

WJEC Composition Resource:

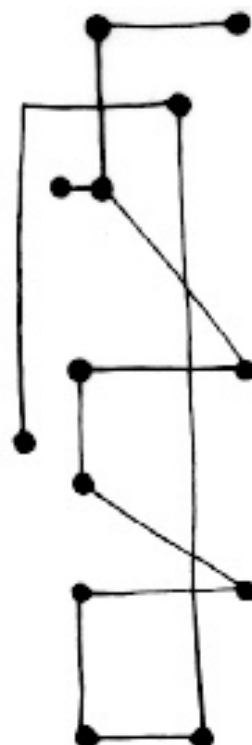
Into the 21st Century

A2 Unit 5: Composing / Option B: Area of Study F (AOS F):
Into the 21st Century (1980 – present)

New ways of composing in the 21st century

Composing in the 21st century offers a vast new world of opportunities where anything is possible. Music is changing at the moment; it's a bit like being alive in 1600 when Palestrina's contrapuntal style gradually merged into the bold new world of Monteverdi. Today's composers take their influences from all sorts of different kinds of music and styles – it could be African polyrhythm, serialism, spectralism, Handel, hip-hop – the list is endless.

This resource suggests some techniques of writing music using ideas straight from the toolkits of most contemporary composers. Some ideas are very new, but there are also lots of techniques from the last century that are in everyday use. Many of these can be found in the contemporary set-works by Thomas Adès, Sally Beamish, Lynne Plowman, Rhian Samuel and Andrew Wilson-Dickson.



What you need to do for this specification

The techniques in this resource apply to Option B of Unit 5 of A2 which accounts for 22% of the overall mark. Three compositions are required:

One composition reflecting the conventions of the Western Classical Tradition	No less than 1 minute
One composition reflecting one area of study	No less than 2 minutes
One free composition	No less than 2 minutes

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When you combine all three compositions they should last no less than 5 minutes and no more than 9.

This resource will help you to compose the **second** of these options and you may wish to also use some of the techniques discussed here in the **third** option.

In addition to this the Area of Study F (Music of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries) contains five set works that you choose from:

- Thomas Adès: *Asyla*, Movement 3, *Ecstasio* (orchestra)
- Sally Beamish: String Quartet No. 2 (*Opus California*) Movements 1 (*Boardwalk*) and 4 (*Natural Bridges*)
- Lynne Plowman: *Night Dances* (flute and piano)
- Rhian Samuel: *Ariel* (flute and piano)
- Andrew Wilson-Dickson: *tango passacaglia* (flute and piano)

Resources

You will find it useful to listen to recordings and look at scores of all these five pieces in conjunction with this resource. Details can be found on WJEC's website.

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Approaches to composing in the 21st century

The 21st century has already seen many different ways and attitudes towards writing music building on many of the discoveries and techniques of the last century. It's too early to formulate these techniques into a set of guidelines, but if we were to try and sum up the main features of music at the present time, you might find some of the aspects below in the work of most composers:

- **Style:** There are a wide variety of different musical styles of composition with no one style predominating. This is usually called '**Pluralism**'.
- **Melody:** Don't let anyone tell you that contemporary composers don't use melody, but they use it in different ways to the past ranging from serial and modal melodies through to ones with key signatures.
- **Tonality:** Composers use a wide variety of different tonal and harmonic styles, ranging from serial and atonal through to very simple modal idioms.
- **Harmony:** No two composers have the same approach to harmony, which might range from dissonant twelve-note chords or microtones to simple triadic harmony.
- **Texture and Sonority:** The use of texture and sonority is very important, sometimes standing on an equal footing with melody, harmony and rhythm.
- **Forms:** Although traditional forms continue to be used, composers have invented many new types of form such as chain form, moment form, narrative forms and so forth.
- **Metre & Rhythm:** Much music since 1980 explores changing time signatures, unusual metres, polyrhythm, additive rhythm, free and aleatoric rhythm and unconventionally notated rhythm.
- **Writing for Instruments:** Many new scores feature new techniques of writing for instruments ranging through glissandi, multiphonics, microtones, key clicks, air tones and many other devices.
- **Notation:** Many composers use conventional traditional notation, but some have abandoned or modified this to include graphic notation, aleatoric notation, time-based notation and other new systems.
- **Influences:** Many composers draw on other music as a basis for their own compositions - a feature of the two set works. These might range from medieval to present day music as well as popular, jazz and world music.

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This guide will give you some tips on each of the issues listed above.

Style - Where do I start?

It's a good idea to start with the kinds of sounds you are already inspired by. You can draw on any music you like and can mix the most unlikely influences. Look at some of the unlikely combinations in some of the set works:

- Techno and Wagner in Thomas Adès's *Asyla*;
- Beethoven and jazz in Sally Beamish's *Opus California*;
- Bach, Bax and tango in Andrew Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia*;
- Latin-American and Eastern European dance, Bartók, Ligeti and Bach in Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances*.

Glossary:

Pluralism: suggests a number of different approaches or styles, both in music itself or in a musical piece, rather than just one kind of style. It has been a particular feature of the musical world since 1980.

