | similarment | immer gleich | simile | |
| with movement | avec mouvement | mit Bewegung | con moto | |
| comfortable, easy, convenient | commode | gemächlich | comodo | |
| all | tout | ganz | tutti | |
| less | moins | wenig | meno | |
| with, with the | | | col, col' colla , colle | |

Character Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| sweet | doux | lieblich | dolce | |
| sweetest | | | dolcissimo | |
| with vigor | avec force | kräftig | con brio, brioso | |
| animated | animé | belebend, belebt, bewegt | animato | |
| expressively | expressivement | ausdrucksvoll | espressivo | |
| calm, quieting | calme | beruhigt, beruhigend, ruhig | calmado | |
| soft, gentle | doucement | sanft, zart | tranquillo | |
| singing | chantant | gesangvoll | cantabile | |
| sad, mournful | douloureux | traurig | dolente | |
| solemn | solennel | feierlich | grave | |
| flowing | coulant | fliessend | scioltamente | |
| with fire | avec feu | mit Feuer | con fuoco | |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|------------|--|
| lively | vif, vivement | lebendig, lebhaft, sehr schnell | vivace | |
| heavy | lourd | schwer | pesante | |
| held, sustained | soutenu | gehalten | tenuto | |
| majestic | majestueux | | maestoso | |
| dying away | mourant | erloschend | morendo | |
| playful | enjoué | scherzhaft | scherzando | |
| simple, unaffected | simple | einfach | semplice | |
| sighing, plaintive | soupirant | seufzen | sospirando | |
| agitated | agité | stürmisch | agitato | |
| broadly | large | breit | largamente | |

Dynamic Marks

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|-----------|--------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| softest | | | pianissimo | pp |
| soft | | piano; leise | piano | p |
| half-soft | | mezzo-; mittel-; halb- | mezzo piano | mp |
| half-loud | | mezzo-; mittel-; halb- | mezzo forte | mf |
| loud | | laut | forte | f |
| loudest | | sehr stark | fortissimo | ff |

Terms for Changing Dynamics

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|----------------|-----------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| increasing | accroître | anwachsend | crescendo | cres. |
| decreasing | decroître | vermindern | decrescendo | deces. |
| diminishing | diminué | abnehmend | diminuendo | dim. |
| barely audible | | | estinto | |

Accent Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|
| forcing | | | forzando sforzando | sf, sfz |
| forced | | | forzato sforzato | sf, sfz |
| strengthening | | | rinforzando | rf, rfz |
| loud, then immediately soft | | | fortepiano | fp |

Connecting Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------|
| attached | enchainez | anheftend | attacca, attacca subito | |
| follow immediately | | | seque | |

Division and Octave Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| divided | divisés | geteilt | divisi | |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--|--|
| in unison | unis | zusammen | all 'unisono | |
| by two | á 2 (á deux) | zu 2 (zu zwei) | a 2 (a due) | |
| octave | | | ottava, 8va | |
| play one octave higher than written | | | all 'ottava, ottava alta, ottava supra, 8va_____ | |
| play one octave lower than written | | | ottava bassa, ottava sotta, 8va_____ | |
| with the octave | | | coll 'ottava | |

Terms Indicating a Return to Normal

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|------------|--------------|
| return to a former tempo | | | a tempo | |
| as written, "in place" | | | loco | |
| as usual | | | a solito | |
| as at first | | | come prima | |
| as above | | | come supra | |
| exactly as written | | | come sta | |

Repeats and Coda Procedures

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| As far as the sign (from the beginning) | fin á la signe | enden am Zeichen | fin' al segno | |
| sign | signe | Zeichen | segno | |
| to the end (after repeating from the beginning) | à la fin | am Ende | al fine | |
| (repeat) from the beginning | de la tête | vom anfang, am anfang | da capo | (D.C.) |
| (repeat) from the sign | de la signe | Wiederholungzeichen | dal segno | (D.S.) |
| then the coda | | | poi la coda | |
| repeat | renvoi | Wiederholung | ancora | |
| end, finish | fin | Ende | fine | |
| next section follows immediately | | | segue | |

