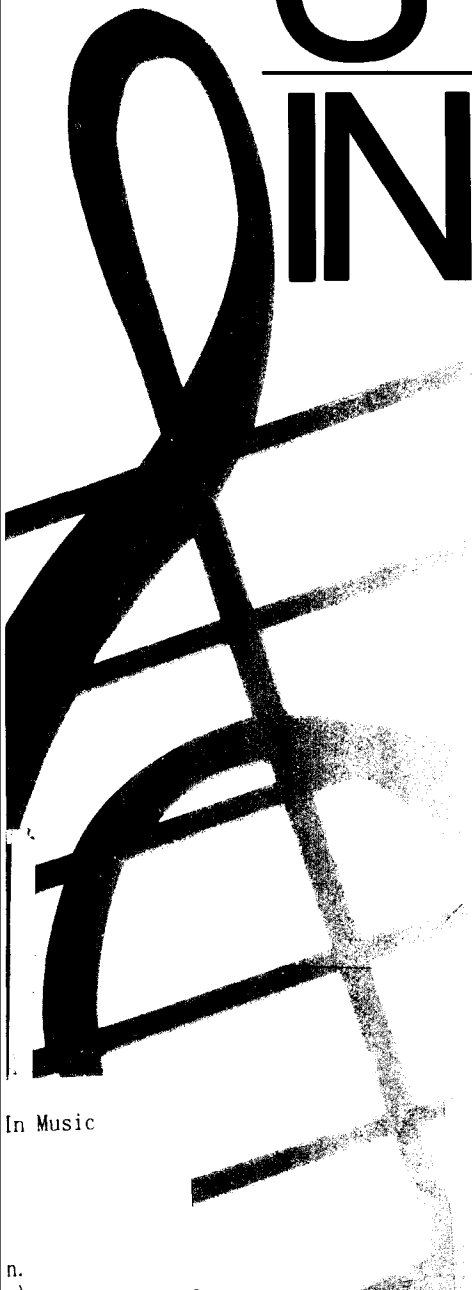


# GETTING STARTED IN MUSIC



In Music

LOIS N. HARRISON

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*University of the Pacific*



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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED, WITH LOVE,  
TO MY MOTHER AND FATHER,  
THERESA MARTHA HUNGER  
AND  
JOHN DENIS NEUWIESINGER,  
FOR GETTING ME STARTED IN MUSIC.

# PREFACE

*Getting Started in Music* is a resource for adults with little or no background in music. It provides materials to support different modes of learning, depending upon the teacher's style, facilities, equipment available, the size of the class, and the motivations of the students. When instruments are available, students in small classes can play the musical examples. Larger classes and those having limited access to instruments may depend upon the teacher to play examples, especially of pieces provided for illustration that the students cannot sing or otherwise perform. Even in the large classes, some highly motivated students may wish to pursue performance opportunities outside of class; independent instruction materials are included for them in the instrument section of the Appendix.

Different tracks are indicated in the text for a variety of approaches to music learning. Instructors are encouraged to incorporate concepts and experiences most appropriate for their students' particular goals. For example, although the chapters on listening and creativity appear late in the book, items from these chapters will be beneficial if introduced earlier, in conjunction with other activities. The section on the voice, included in the Appendix, will be of utmost importance to some classes and should be introduced early in the learning sequence for those classes.

Explanations are included in the text to minimize note taking in class time, thus allowing more time for student/teacher active involvement in musical experiences.

The main goals of the text are to help the student

1. Learn music fundamentals such as note values, meter and key signatures, pitch names, chords, and so on.
2. Develop an understanding of music concepts such as beat, meter, syncopation, melodic direction, form, mode, and so on.
3. Consistently learn theoretical aspects of music fundamentals in conjunction with aural experience.
4. Participate in aesthetic experiences.
5. Increase involvement in music through singing and playing of melodic and harmonic instruments.

*Getting Started in Music* is organized with a variety of provisions for musical experiences. The tape, the music, the rhythm drills and examples in the text, and the instrument instructional materials focus on these experiences. Many chapters of the text include analysis of music in regard to seven elements: rhythm, melody, harmony, form, tempo, dynamics, and timbre. Analysis leads to aural experience of the music, to performance of the music, or both.

