

Accordion to Most Sailors: Instruments from the accordion family associated with seafarers.

African Chant: Background music in the jungle is accompanied by chanting in an African language (usually Swahili or Zulu), or at least a mock-up thereof.

Amazing Freaking Grace: The hymn "Amazing Grace" is played at funerals.

AM/FM Characterization: A character's music they play in the car says something about their personality.

Anachronistic Soundtrack: The movie's soundtrack includes songs that wouldn't have existed yet in the time period the movie takes place in.

Angry Mob Song: A group of angry people singing.

Associated Composer: The director and the composer are buddies.

Autobots, Rock Out!: Rock music plays during action scenes.

Avian Flute: The use of flutes and piccolos in imitation of birdsong.

Awesome Music: A Sugar Wiki entry for talking about music you find cool.

Background Music: Music played in the background to convey ideas and emotions.

Bad to the Bone: When a certain song is played so many times in movies, that when it's played, the audience knows what it's signifying.

Battle Theme Music: Music that plays during battle scenes in video games.

Big Finale Crowd Song: A large crowd song near the end of a work.

Boléro Effect: A song that gets louder and louder.

Bootstrapped Leitmotif: A piece of music becomes a character, place, or thing's theme.

Bootstrapped Theme: A piece of music turns into the theme tune.

Boss Remix: The boss theme is a remix of another piece of music from the video game.

Captivity Harmonica: Someone in jail plays the harmonica.

Cartoon Conductor: In cartoons, conductors control what music the audience plays as if by magic.

Chaos of the Bells: When "Carol of the Bells" is used as a soundtrack to underscore suspense, action, and/or dread.

Cherubic Choir: A kids' choir signifies victory or that the danger is over.

Circus Synths: Circus music played with electronic instruments.

Climactic Music: The music gets more dramatic during the most exciting part of the plot.

Credits Medley: Closing credits are scored with a playlist of different songs from the movie or game.

Creepy Children Singing: A scene is made disturbing by accompanying it with children singing in a creepy manner.

Creepy Circus Music: Circus music played to induce fear.

Creepy Jazz Music: Jazz music used to signify creepiness, often a particular villain.

Crowd Song: A large group of people sing perfectly in unison.

Cult Soundtrack: When a movie becomes popular mainly because of its music.

Cyber Punk Is Techno: Electronic music signifies a gritty sci-fi setting.

Dark Reprise: A sadder or scarier version of a previously sung happy song.

The Day the Music Lied: Music seems to signify something, but that something doesn't happen.

Descent into Darkness Song: A song that starts out upbeat, but gets darker.

Diegetic Soundtrack Usage: The theme song is played, whistled or hummed in-universe.

Diegetic Switch: A song is played in-universe, then it stops but the song keeps playing out-of-universe.

Disney Acid Sequence: A song with trippy visuals.

"Do It Yourself" Theme Tune: Cast member(s) of a particular work performing to contribute for its soundtrack.

Dramatic Choir Number: A choir joins the lead singer in singing the song.

Dramatic Pause: A moment where there isn't any dialogue and there's no (or hardly any) music, played for drama.

Dreadful Musician: Someone who's horrible at playing music.

Dream Melody: A character likes to sing or hum a certain tune that's mysterious to them.

Drone of Dread: Droning music played as unsettling.

The Elevator from Ipanema: All elevators play "The Girl from Ipanema".

Establishing Character Music: Background music establishes someone's personality.

Ethereal Choir: A choir singing in harmony to signify otherworldiness.

Everything Is an Instrument: Using things besides musical instruments to make music.

Everything's Louder with Bagpipes: Playing the bagpipes to annoy people.

Familiar Soundtrack, Foreign Lyrics: A cover of a popular song in a foreign language, used to provide a sense of familiarity but also signify that they're in a foreign country or a character is from one.

Fanfare: Uplifting brass instruments, used to celebrate something.

French Accordion: French settings are scored to the sounds of the accordion-based bal musette.

Follow the Bouncing Ball: A ball bounces along the lyrics to a song so that the audience can sing along.

Foreign Re-Score: A work gets re-scored when it's shown in a different country.

Forgotten Theme Tune Lyrics: The theme song has lyrics that aren't used.

Future Music: Either characters in the future listen to different music, or works set in the future have music that has either theremins, sci-fi noises, copies of modern-day songs, or disco music.

Gospel Choirs Are Just Better: Gospel choir music signifies "this scene is important".