Pitch Letter Names

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---------|----------|--------|------------|--------------|
| C-flat | ut bémol | ces | do bemolle | |
| C | ut | C | do | |
| C-sharp | ut diése | cis | do diesis | |
| D-flat | ré bémol | des | re bemolle | |
| D | ré | D | re | |
| D-sharp | ré diése | dis | re diesis | |
| E-flat | mi bémol | es | mi bemolle | |
| E | mi | E | mi | |
| E-sharp | mi diése | eis | mi diesis | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------|--|
| F-flat | fa bémol | fes | fa bemolle | |
| F | fa | F | fa | |
| F-sharp | fa diése | fis | fa diesis | |
| G-flat | sol bémol | ges | sol bemolle | |
| G | sol | G | sol | |
| G-sharp | sol diése | gis | sol diesis | |
| A-flat | la bémol | as | la bemolle | |
| A | la | A | la | |
| A-sharp | la diése | ais | la diesis | |
| B-flat | si bémol | B | si bemolle | |
| B | si | H | si | |
| B-sharp | si diése | his | si diesis | |
| Doubles illustrated: | | | | |
| G-double sharp | sol double-diése | gisis | sol doppio diesis | |
| G-double flat | sol double-bémol | geses | sol doppio bemolle | |

Tonality

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---------|--------|--------|----------|--------------|
| major | majeur | Dur | maggiore | |
| minor | mineur | moll | minore | |

Odds 'n Ends

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|---------|---------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| duet | duo | Duett, Duo | duetto | |
| trio | terzette | Terzett | terzetto | |
| quartet | quatuor | Quartett | quartetto | |
| quintet | quintette, quintour | Quintett | quintetto | |
| sextet | sextette, sextour | Sextett | sestetto | |
| octet | octette | Oktett | otteto | |

Nomenclature of Note Values

| U. S. | British | French | German | Italian | Spanish |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Whole | semibreve | ronde | Ganze (Note) | semibreve | redonda |
| Half | minim | blanche | Halbe (Note) | bianca | blance |
| Quarter | crotchet | noire | Viertel | nera | negra |
| (quarter rest) | | soupir | | | |
| Eighth | quaver | croche | Achtel | croma | corchea |
| Sixteenth | semiquaver | double-croche | Sechzehntel | semicroma | semicorchea |
| Thirty-second | demisemiquaver | triple-croche | Zweiunddreissegestel | biscroma | fusa |
| Sixty-fourth | hemidemisemiquaver | quadruple-croche | Vierundsechzigstel | semibiscroma | semifusa |

Vocal Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------|
| voice | voix | Stimme | voce | |
| chest voice | | | voce di petto | |
| head voice | | | voce di testa | |
| two voices | | | a due voci | |
| three voices, etc. | | | a tre voci, etc. | |
| equal voices | | | voce pari, voci eguali | |
| with the voice | | | colla voce | |
| half voice | | | mezza voce | |
| under, subdued | | | sotto voce | |
| chorus | choeur | Chor | coro | |
| soprano | | Sopran | soprano | |
| alto | | Alt | alto | |
| tenor | | Tenore | tenore | |
| bass | | Basso | basso | |
| closed mouth | bouche fermée | Brummstimme | bocca chiusa | b.c. |

Strings Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| violin | violon | Geige or Violine | violino | |
| violins | violons | Geigen or Violinen | violini | |
| viola | alto | Bratsche | viola | |
| violas | altos | Bratschen | viole | |
| cello | violoncelle | Violoncell | violoncello | |
| cellos (celli) | violoncelles | Violoncelle | violoncelli | |
| double bass, contrabass, bassviol, string bass | contrebass | Kontrabass | contrabasso | |
| double basses, et al. | contrebasses | Kontrabasse | contrabassi | |
| harp | harpe | Harfe | arpa | |
| harps | harpes | Harfen | arpe | |
| guitar | guitare | Gitarre | chitarra | |
| string | corde | Saite | corda | |
| open string | corde á vide, corde á jour | | corda vuota | |
| bow | archet | Bogen | archetto | |
| up-bow | poussé | Aufstrich | arcata in su | |
| down-bow | tiré | Abstrich | arcata in giu | |
| plucked | | | pizzicato | |
| bowed | | | arco | |
| frog, nut, heel | talon | Frosch | tallone | |
| at the point; at the tip | pointe | Spitze | punta d'arco | |
| on the fingerboard | sur la touche | am Griffbrett | sul tasto | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| near the bridge | sur le chevalet | am Steg | sul ponticello | |
| with the wood | avec le bois | mit Holz | col legno | |
| in the ordinary way | mode ordinaire | gewöhnlich | modo ordinario | |
| with mute | sourdine | mit Dämpfer | con sordino | |
| with mutes | sourdines | mit Dämpfern | con sordini | |
| take off mutes | enlevez les sourdines | Dämpfern weg | via sordini | |
| without mutes | sans sourdines | ohne Dämpfern | senza sordini | |
| double stop | double corde | Doppelgriff | | |

