

Musical Time Machine

Why are we learning this? Unfamiliar listening questions at GCSE often ask which era you think the piece is from, and the music we listen to today evolved from Baroque counterpoint.

What are the main 3 musical eras?

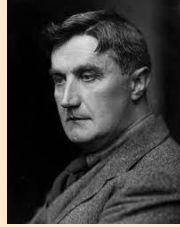
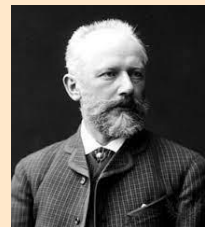
- **Baroque** – 1600-1750. The main keyboard instrument was the harpsichord, and the string instruments were prominent in chamber music. They did have flutes, but these were made of wood instead of metal, like they are today. The only brass instruments were French horn and trumpet, but both of these were ‘natural’, so didn’t have any valves which meant they had a limited range.
- **Classical** – 1750-1825. The piano was invented and quickly replaced the harpsichord as it was louder and more versatile. The clarinet was a new addition to the woodwind family, and orchestras started to use timpani in the percussion section.
- **Romantic** – 1825-1900. Orchestras got much larger, with lots of new instruments, such as trombone, tuba, bass clarinet, piccolo and lots of percussion. Flutes were now made of metal, which made them louder.

Famous Composers

J.S. Bach (1685-1750) W.A. Mozart (1756-1796) Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)



Keywords

Baroque

Music composed between c. 1600-1750. It is often very florid, with lots of scales, ornaments and perfect cadences. Instruments include harpsichord and strings.

Classical

Music composed between c. 1750-1825. Music is very ordered, often with a pretty melody and accompaniment. Instruments include piano, strings and woodwind.

Romantic

Music composed between c. 1825-1900. It has very rich harmonies, with discords and extended chords. Instruments include piano, full orchestra with plenty of brass and percussion.

Harpsichord

Similar to a piano, but the strings are plucked instead of hit, which creates a very delicate, twangy sound

