

Max's Musical Tempo Masterclass

Learning objective: To identify, define, and compare different tempos in music using accurate terminology.

Read each flashcard carefully to learn about musical tempo. Use these to test your knowledge of how speed changes the mood and character of a piece of music.

Tempo	BPM
The speed or pace at which a piece of music is played.	Beats Per Minute; the standard unit used to measure musical tempo.
Largo	Adagio
A very slow and broad tempo.	A slow tempo, often described as 'at ease'.
Andante	Moderato
A moderate, walking pace.	A moderate tempo, slightly faster than Andante.
Allegro	Presto
A fast, lively, and bright tempo.	A very fast and energetic tempo.
Accelerando	Ritardando
A musical instruction to gradually increase the speed.	A musical instruction to gradually decrease the speed.
Max asks: If a song is played at 60 BPM, would it be Largo or Allegro?	Compare and contrast: How does a Ritardando affect the 'energy' of a piece of music?
Largo, because 60 BPM represents one beat per second, which is a slow, broad tempo.	A Ritardando lowers the energy by creating a sense of slowing down, often used to signal the end of a section or to create suspense.