

Dynamics & Tempo

Music

How loud and how fast — the Italian, in order, with numbers where they exist.

Dynamics run quiet to loud; tempo markings run slow to fast, in beats per minute.

Dynamics, quiet → loud

pp – pianissimo, very soft

p – piano, soft

mp – mezzo-piano

mf – mezzo-forte

f – forte, loud

ff – fortissimo, very loud

Changing

cresc. – getting louder

dim. – getting softer

sfz – sudden accent

rit. – gradually slower

accel. – gradually faster

a tempo – back to the original speed

Tempo, slow → fast (bpm)

Largo 40–60

Adagio 66–76

Andante 76–108

Moderato 108–120

Allegro 120–168

Presto 168–200

There is no p that is quiet enough to be inaudible. Soft still has to carry.