

A GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS



- ACCIDENTAL** Shitting oneself when attempting a high note.
- AROUND THE HOUSES** Another term for carol-singing.
- ATONAL** A tune made up of just 1 note (A), often heard when tuning-up.
- AVANT GARD** Describes an orchestra. It has a conductor but no guard.
- BALLAD/SAD BALLAD** A corruption of Bad Salad - a sandwich with no tomatos.
- BAR** Where all self-respecting musicians hang out when not playing.
- BARLINE** Having to join a queue before you can get a drink.
- BEAT** How you feel when you try and play music that's too difficult for you.
- BOP** Bordering On Panic
- BOSSA NOVA** A new bandleader in a Latin band.
- BOUNCE** Something to watch when the girl vocalist gets into the groove.
- BREVE** Underpants used for playing very fast numbers. (**Semibreve** = Boxershorts)
- CHILD PRODIGY** Someone who's got the notes but not the pubic hair to go with it.
- CHROMATIC** An unusual method of loft insulation.
- CLEF** French for key - useful for getting into your room when doing a gig in Paris.
- CORDON BLEU** The right chords to use in a strip joint.
- CORDUROY** The chords to use when backing Mr Eldridge.
- CODA** The bit of music you play while deciding who gets the next round in.
- COLLA VOCE** A type of singing expected when wearing a shirt and tie.
- CRESCENDO** Getting louder - wearing more and more garish clothes to a gig.
- CROTCHET** The habit of wearing silly hats on the bandstand (as in Davy...)
- D.C.** (Dud Composer) - Someone who can't think of anything new so repeats it all.
- D.S.** (Delayed Shit) - Knowing you can't go until you've had to play it all again.
- DIATONIC** A remedy for diarrhoea
- DIMINUENDO** Getting softer when the batteries in the PA system run out.
- DOMINANT SEVENTH** The name of the last one of Snow White's dwarfs.
- DOTS** Coming after a note increases the value of the pay cheque by half again.
- FALL-OFF** Failing libido caused by too many notes to play.
- FINE** As in the saying "As long as the ending's fine, no-one notices the rest."
- FLAT** A puncture on the way to the gig.
- FORTE** A chain of restaurants sometimes used by musicians.
- GOING OUTSIDE** What happens when there's no toilet in the establishment.
- HARMONY** Notes given to horn players under the lead part so they won't get bored.
- HEAD** See next item.
- HORN** See last item.
- IMPROVISE** What to do when you've forgotten your music stand.
- INTERVAL** The time spent between cocking up the last number and the next.
- KEY** The best way to open the piano lid.
- KEY SIGNATURE** Safeguards you from getting your own partner back when going to wife-swapping parties.

LATIN A stodgy archaic Language used in the Roman Empire, hence the name given to the lively and exciting music found in Cuba and South America !!!

LEGATO Played in such a way as to increase the prospects of getting your leg over.

LYRICS Poetry worth listening to but never fully-heard or understood.

MAJOR The bandleader in a military band.

MINOR A musician who works in the pits.

MELODIC How to greet a bandleader called Richard while blowing your horn.

MODE Music written by someone who's not yet learnt which note to start a major scale on.

MODULATE What spacemen had to eat in their lunar capsule.

NATURAL *Live* music as opposed to *artificial* canned music.

PASSING NOTES A condition caused by consuming too much music.

PENTATONIC A round of 5 tonic waters (found only in classical music circles).

PIANO An instrument on which you can play 2 or more wrong notes at the same time.

PITCH The nautical terms Pitching and Tossing are also used in music.

POLYTONAL Songs sung by a parrot.

QUAVER What strict-tempo dancers do while the introduction to a song is being played.

REPEATS Caused by eating a curry just before going on to play.

REST How trumpet players spend most of the time during big band gigs.

RHYTHM A regular pulse. Next time, ask your doctor to take your rhythm.

SCALE Plaque on teeth. Notice that players with dentures never play scales.

SCORE The number of women the drummer has entertained.

SHARP A player who always has polished trousers and creases in his shoes.

SIDE SLIPPING The sensation you feel just before you fall off the bandstand.

SIGN How musicians communicate. Three fingers up means "Get 3 pints in!"

SKIPPING THE BEAT Dancing to Hip Hop music.

SLUR Tends to occur when the last number of the evening is in a difficult key.

SOLO What happens when you get lost playing a big band chart.

SONG CYCLE The right piece of music to sing on a bicycle.

SWING How the music sounds when you've drunk too much.

TEMPO As in the *Wrong Tempo* - how you actually sound when you're drunk

TIME The number of hours the gig lasts.

TONGUING A way to clean your instrument on the job.

TREMELO What happens when you're bursting to go after just the second bar.

TRILL How to sing polytonal music.

TRIPLETS How a crochet/quarter-note looks when you've been drinking.

TRITONE Attempting a note but not succeeding.

TUNING How sharp or flat other players are compared to you.

WOODSHEDDING An occupation to consider when you give up music.