Gratuitous Mariachi Band: Mariachi bands pop up randomly.

Happy Birthday to You!: It's someone's birthday, but nobody sings "Happy Birthday" because the work was made during the time when the song was under copyright.

Happy Circus Music: Circus music that sets a fun mood, usually at an actual circus or similar.

Heartbeat Soundtrack: Music meant to mimic a heartbeat, signifying that a character is going to die or is afraid.

"The Hero Sucks" Song: The villain sings a song insulting the hero.

Hollywood Tone-Deaf: People who can't sing well sound exaggeratedly awful.

Holy Pipe Organ: A pipe organ means that something is sacred or religious.

Iconic Sequel Song: A song that came from a later instalment but is iconic for the franchise as a whole.

Image Song: A song about an anime character.

Incessant Chorus: A character who sings this particular song in every scene they're in.

Interscene Diegetic: A character is singing, the scene changes, but you can still hear the singing.

In-Universe Soundtrack: Background music is played in-universe.

Invisible Backup Band: Whenever someone in-universe plays an instrument, there will be inexplicable background vocals or instruments.

Irony Nursery Tune: A nursery rhyme used to set a creepy atmosphere.

Isn't It Irony?: The work uses a song the creators assumed to be appropriate, but paying close attention to the lyrics will reveal that this song actually doesn't fit the scene it is being played in.

"I Want" Song: Heroes expresses their ambitions or dreams through a musical number before their heroic journey.

Jungle Jazz: Jazz music for scenes in the jungle.

Last Episode Theme Reprise: The theme song plays in the background of a climatic scene in the finale.

Left the Background Music On: The background music turns out to be coming from an in-universe source that is then turned off.

Leitmotif: A piece of theme music associated with a specific character, group, recurring event or location.

Leitmotif upon Death: The character's personal musical score plays during their death.

Letting the Air out of the Band: The background music slows to a stop upon revealing something not so good.

Level 1 Music Represents: The first level theme music of a video game becomes iconic.

Local Soundtrack: The soundtrack has a connection to the story's Real Life setting.

Location Song: A song about a place.

Lohengrin and Mendelssohn: If there's a wedding, the "Here Comes the Bride" song or the intro to A Midsummer Night's Dream will play.

Lonely Piano Piece: Sad piano music that plays during sad scenes, especially when a character is alone.

Love Theme: When romance has its own theme.

Massive Multiplayer Ensemble Number: A song that sums up the attitudes of all the main characters before a major event, sometimes with plenty of counterpoint.

The Mel Brooks Number: A song that sounds like a sad song, but is actually funny because the lyrics, context, or characters' behaviour is.

Melodramatic Pause: A pause to convey drama, similar to Dramatic Pause, except this time with a hammy orchestra.

Mickey Mousing: The music illustrates the physical movements.

Minsky Pickup: A certain old-timey intro fanfare.

Mocking Music: A character is in a bad mood, but when they try to listen to music, the song is about what put the character in the bad mood.

Moody Trailer Cover Song: Trailers use a cover of a pop song sung in an alto voice and with moody instruments.

Musical Episode: An episode where everyone sings.

Musical Gag: A joke in the soundtrack.

Musical Gameplay: A video game in which the sound effects are, or contribute to, the music.

Musicalis Interruptus: Interrupting a song.

Musical Nod: A tune returns sometime later, usually in a video game.

Musical Pastiche: Making an existing song darker by changing the instruments.

Musical Spoiler: The first sign that something is going to happen is that the score changes.

Musical Trigger: When a character plays a certain tune, it triggers off an event.

Music Box Intervals: A song has intervals of music that sound like they came from a music box.

Music Video Syndrome: A work is cut to look like a music video, even though it isn't one.

National Anthem: A country's theme song.

Near Victory Fanfare: Video game music that plays if you're close to victory.

Nostalgic Music Box: Music box tunes used for nostalgia.

Nothing but Hits: Radios only play popular songs.

Ominous Latin Chanting: Latin chanting used during ominous scenes.

Ominous Music Box Tune: A music box tune that's creepy due to sounding off or playing at an inopportune time.

Ominous Pipe Organ: A villain has organ music as their theme.

One-Man Song: Songs named after guys.

One-Woman Song: Songs named after women.

One-Woman Wail: A woman or a child wailing melodiously used for sad scenes.

Orchestra Hit Techno Battle: Rave music used for battles.

Orchestral Bombing: Orchestra music used for a battle, especially if it involves aerial warfare.

