

Lesson #9 :

Articulations & Dynamics

- Dynamics and Articulations tell you *HOW* to play the music.
 - Loud/Soft
 - Short/Connected
 - Accented/Marcato
- We will discuss what to look for and how to interpret these markings.



TECHNICAL (Terminology)
SKILLS
(stds 2,6/9.1, 9.3)

Some definitions were taken from :

The Hal Leonard Pocket Music Dictionary (1993)

The Basic Guide to How to Read Music by Helen Cooper (1986)

Dynamics indicate how loud or soft to play.

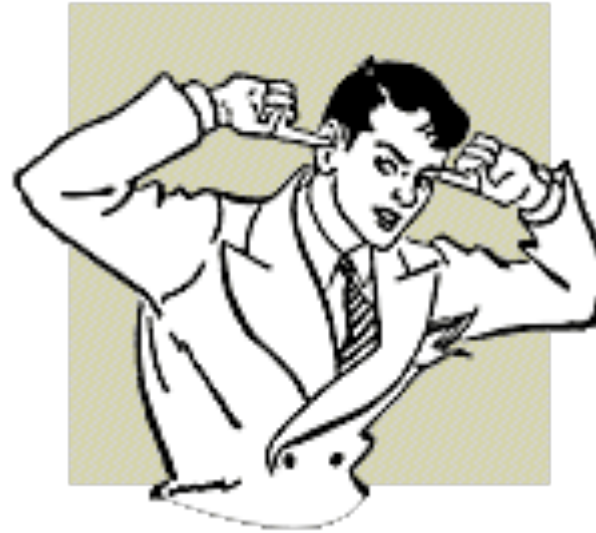
- Two types of Dynamics :
 - Stable or Step Dynamic indicators
 - Markings which indicate a change in the dynamic level.

Stable or Step Dynamic indicators

p = Piano (soft)

f = Forte (loud)

m = Mezzo (medium)



So.....

Stable or Step Dynamic indicators

mp = Mezzo Piano (medium soft)

mf = Mezzo Forte (medium loud)

But that's not all.....

Stable or Step Dynamic indicators

pp = Pianissimo (very soft)

ff = Fortissimo (very loud)

And there's more.....

Stable or Step Dynamic indicators



ppp = Pianississimo (very very soft)

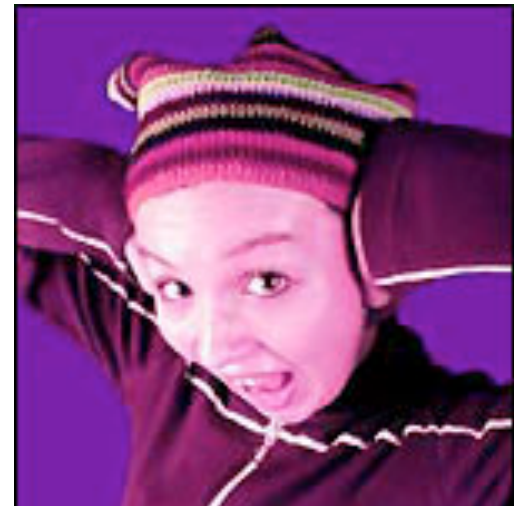
fff = Fortississimo (very very loud)

You will hear me refer to the above markings as
“Pianopianissimo” and Fortefortissimo”
respectively.

Markings which indicate a change in the dynamic level.

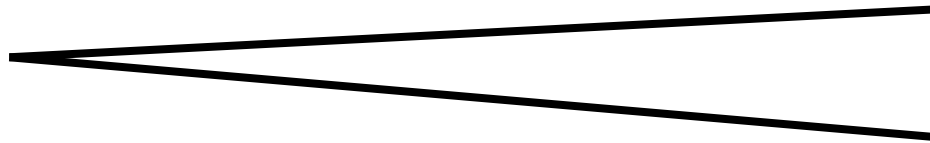
fp = Forte piano (Loud, then soft)

sfz = Sforzando (Strong accent)

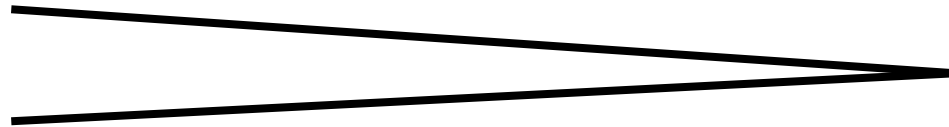


Markings which indicate a change in the dynamic level.

Cresc. = Crescendo (Becoming gradually louder)

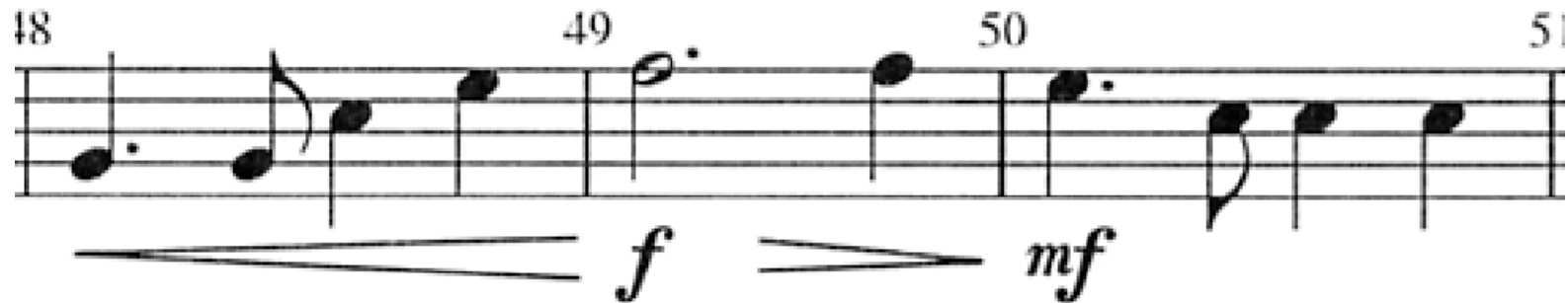


Decresc. = Decrescendo (Becoming gradually softer)