Keyboard Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| organ | orgue | Orgel | organo | |
| piano, pianoforte | piano, pianoforte | Piano, Klavier | piano, pianoforte, fortepiano | |
| grand piano | piano á queue | Flügel | pianoforte a coda | |
| harpschord | clavecin | Cembalo, Keilflügen, Clavicimbel | clavicembalo | |

Brass Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| brass instruments | instruments de cuivre | Blechinstrumenten | stromenti d'ottone | |
| horn | cor | Horn | corno | |
| horns | cors | Hörner | corni | |
| trumpet | trompette | Trompete | tromba | |
| trumpets | trompettes | Trompeten | trombe | |
| cornet | cornet á pistons | Kornett | cornetta | |
| cornets | cornets á pistons | Kornetten | cornette | |
| trombone | trombone | Posaune | trombone | |
| trombones | trombones | Posaunen | tromboni | |
| bass trombone | trombone basse | Bassposaune | trombone basso | |
| baritone | bugle ténor (baryton) | Tenorhorn (Euphonion) | flicorno tenore (bombarda) | |
| euphonium | basse á pistons | Baryton | | |
| tuba | tuba | Basstuba | tuba | |
| open | ouvert | offen | aperto | |
| stopped | bouche | gestopft | chiuso | |
| brassy | cuivre | schmetternd | | |
| bells in the air | pavillons en l'air | Schalltrichter auf | campane in aria | |

Woodwind Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| wind instruments | instruments á vent | Blasinstrumenten | stromenti di vento | |
| woodwind | instruments á bois | Holzblasinstrumenten | | |
| piccolo | petite flûte | kleine Flöte | flauto piccolo | |

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| flute | flûte | Flöte | flauto | |
| flutes | flûtes | Flöten | flauti | |
| oboe | hautbois | Oboe | oboe | |
| oboes | hautbois | Oboen | oboi | |
| English horn | cor Anglais | Englisch Horn | corno Inglese | |
| bassoon | basson | Fagott | fagotto | |
| bassoons | bassons | Fagotte | fagotti | |
| contrabassoon | contre-basson | Kontrafagott | contrafagotto | |
| clarinet | clarinette | Karinette | clarinetto | |
| clarinets | clarinettes | Karinetten | clarinetti | |
| bass clarinet | clarinette basse | Basskarinette | clarinetto basso | |
| saxophone | saxophone | Saxophon | sassofono | |
| saxophones | saxophones | Saxophone | sassofoni | |

Percussion Terms

| English | French | German | Italian | Abbreviation |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| percussion instruments | batterie | Schlaginstrumenten | stromenti di percussione | |
| snare drum | tambour | kleine Trommel | tamburo | |
| tenor drum | caisse roulante | Rührtrommel | tamburo rullante | |
| bass drum | grosse caisse | grosse Trommel | gran cassa | |
| kettledrums | timbales | Pauken | timpani | |
| castanets | castagnettes | Kastagnetten | castagnette | |
| xylophone | claquebois | xylophon, strohfiedel | silofono | |
| orchestra bells | jeu di timbres | Glockenspiel | campanelli | |
| tubular bells | cloches tubulaires | Röhrenglocken, Glocken | campane tubolari | |
| chimes | cloches | Glocken | campane | |
| cymbals | cymbales | Becken | piatti | |
| triangle | triangle | Triangel | triangolo | |
| gong | tam-tam | Tam-Tam | tam-tam | |

