

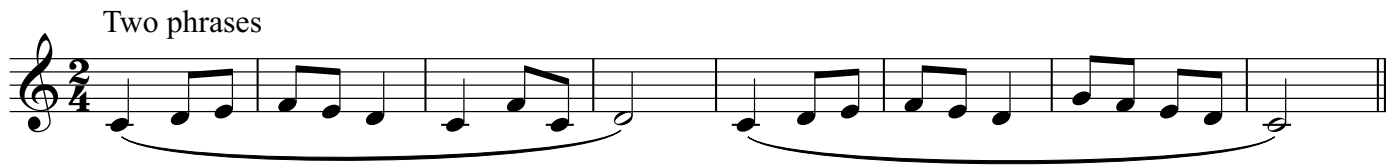
# Expression

As music was first printed in Italy, Italian has become the language of music. Renaissance composer Giovanni Gabrieli was the first to include dynamic markings in his scores. Composers during the Baroque period used expression markings sparingly, but as time marched on, composers became increasingly specific regarding performance instruction. Some composers, such as Rameau and Schumann, chose to use expression markings in their native language. Contemporary composers use Italian, their own language, or borrow foreign words to evoke a specific feeling. For example, "mit sehnsucht" to denote the expression of a song from the German Romantic period.

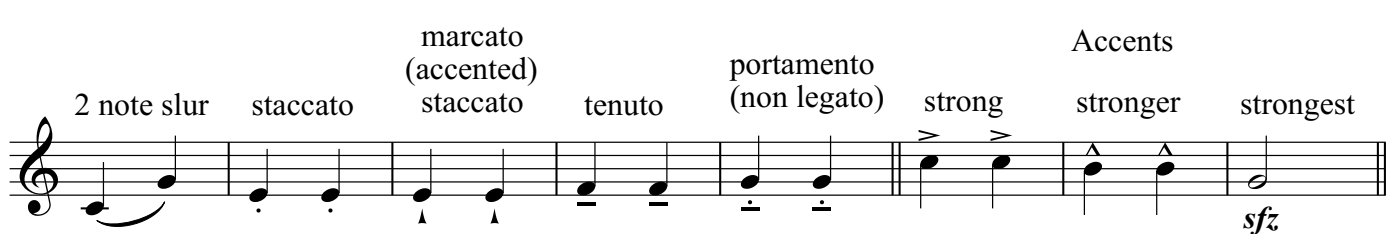
## Touch

**All music is to be played *legato*, or connected, unless otherwise notated.** The specific marking for legato is a long curved line placed over or under a group of notes, and is called a slur. It also serves to indicate phrase length. A phrase is a group of notes that makes sense as a complete thought, roughly equivalent to a sentence in grammar. It is desirable and musical to initiate the phrase by dropping the hand into the keys and creating a slight accent (extra stress), and to end the phrase by tapering the dynamic level (louder to softer) and lifting the hand for a quick "breath." When just two notes are connected by a slur, they are considered a unit of sound - the *two note slur* - played by dropping the hand into the first note, and "rolling" or connecting into the second note, which is softer and released. When a note has a dot placed over or under it, it is to be played *staccato*, or very short. A dash over a note indicates *tenuto*, to be played with a slight pressure, held for most of its duration, but then separated from the following note. A note with both a dot and a dash is called *portamento*, and is between the touch of staccato and tenuto. An accent mark means to play with extra force. The strongest of these is the *sforzando*, which also has the element of surprise.

Two phrases



2 note slur    staccato    marcato (accented) staccato    tenuto    portamento (non legato)    strong    stronger    strongest



*sfz*




## Tempo

Tempo indicates the speed at which the work is to be played and is given at the beginning of the piece. Here are the most common tempi. Exact tempo is a matter of interpretation, and will vary from one performer to another.

<b>Presto</b>	very fast
<b>Allegro</b>	fast
<b>Allegretto</b>	rather fast and gracefully
<b>Moderato</b>	neither fast nor slow
<b>Andante</b>	slow
<b>Adagio</b>	very slow
<b>Largo</b>	very slow and majestic, with grandeur

## Dynamics & other Expression Markings

Dynamics indicate how loudly or softly to play. The degrees of loud and soft are all relative to one another. Given below are terms and abbreviations for sound and expression.

<i>pp</i>	<i>pianissimo</i>	very soft
<i>p</i>	<i>piano</i>	soft
<i>mp</i>	<i>mezzo piano</i>	"half" soft, or somewhat soft
<i>mf</i>	<i>mezzo forte</i>	"half" loud, or somewhat loud
<i>f</i>	<i>forte</i>	loud
<i>ff</i>	<i>fortissimo</i>	very loud
	<i>crescendo</i>	gradually louder
	<i>decrescendo</i>	gradually softer
<i>dim.</i>	<i>diminuendo</i>	gradually softer
<i>rit.</i>	<i>ritardando</i>	gradually slower
<i>rall.</i>	<i>rallentando</i>	gradually slower
<i>riten.</i>	<i>ritenuto</i>	immediately slower
<i>a tempo</i>	<i>a tempo</i>	return to the original tempo
	<i>fermata</i>	hold for extra time, or pause