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Music Glossary for Suno

Edited last month

Stuck on a prompt and want to try some musical terms? Maybe you need some inspiration to get what you want but want a new way to describe it? We've got you covered with our glossary of music terms to try out in Suno.

Tempo & Rhythm

Tempo - The speed of a piece of music, measured in beats per minute (BPM)

Adagio - Slow tempo (66-76 BPM), meaning "at ease"

Allegro - Fast, lively tempo (120-168 BPM)

Andante - Moderate walking pace (76-108 BPM)

Presto - Very fast tempo (168-200 BPM)

Rubato - Flexible tempo where the performer speeds up and slows down expressively

Syncopation - Rhythmic emphasis on normally weak beats or off-beats

Polyrhythm - Two or more conflicting rhythms played simultaneously

Groove - The rhythmic feel or "pocket" that makes you want to move

Downbeat - The first beat of a measure, typically the strongest

Upbeat - The beat before the downbeat, often creating anticipation

Dynamics & Expression

Dynamics - The volume or intensity of sound in music

Crescendo - Gradually getting louder



Diminuendo/Decrescendo - Gradually getting softer

Forte (f) - Loud

Piano (p) - Soft

Fortissimo (ff) - Very loud

Pianissimo (pp) - Very soft

Accent - Emphasis on a particular note or beat

Staccato - Short, detached notes

Legato - Smooth, connected notes

Vibrato - A slight variation in pitch that adds warmth and expression

Tremolo - Rapid repetition of a note or alternation between notes

Song Structure

Verse - Sections that tell the story, typically with changing lyrics

Chorus - The main, repeated section with the central message or hook

Bridge - A contrasting section that provides variety and builds tension

Pre-Chorus - A transitional section building up to the chorus

Intro - The opening section that establishes the mood



Outro - The closing section that ends the song

Hook - A catchy, memorable musical or lyrical phrase

Refrain - A repeated line or phrase, often at the end of verses

Break - A section where some instruments drop out, creating contrast

Drop - In electronic music, the moment of maximum energy release

Melody & Harmony

Melody - The main tune or sequence of notes that stands out

Harmony - Notes played simultaneously that support the melody

Chord - Three or more notes played together

Chord Progression - A sequence of chords that forms the harmonic foundation

Key - The tonal center of a piece based on a specific scale

Major - A key or chord with a bright, happy sound

Minor - A key or chord with a darker, sadder sound

Scale - A sequence of notes in ascending or descending order

Interval - The distance between two pitches



Octave - The interval between one note and another with double its frequency

Arpeggio - Playing chord notes in sequence rather than simultaneously

Counterpoint - Two or more independent melodies played together

Dissonance - Tension created by clashing notes

Resolution - Movement from dissonance to consonance, creating satisfaction

Genres & Styles

Blues - Genre characterized by specific chord progressions and expressive vocals

Jazz - Genre featuring improvisation, swing rhythms, and complex harmonies

Rock - Guitar-driven genre with strong backbeat

Pop - Accessible, catchy music aimed at mainstream audiences

Electronic/EDM - Music created primarily with electronic instruments and computers

Hip-Hop - Genre featuring rap vocals, sampling, and strong beats

R&B - Rhythm and blues with soulful vocals and groove-oriented arrangements

Country - Genre with roots in American folk, often featuring acoustic instruments

Classical - Art music tradition spanning centuries with formal structures

Folk - Traditional music passed down through communities



Funk - Groove-based genre with syncopated basslines and rhythmic emphasis

Soul - Emotive genre combining gospel, R&B, and blues elements

Reggae - Jamaican genre with offbeat rhythms and social themes

Metal - Heavy, aggressive rock with distorted guitars and powerful vocals

Ambient - Atmospheric music focused on texture and mood over traditional structure

Instrumentation & Texture

Instrumentation - The specific instruments used in a piece

Arrangement - How different instruments and parts are organized

Texture - The overall sound quality created by combining different elements

Monophonic - Single melodic line without accompaniment

Homophonic - Melody with harmonic accompaniment

Polyphonic - Multiple independent melodic lines

Orchestration - The art of assigning musical elements to specific instruments

Timbre - The unique color or quality of a sound (what makes a guitar sound different from a piano)

Layering - Stacking multiple sounds or instruments for richness



Sparse - Minimal instrumentation with space between elements

Dense - Many instruments or elements playing simultaneously

Vocal Techniques

Falsetto - High, airy vocal register above normal range

Belt - Powerful, sustained singing in chest voice at high pitches

Melisma - Singing multiple notes on a single syllable

Vocal Run - Quick succession of notes, often improvised

Harmonization - Multiple voices singing different notes simultaneously

A Cappella - Singing without instrumental accompaniment

Call and Response - Musical conversation where one phrase is answered by another

Scat - Improvised vocal improvisation using nonsense syllables (common in jazz)

Crooning - Soft, intimate singing style

Rapping - Rhythmic spoken or chanted lyrics

Production & Effects

Reverb - Effect simulating sound in a space (room, hall, cathedral)



Delay/Echo - Repetition of sound after a time interval

Compression - Reducing the dynamic range between loud and quiet sounds

Distortion - Intentional alteration of sound, often making it grittier or heavier

Filter - Effect that removes or emphasizes certain frequencies

Modulation - Variation in pitch, amplitude, or other parameters

Panning - Positioning sound in the stereo field (left to right)

EQ (Equalization) - Adjusting the balance of frequency components

Sampling - Using recordings of existing sounds in new compositions

Loop - Repeated section of music

Fade In/Out - Gradually increasing or decreasing volume at the beginning or end

Advanced Concepts

Modulation (Key Change) - Shifting from one key to another within a piece

Time Signature - The rhythmic framework (e.g., 4/4, 3/4, 6/8)

Cadence - A harmonic or melodic formula that creates a sense of resolution or pause

Ostinato - A repeated musical pattern or phrase

Pedal Point - A sustained or repeated note while harmonies change above it



Augmentation - Lengthening the rhythmic values of a melody

Diminution - Shortening the rhythmic values of a melody

Suspension - Holding a note from one chord into the next, creating tension

Anacrusis - Notes that occur before the first full measure (pickup notes)

Coda - A concluding section that brings a piece to an end

Tips for Using Musical Terms in Prompts

- Combine tempo terms with genres (e.g., "upbeat allegro pop" or "slow adagio ballad")
- Use dynamics to shape emotional intensity ("crescendo into powerful chorus")
- Specify instrumentation for desired textures ("sparse piano and vocals" vs. "dense orchestral arrangement")
- Mix structural terms to guide song form ("verse-chorus-verse with extended bridge")
- Layer production effects for atmosphere ("reverb-heavy ambient soundscape")
- Blend genres creatively ("jazz-influenced hip-hop with soulful vocals")

The more specific your musical vocabulary, the more control you have over your Suno creations!



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