The performance media included are the voice, keyboard, autoharp, guitar, and recorder. In classes with these instruments available, it is possible (and recommended as a challenge) for the student to explore the musical elements using all the instruments included. Adults with little musical background may concentrate on only one instrument for producing melody, and another for producing harmony, as aids to understanding the concepts presented. Large classes and those with no available instruments can incorporate singing as a regular performance opportunity. Listening should be part of every class, no matter what the other participatory involvements. Choices are provided so students and teachers can select their best alternatives. In addition to singing, listening, and playing, opportunities are provided for the student to read, write, create, and move to music.

These resources are provided as components of *Getting Started in Music*:

1. The text with twelve chapters explaining relevant concepts and providing exercises to strengthen the student's musicianship.
2. A tape with musical illustrations to help the student understand the concepts more fully through aural involvement.
3. Music notation for analysis and performance.
4. An appendix that includes supplementary materials, answers to questions asked in the text, reference charts, a keyboard facsimile and an instrument section with instructions for voice, autoharp, guitar, keyboard, and recorder directly related to discussions in the text.
5. A teacher's manual available on request from the publisher. This supplementary

book includes discussion of how different groups of students may use the text. Sample tests that may be used as study aids by the students are also in the teacher's manual.

The student should read about concepts in the main text, apply the discussion to music selections, listen to related items on the tape, and follow performance instructions in the appendix when required. Liberal use of paper clips will help the student locate supplementary materials in the music section and the appendix.

The music section is arranged in alphabetical order. Because some melodies have more than one set of words, a music index has been added at the end of the book to facilitate finding different versions of the piece. The music index also includes selections shown in the text. A list of the names and numbers of the instrumental sections that mention the piece appears under each selection that is so mentioned.

The large dot (●) in the margin is there to alert you to the expectation that you will be instructed to carry out an overt response (clapping, singing, writing, answering, or the like).

Although students should work through many parts of the text independently, group participation with a teacher's help is recommended. Teachers are needed to help students ascertain correct musical and written responses.

*Getting Started in Music* was strengthened by its use with students at three tertiary institutions, the University of Oregon, the University of the Pacific and Western Australian College of Advanced Education, with their supportive and complementary environments. I am grateful to the students who made helpful comments and who asked perceptive questions. The final product benefited from their involvement and from contributions made by cooperating teachers who used, and then discussed, the materials with me: Chris Anderson, Wendy March, Barry Palmer, Alan True, Sandra Williams, Mary Lou Van Rysselberghe. Edmund Soule was a source of inspiration in dealing with both editorial and musical matters.

University of the Pacific faculty members were generous in contributing to the tape (Joan Coulter, William Dehning, William Domink, Wolfgang Fetsch and Carol van Bronkhorst) and the text (Joan Anderson and Terry Mills), as were University of the Pacific students who played on the tape (Paul Kimball, Mary McKean, Jody McComb, Jean Neven, Ed Powell, Tim Roberson, Coleman Sholl and Karen Wilson). Marge Dehning (Stanislaus State), Victor Steinhardt (University of Oregon), and Hope Harrison (Klamath Falls Union High School) cheerfully gave time and talent. My husband, Nelden Ward, gave me the gift of time by taking on many responsibilities that otherwise would have been mine.

Before "getting started," read the table of contents to ascertain the general plan of the book. Find and follow the directions for identifying the selections on the tape (Appendix, p. 234) as you listen to it. This book is most effective when all its resources are used.

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# CHAPTER 1

## ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

This chapter will help you understand the *constituent* and *expressive elements* of music. Although the elements will often be considered separately for purposes of definition and clarification, they are inseparably interrelated in their ultimate roles of contributing to the art we know as music.

The constituent elements—*rhythm*, *melody*, *harmony*, and *form*—are present in most types of music you will encounter. Constituent elements may be likened to the basic building blocks of music. They are affected by the expressive elements while still maintaining their integrity.

The expressive elements—*tempo*, *dynamics*, and *timbre*—help add variety and contrast to music. They lend themselves to creative performance.