Orchestral Version: A song from a video game gets an orchestral version done.

Playing the Heart Strings: String music used for dramatic, sad scenes.

Playlist Soundtrack: The game's soundtrack in an area or over an entire game is composed of multiple songs playing randomly one after the other like a playlist on shuffle.

Pop-Star Composer: The work's composer is famous.

"Psycho" Strings: Sharp notes on a string instrument signify insanity, evil, or otherworldliness.

Public Domain Soundtrack: The soundtrack uses music that is in the public domain.

Rearrange the Song: A different version of the theme song is played.

Record Needle Scratch: The background music stops with the sound of a record needle scratching to signify something abruptly changing or stopping.

Recurring Riff: A series has its own theme, but it's not a theme song.

Recycled Soundtrack: Background music from a work gets used again in another work.

Recycled Trailer Music: The music from the trailer comes from another work, or is a song in its own right.

Regional Riff: Musical instruments used to signify places.

Re-Release Soundtrack: A song is changed for the movie's home release.

Sad Battle Music: Sad music is used to add pathos to a battle scene.

Saved by the Church Bell: Triumph and salvation is accompanied by the sound of church bells.

"Setting Off" Song: A song about going on a trip.

Sentimental Music Cue: You can tell that the conflict is going to be resolved when sentimental music plays.

Serendipitous Symphony: Background noises are turned into music.

Sexophone: A saxophone solo is used to illustrate sensual or romantic scenes or characters.

Shave And A Haircut: That little tune that plays at the end of songs that goes "Dun dun dun dun dun... DUN DUN!".

Sidekick Song: The good guys' sidekicks have their moments to shine with a song.

Silent Credits: Music does not play during the end credits.

Simple Score of Sadness: Sad music is slow and has few instruments.

Sinister Tango Music: Tango music sets a creepy atmosphere.

Soap Opera Organ Score: A tremolo electric organ announces a soap opera, a Soap Within a Show parody, or a soap-opera-like, comically melodramatic situation.

Softer and Slower Cover: A slower, quieter cover of a song.

Solo Duet: When it sounds like a duet but the singer is actually alone.

Songs in the Key of Panic: Video game music that plays when someone is running out of time or in danger.

Sound-Coded for Your Convenience: Video game sounds that provide info.

Sound Test: An option in a video game where you can listen to all its music.

Soundtrack Dissonance: The music does not match the tone of the scene it is accompanying.

Soundtrack Lullaby: As someone is sleeping/falling asleep, the soundtrack plays a lullaby-like tune.

Source Music: Background music that is actually playing in-universe.

Standard Snippet: Certain pieces of music commonly used.

Steel Drums and Sunshine: Steel drums are played for happy scenes, especially at the beach, jungle, on islands, or underwater.

Sting: A brief bit of music played for drama or comedy.

Stock Trailer Music: Famous songs in music trailers.

Sudden Soundtrack Stop:

Sung-Through Musical: In a musical number, dialogue is sung.

Suspiciously Apropos Music: When a character plays music, it's oddly relevant to the matter at hand.

Suspiciously Similar Song: A song or piece of music that sounds like a copyright-friendly version of another song or piece of music.

Theme-and-Variations Soundtrack: The songs are all variations on a theme.

Theme Music Abandonment: The theme song goes away.

Theme Music Power-Up: When a character does something amazing, their theme plays loudly.

Theme Music Withholding: The theme song goes away for a few episodes, but then comes back.

Theme Song Reveal: Elements of the plot are suggested via the theme song.

This Is a Song: A song that is, at least partially, about itself.

Tick Tock Tune: Music with a ticking motif.

Title Theme Drop: The title screen theme for a game shows up within the actual game.

Triumphant Reprise: A happier version of a previous song that was depressing in tone.

Un-Duet: During a breakup, characters try to duet but because the other side is a no-show, they end up with a Solo Duet instead.

Variable Mix: When game music occasionally changes.

Victorious Chorus: A chorus signifies triumph.

Villain Song: The villain sings about their villainy.

"The Villain Sucks" Song: The hero sings a song insulting the villain.

Walking in Rhythm: A character walks to the beat of the background music.

Wanderlust Song: A song about roaming.

Westminster Chimes: Those "bing bong bing bong, bong bing bing bong" chimes associated with Big Ben.

With Lyrics: An instrumental song is given lyrics.

Xylophones for Walking Bones: Skeletons and xylophone music is associated.