

We have previously seen the notes, the rhythms, the measures... So now we can read a score. But it is obvious that each part of the song is not played in the same way, that is why we use nuances, character and movement (which we will see in a future lesson).

Today in this course we are going to see nuances and character.

### 1. The nuances

We will quote them from the weakest to the strongest:

ppp: pianississimo, very very weak

pp: pianissimo, very weak

p: piano, weak

mp: mezzo piano, moderately weak

poco p: a little weak

sotto voce: whispered

mezza voce: in a low voice

poco f: a little strong

mf: mezzo forte, medium strong

f: forte, strong

ff: fortissimo, very strong

fff: fortississimo, very very strong

This funny symbol, just below, is a crescendo!



It is certainly not very beautiful, but it means to increase the nuance, to go from the previous nuance to the desired nuance.

And this second symbol, below, you guess what it is?



Indeed, it's called a decrescendo, and it's exactly the same as the previous symbol. He is not beautiful either, and his role is the opposite of crescendo, he means to lower the nuance, to go from the previous nuance to the desired nuance.

## 2. Emphasis terms

We may want to apply a nuance to only one note: in this case we use what is called an accent term.

Here are some :

appoggiato: supported

strong piano: strong attack immediately followed by the piano nuance

leg. : legato, bound

legg. : leggiero, light

marc. : marcato, marked

sfz: sforzando, suddenly giving more strength

sost. : sostenuto, well supported

stacc. : staccato, detached

ten. : tenuto, taking the sound

## 3. Character and expression

Character is the general hue given to the expression of a song.

Here are a few examples:

amabile: kind

appassionato: passionate

cantabile: singing

con anima: with soul

con brio: lively

con dolore: with pain

con espressione: with expression

con grazia: with grace

motorcycle con: with movement

dolce: sweet

espressivo: expressive

giocoso: pleasant, cheerful

grazioso: graceful

lagrimoso: weeping

maestoso: majestic

mosso: animated

semplice: simple

sostenuto: supported

tempo giusto: fair, precise movement

teneramente: tenderly

tranquillo: quiet

Conclusion: THE TIPS TO REMEMBER

- The nuances, the character and the expression allow the musician to know how to interpret the written score.
- This information is written in Italian.
- A distinction must be made between a nuance, valid for several musical phrases, and an accentuation term, valid only for the note concerned.
- Character and expression are the general hue of the song, how the musician should interpret the score in front of him.