### RHYTHM

The movement of sound through time is called rhythm. Concepts contributing to an understanding of rhythm are those related to the contrasts of regular and irregular, strong and weak, long and short, and equal and unequal.

- To help you understand these concepts, try these activities:
  1. *Regular and irregular.* Create a regular beat by tapping your foot so the sound of each tap is an equal distance from the next one (! ! ! ! ! ! ! !).

## 2 ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

Contrast the regular beat with an irregular one in which the taps are not equally spaced (! !! ! !!! !).

2. *Strong and weak.* Alternate a strong hand clap with the weak sound of your forearms striking each other. After doing a series of strong claps alternating with weak forearm strikes, switch to one strong clap, followed by two weak forearm strikes. Keep the spaces between the clap and strikes equidistant.
3. *Long and short.* Create a long humming sound with no break. Contrast it with a series of short humming sounds.
4. *Equal and unequal.* Contrast the equal sounds of the chanted "murmur" with the unequal sound of a pseudo-sneeze. Say "murmur murmur kachoo kachoo." Notice that both syllables of "murmur" are equal in length; the syllables of "kachoo" are unequal with the first syllable being shorter than the second. These equal and unequal syllables are related to *beat divisions*. They can be superimposed over a regular beat if you choose to say them that way, or they can be chanted irregularly. Say them with both a regular and an irregular beat for an added contrast.

murmur	murmur	kachoo	kachoo	
!	!	!	!	
murmur		murmur	kachoo	kachoo
!		!	!	!

These words used only two syllables for each beat. Beats can also be subdivided into three: "merrily" is a word with three syllables that can be chanted to show division of the beat into *three* equal parts. Contrast the equal syllables of "merrily" with the unequal syllables of "intellect."

merrily	merrily	merrily	merrily
!	!	!	!
intellect	intellect	intellect	intellect
!	!	!	!

Rhythm patterns combining the contrasts of long/short and equal/unequal are used in melodies and harmonies as well as with rhythm passages standing alone. They are related to regular/irregular and to strong/weak, and are superimposed over the basic rhythmic structures caused by them.

Most of the rhythm you hear in contemporary music is built upon a series of regular beats called the *steady beat*. Most of the music you will experience in this text will have a steady beat. It is easier for the beginner in music to perceive music that has regularity of rhythm.

Because you will be working with music having a steady beat, that music will also have *meter* that is constant. Meter refers to the grouping of a strong beat followed by one or two weaker beats that creates *sets* of steady beats. In most of the music you study with this text, you will be working with meter that remains

constant throughout the piece. You should be aware, however, that musical pieces are not always confined to one meter throughout. It is possible to change meters within a composition.

When you tap your foot regularly in time with a piece of music, you are responding to the underlying pulsation, or the steady beat of that composition. A nonmusical illustration of a steady beat is the ticking of a clock. If music used only the steady beat, it would not be very interesting! To maintain variety in music, rhythm patterns are superimposed over the beat. Such patterns are often repeated, or stated only once. Patterns are used with

1. the rhythm of the melody.
  2. the rhythm of the harmony.
  3. the rhythm of percussion instruments or sounds made by parts of the body, such as clapping, clicking, tapping, thumping, and so on.
- Find the response section (Tape 1). This section demonstrates repeated rhythm patterns. Respond with the music playing on the tape:
    1. When you hear the claves (the first instrument playing in the response section) clap along with it on the steady beat. Even when other instruments begin to play, continue to clap the steady beat with the claves.
    2. As soon as you are confident in keeping the steady beat, try to produce rhythm patterns related to the steady beat. Slap your thighs with the harmonic rhythm as played by the piano. Notice that even though the notes played by the piano change, the rhythm pattern is consistently repeated.
    3. Tap the melodic rhythm as played by the recorder. Notice that even though the recorder pitches change, the rhythm pattern repeats itself.
    4. Use either percussion instruments or environmental objects (easily accessible sound-producers found around you, such as pens, keys, spoons) to reproduce five more patterns illustrated on the tape by the following instruments (in order):
      - a. tambourine
      - b. woodblock
      - c. bongo
      - d. triangle
      - e. xylophone
  - Listen to Tape 2 for an example of irregular rhythm (Gregorian chant). Rhythm is generally predictable and regular, but this music does not have a regularly recurring beat. In the case of Gregorian chant, the lack of regularity helps one to identify it. Instead of the systematic grouping of sounds according to their duration, as is heard in the previous items on the tape, the rhythm of Gregorian chant follows the natural stresses of the words.