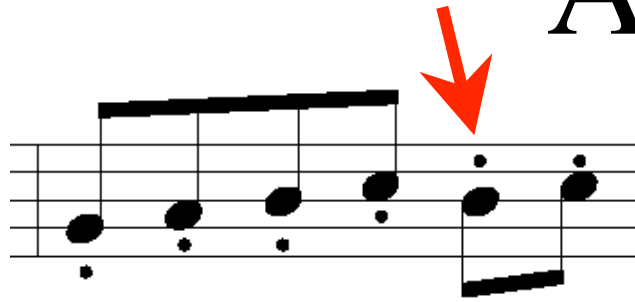
Dim. = Diminuendo (Becoming gradually softer)

Markings which indicate a change in the dynamic level.

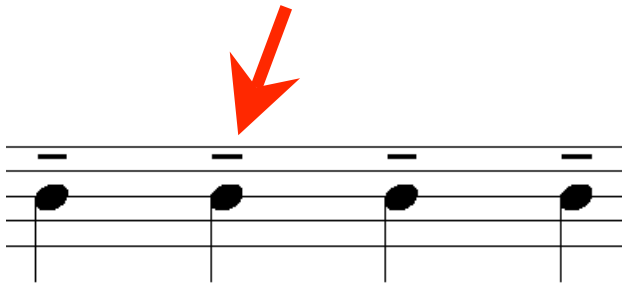


Articulations :
Markings assigned to
individual notes which
indicate the degree to
which notes are separated
or connected.

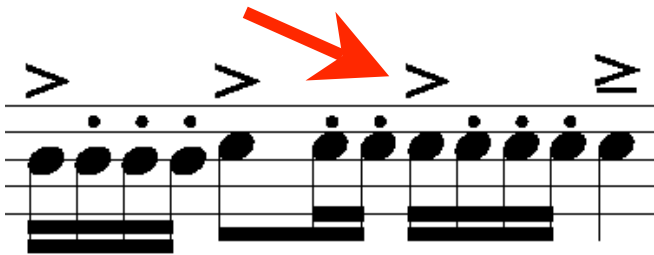
Articulations



= Staccato : short, separated notes.

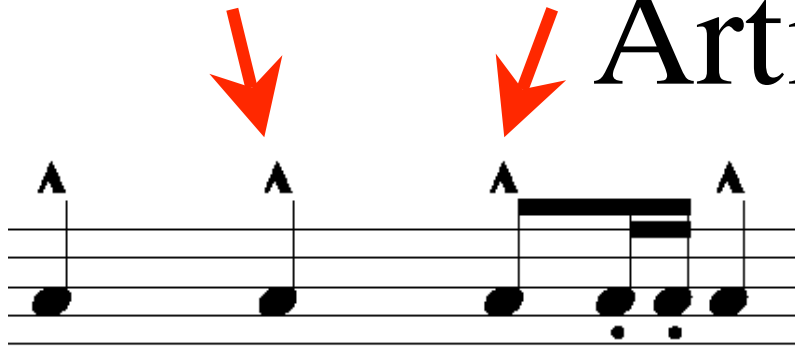


= Tenuto : played for full value.



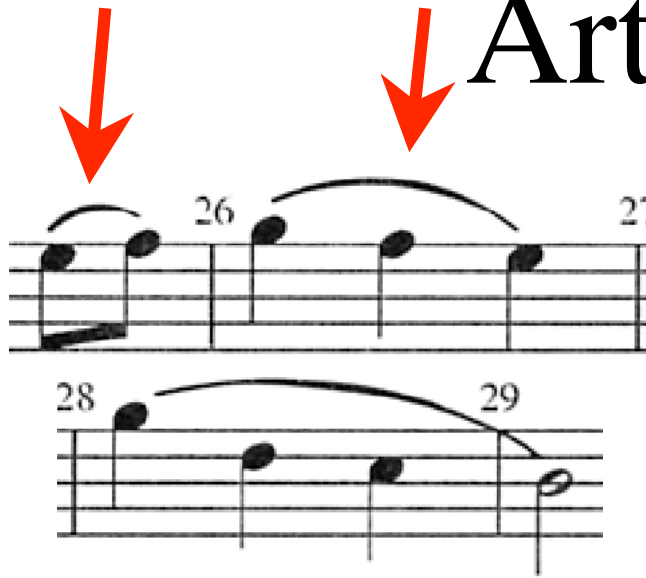
= Accent : emphasize or stress the note.

Articulations



= Marcato : marked, stressed notes. Could be thought of as the combination of the staccato & accent applied to the note simultaneously.

Articulations



= Slur : a curved line which joins two or more notes of different pitch. Slurred notes are to be played in a connected style. Each slurred grouping is to be played in one breath.



! Please note that a slur IS NOT the same as a tie. A tie rhythmically joins two notes of the same pitch into one longer sound.

Next Lesson :

Lesson #10 : Sight Reading!

- Playing a printed piece of music for the first time WITHOUT rehearsing it.
- But HOW can I play this music the first time I see it without practicing??!!!
- Like anything else the key to success is all in the way you *THINK* about it.
- With the right thought sequence you will be able to play music you've never seen before with most of the right rhythms and notes without getting lost!