



TEMPO / METRONOME

Name _____

TEMPO = SPEED

The word **tempo**, an Italian term for 'time', is an indication of how fast the beat is moving and usually is referred to in terms of the number of beats per minute in music. The faster the beat, the faster the tempo, so a piece of music with an indicated tempo of sixty beats per minute will be slower than music with 100 beats per minute.

Composers usually indicate the tempo for a piece by placing specific Italian terms at the beginning. Even though few conductors and performers agree on a 'right' or exact tempo for a composition, these are some of the most frequently used terms to indicate the composer's preference. (slowest to fastest)

Slow tempo: *adagio, largo, lento*

Moderate tempo: *allegretto, andante, moderato*

Fast tempo: *allegro, presto, vivace*

Added to these words, the performer or conductor often finds a qualifying word such as *meno*, meaning 'less', *molto*, which means 'very' or 'much' and *non troppo*, meaning 'not too much'.

SLOW TO FAST

Fill in the blanks on the chart below with a word of your own that equals the Italian term in tempo markings, as they move from slow to fast.

Italian	English	Italian	English
1. <i>Largo</i>		6. <i>Allegretto</i>	
2. <i>Lento</i>		7. <i>Allegro</i>	
3. <i>Adagio</i>		8. <i>Vivace</i>	
4. <i>Andante</i>		9. <i>Presto</i>	
5. <i>Moderato</i>		10. <i>Prestissimo</i>	

Listen to recordings of several familiar pieces of music as you tap with the steady beat. Vary your selections from slow to fast examples.

METRONOME

Musicians use a mechanical or electrical device called a **metronome** to keep a steady beat or reproduce an exact tempo. Invented by J. N. Malzel in 1816, the early models consisted of a swinging rod or pendulum whose speed of movement could be varied by sliding a weight up or down the rod. The composer Ludwig Beethoven was one of the first musicians to use a metronome during his composing.

Most music moves at a metronome speed of between 60 and 160 beats per minute. For example, most marches move at MM (Malzel's metronome) 120 or 120 ticks per minute, each tick being the length of a quarter note.

Ex.	<i>Largo</i> = 40 to 57 beats per minute	
	<i>Adagio</i> = 57 to 70	
	<i>Andante</i> = 71 to 89	
	<i>Allegro</i> = 90 to 135	
	<i>Vivace</i> = 136 to 170	
	<i>Presto</i> = 171 to 216	

Modern metronomes have replaced the swinging pendulum with a clock or digital mechanism, but it is still widely used to indicate to the conductor or performer the suggested pace of a piece as set by the composer.

FOLLOW THE TEMPO

Rehearse the following rhythm patterns on unpitched instruments using the suggested metronome markings.

♩ = 92

Drum $\frac{2}{4}$ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ :||

Sticks $\frac{2}{4}$ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ :||

♩ = 120

Drum $\frac{4}{4}$ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ :||

Tambourine $\frac{4}{4}$ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ :||

X