#### 4 ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

In contrast to Gregorian chant, much music uses not only a steady underlying beat but also a grouping of steady beats in sets of twos or threes or combinations of twos and threes. This grouping, called *meter*, is caused by stress (accent) being given to the first beat in each group:

1 2 3 1 2 3

or

1 2 1 2.

- As you listen to “Hallelujah!” (Tape 20), alternate a clap (for the strong beat) with a forearm strike (for the weak beat) to find the meter of two.
- As you listen to “Orchestra Song” (Tape 13), use one clap followed by two forearm strikes to find the meter of three.
- Find the meter of a piece of music of your own choosing that has a steady beat. Is it in two or three? Create a brief rhythm pattern to accompany your music. Your pattern should be related to the steady beat (regular) and should match the grouping of the meter (with its strong and weak beats), but should also demonstrate the variety made possible by the use of long/short and equal/unequal rhythmic contrasts. Repeat the pattern as you listen to the music. Be analytical; does your pattern fit with the music you selected? Do the accents of the meter in your piece correspond with the important notes of your pattern?

A rhythm pattern repeated throughout a piece is called a *rhythm ostinato*. Rather than explaining that a musical pattern will be repeated many times in succession, it is more direct to use the word *ostinato* when that effect is desired. In a rhythm ostinato only the rhythm is patterned, whereas the *melodic ostinato* incorporates a pattern of pitches as well as of rhythm.

- Create a rhythm ostinato to go with “Semper Fidelis” (Tape 8). Follow these steps in creating the ostinato:
  1. Find the steady beat as you listen to the piece.
  2. Clap or tap with the steady beat.
  3. Find the strong/weak beats to determine if the meter is two or three.
  4. Use long/short and equal/unequal rhythmic ideas to create a pattern that fits with the steady beat and the meter of the piece. The pattern should match the rhythmic emphasis demonstrated by the meter. In other words, your pattern should emphasize the strong beats of the music you are hearing.
- Create two other rhythm ostinatos to accompany two different musical selections chosen by you. (Your teacher may ask you to collect musical examples on tape for class sharing in assignments like this.)

## PITCH

The elements of both melody and harmony are related to pitch. The word *pitch* refers to identification of individual musical sound in relationship to other individual musical sounds in a tonal arrangement proceeding from low to high, or high to low. Exact pitch is determined by the frequency or number of vibrations per second of the sound.

## MELODY

Although *melody* can be defined as a succession of musical pitches, it is crucial to note that an integral part of melody is rhythm. The notes of a melody vary according to both pitch and duration. The rhythm concepts already introduced apply to melodies as well as to independent nonmelodic patterns. The element of form applies to melody also. Repetition and contrast of sections of melodies help contribute to their unique characteristics.

- Whistle or hum a song you know. It is unlikely that you would whistle or hum something other than the melody, since that identifies the song.
- Listen to the Gregorian chant again. The succession of single notes of the chant is a melody, although not an easy one to remember.
- Listen to Tape 3. Pearl Bailey sings the melody of “Takes Two to Tango.”
- Practice singing a melody you like.
- Listen to Tape 4. William Kendall, a tenor, sings the melody of “Ev’ry Valley” (Handel) accompanied by a symphony orchestra.

Pitch characteristics of melodies include

1. *Direction.* The pitch of a melody may go up, go down, or stay the same. The notes for the first words of “Ev’ry Valley” (Tape 4) clearly move in an upward direction; the notes for the “Horn” (Tape 13) stay the same; those for “feelin’ of romance” (Tape 3) move in a downward direction.
2. *Range.* The melody may have a wide or narrow spectrum of notes ranging from low to high.
3. *Position.* The melody may be performed using notes of high pitches or it may be *transposed* to notes of low pitches. As long as the intervals between the pitches remain consistent, the melody may be performed at different places within the total pitch continuum.

