**Features of the Baroque Period (1600-1750)**

**Key composers: Bach, Handel, Vivaldi**

* Use of **ornamentation** to decorate melodies. Eg. Trills/mordents
* The major/minor system of scales was established. Music was ‘in a key’ (diatonic)
* Much use of chords 1,2, 4, 5 & 6
* Composers began experimenting with different textures. Eg. Monophonic/homophonic/polyphonic (Fugue was popular)
* Musical devices such as sequence/pedal/suspensions were used
* Terraced dynamics. Loud & soft created by having more or less instruments. Crescendos/diminuendos & separate dynamic markings (p, mf etc) were not yet used.
* The **Harpsichord** was important (providing a basso continuo. Ie. Harmony part written in Figured bass (numbers over numbers to signify the chord & its inversion)
* The **concerto grosso** was important as a musical form. This features 2 groups of instruments (soloists…concertino and the accompaniment…tutti or ripieno)
* Music written in different movements, each with a different mood
* The orchestra was small; string instruments were the most important. Flutes were also used.
* The **Ground Bass** was used (a repeating bass line)
* Choral Church music was popular, but all male at this point!
* Secular vocal music was mainly operatic (plays set to music)

**Features of the Classical Period (1750-1827)**

**Key composers: Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn**

* Very formal sounding.
* Clear cadences
* Clear musical phrases
* **Melodies..very scalic**
* A sense of ‘Key’ was very important. There were strict ‘rules’ as to which key one could modulate to (relative minor etc)
* **Sonata form was very important** (exposition/development/recapitulation)
* The piano became more important than the harpsichord
* Piano Sonatas were very popular (written in 3 or 4 movements). Smaller scale than concertos, and were played in the home rather than big concert halls.
* The solo concerto was established (a piece featuring a singular instrument with accompaniment)
* Composers began adding much more performance detail…dynamics (crescendos and diminuendos; articulation (eg staccatos/slurs etc)
* Contrasts of mood within a single movement were now common
* The orchestra was medium sized…clarinets/ trumpets & horns became more widely used

**Features of the Romantic Period (1827-1900)**

**Key composers: Wagner, Chopin, Tchaikovsky**

* About expression & powerful emotions (music was often about love/hate/death)
* Music tells a story or paints a picture
* More use of adventurous & **dramatic chords** (eg. The diminished 7th).
* **Greater contrast of dynamics were used**
* Key was less important….creating the right mood was more important
* A greater amount of chromaticism was used
* Melodies were more complex, with leaps (angular)
* Use of complex rhythms
* **Rubato** (fluctuations of tempo) was used, especially in piano music
* New levels of complexity led to more **Virtuosic** performers
* The piano developed…larger range….Stronger metal body to cope with the increased loud dynamics required
* The orchestra grew dramatically in size
* Vocal music written for solos was popular, known as Lieder (origins Germany)