

A Comparison of Baroque and Classical Styles

	<i>Baroque (c. 1600–1750)</i>	<i>Classical (c. 1750–1825)</i>
Composers	Monteverdi, Purcell, Vivaldi, Handel, Bach, Jacquet de la Guerre	Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert
Melody	Continuous melody with wide leaps, chromatic tones for emotional effect	Symmetrical melody in balanced phrases and cadences; tuneful, diatonic, with narrow leaps
Rhythm	Single rhythm predominant; steady, energetic pulse; freer in vocal music	Dance rhythms favored; regularly recurring accents
Harmony	Chromatic harmony for expressive effect; major-minor system established with brief excursions to other keys	Diatonic harmony favored; tonic-dominant relationship expanded, becomes basis for large-scale form
Texture	Polyphonic texture; linear-horizontal dimension	Homophonic texture; chordal-vertical dimension
Instrumental genres	Fugue, concerto grosso, trio sonata, suite, chaconne, prelude, passacaglia	Symphony, solo concerto, solo sonata, string quartet, other chamber music ensembles
Vocal genres	Opera, Mass, oratorio, cantata	Opera, Mass, oratorio
Form	Binary form predominant	Ternary form becomes important, sonata-allegro form developed
Dynamics	Terraced (contrasting) dynamics	Continuously changing dynamics through <i>crescendo</i> and <i>decrescendo</i>
Timbre	Continuous tone color throughout one movement	Changing tone colors from one section to the next
Performing forces	String orchestra, with added woodwinds; organ and harpsichord in use	Orchestra standardized into four choirs; introduction of clarinet, trombone; rise of piano to prominence
Improvisation	Improvisation expected; harmonies realized from figured bass	Improvisation largely limited to cadenzas in concertos
Emotion	Single affection; emotional exuberance and theatricality	Emotional balance and restraint

Source: Joseph Machlis and Kristine Forney, *The Enjoyment of Music*, 8th Edition, Shorter Version. W. W. Norton & Co., 1999.