4. *Intervals*. The distance between the pitches of the melody may be

- a. *Steps*. When this is true, the melody moves in a stepwise fashion from one note to the next adjacent one. The pitches go in a downward direction using steps with the words “Do the dance of love” on Tape 3.
- b. *Skips*. Intervals larger than steps may be small skips, such as those at the beginning of the clarinet part of the “Orchestra Song” (Tape 13, “The clarinet, the”). Notice that steps follow these small skips (“clarinet makes doodle, doodle, doodle”).

Large skips occur when pitches leap from one to the other. See if you can hear some spectacularly large skips in “Bravour, Variations on a Theme from Mozart” (Tape 17).

## HARMONY

At least two different pitches must be sounded simultaneously to produce *harmony*. *Chords* result from the simultaneous sounding of three or more different pitches. A *chord progression* results from chords being produced successively.

Depending upon the *texture* of the piece, harmony may be the result of

1. *Vertical structure*: chords connected to and supportive of the melody (*homophonic*).
- Listen to an illustration of homophonic harmony (“Bring Me Little Water, Silvy,” Tape 9).
- or
2. *Horizontal structure*: chords created by simultaneously sounding melodies (*polyphonic*).
- Listen to an illustration of polyphonic harmony (“Orchestra Song,” Tape 13), created when all the instruments play together. *Rounds* are also examples of polyphonic harmony.

To review the concept of texture in music that you have heard: There is no harmony with the Gregorian chant; the melody is unaccompanied (*monophonic*). The symphony orchestra accompanying the tenor soloist in “Every Valley” provides homophonic harmony as does Pete Seeger’s guitar in “Bring Me Little Water, Silvy” and the group accompanying Pearl Bailey in “Takes Two to Tango.”

Listeners sometimes hear modern music and say it doesn’t have harmony. This suggests a confusion in terms. Some contemporary music may not be *consonant*, that is, it may not have harmony meeting the expectations of an individual, but it still has harmony, two or more pitches sounding together. *Dissonance* is a



term for harmony that produces a sensation of unrest, disturbance, or instability. Consonant harmony is stable; it lacks the sense of tension and disruption caused by dissonance. Dissonance and consonance are opposites. As music has developed historically, dissonances have gradually been perceived as more consonant. Listeners become accustomed to sounds that were previously considered dissonant. Because of changing attitudes and individual reactions, equating consonance and dissonance to “pleasant” and “unpleasant” is not entirely satisfactory. Even though the overall concept of a piece of music generally is that of consonance or dissonance, the two contrasting qualities can both be present in varying degrees in any one piece of music.

- Listen to the illustrations. Tape 5, 6, and 7 showing different kinds of harmony.
  1. “Sixty-seventh Psalm” by Charles Ives (Tape 5) is dissonant.
  2. “Danse Sacrale,” is the climax of “The Rite of Spring” by Stravinsky (Tape 6). In its premier performance it was regarded as so dissonant that people fought in the aisles of the concert hall while the orchestra played. Audience members disagreed violently on its acceptability. Today “The Rite of Spring” has become a regular part of orchestral concert literature.
  3. “Country Gardens” by Percy Grainger uses harmony that is consonant (Tape 7).
- Find another example of consonant harmony.
- Find another example of dissonant harmony.

## FORM

*Form* relates to the organization of music, its shape or structure, the arrangement of the elements in their unique musical relationships. It is perceived in terms of repetition and variety. Short pieces can be analyzed according to *phrases* that are the same or different. Phrases are short sections of music that end with a feeling of pausing or stopping. They are generally comparable to a sentence or a clause in language. Phrases end with *cadences*, which consist of a combination of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic factors that combine to give a sense of stopping or pausing. The stop often is the end of a piece or section. The pause implies that more music will follow. (This use of the word *cadence* is not to be confused with its use when referring to the beat of music in a march or a dance.)

A song with two different phrases can be labeled *AB* form; two phrases that are the same can be labeled *AA* form; two phrases that differ in minor details only can be labeled *AA'*. The letters provide an abbreviated way to describe the structure of the piece.