Listen: There's a huge amount of contemporary music out there on the internet (both on Spotify and YouTube), but it can be difficult to know where to start. Try looking at an excellent series of fifty composer profiles (with links to their music) written by Tom Service and posted up on the Guardian newspaper's website: www.theguardian.com/music/series/a-guide-to-contemporary-classical-music

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Can I draw on the music of the past?

Yes, all the above composers (and many others) have used the music of the past, mixing it with the present. This is different from writing a piece in the Western Classical style (as you do in a different part of the syllabus). When you write a piece in the Western Classical style, you need to be strict about applying the rules of the period to it, whereas a contemporary composer might take a classical idea, theme or series of harmonies and use them very freely (for instance, look at the way Sally Beamish adds all sorts of notes and rhythms to Beethoven's music, not permissible two hundred years ago). *But, remember, if you are basing your piece on another composer's music (or several composers' pieces) this is only a starting point for your own composition.*

Can I try and write music that doesn't draw on the past?

Using music of the past is just one option; there are always lots of other ideas out there waiting to be discovered. If you have a fantastic new idea of your own for a piece which you think has never been tried before, then give it a go. For instance, you might try applying ideas you would normally use in software packages like Logic, Cubase or Ableton to music written for performers.

Are there different systems to help me organise the notes I write?

You will need to organise your music, give it form and find your own systems of organising the notes you put on paper. You'll find some tips in this resource.

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Melodies, modes and scales

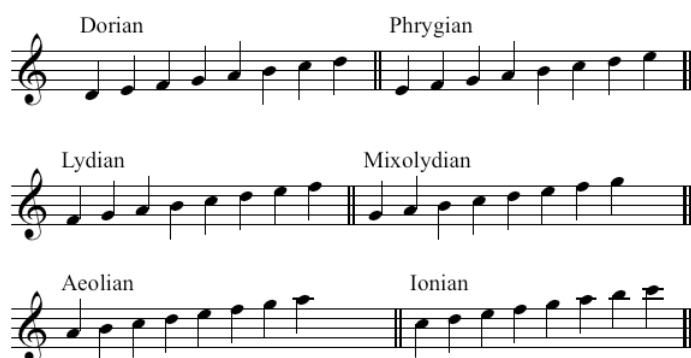
There are many ways of writing melodies. In the 21st century, they probably won't have traditional 2 and 4 bar phrases with cadential closes, but there are still many aspects of melodic writing that are still crucial, even in the most advanced contemporary music. Any melody will have a contour: this can take all sorts of shapes and forms, but do keep it at the forefront of your mind when you are composing.

Major and minor scales: do they have a place in 21st century music?

Major and minor scales are fine, but using them with functional harmony and formal modulations is more suited to composing in the Western Classical Style. However, many of today's composers use major and minor keys and there is no reason why you should find your own way of using them for your melodic lines. However, there are other types of **modes** or scales that you might want to try out.

Other kinds of scales and modes

Here are some of the most common modes. As you'll see, each of these has different characteristics (i.e. flattened 7th, flattened 2nd, sharpened 4th etc.); composers of the past chose them to evoke particular types of emotion. They are still useful for present day composers.



Glossary: A **Mode** is a collection of notes (presented as a scale) from which melodic lines are formed (major and minor scales are, of course, modes as well).

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Modes of Limited Transposition

The above modes can be transposed to any degree of the scale, but there are also a series of seven modes described by the French composer Olivier Messiaen (1908-92) as “Modes of Limited Transposition”. In these modes there is no tonic and no note takes precedence over another. These are laid out below.

Whole-tone mode

This six-note mode initially sounds fabulous, but should be used very sparingly; the effect quickly becomes monotonous and it can be very difficult to effectively move away from. There is only one transposition (beginning on D flat) and it does not have a key centre, so it doesn't matter what note you start from.



Octatonic mode

The Octatonic mode is constructed from alternating tones and semi-tones. It also doesn't have a key centre and it exists in three forms (beginning on C, D flat and D).



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The remaining five modes consist of interlocking four, five and six note cells and, with the exception of the first of them (which has four transpositions), they each have six transpositions:



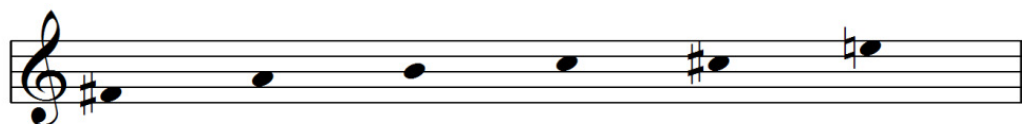
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Jazz modes

In jazz, different types of scale (or mode) are regularly used for figuration and melodic writing. They are often utilised by composers working outside jazz. Here is one used in the 2nd movement of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances*:



What can I do with modes?

You can use any of the above modes as the basis for writing melodic lines and you can also form harmonies from these modes. If you stick to just the notes in the modes whilst writing your harmonies, this will make you come up with harmonies and progressions that you might otherwise have not thought of. For instance, if you use the octatonic scale starting on C, it will only give you the following triads:



There is also no reason why you shouldn't combine harmonies from one mode with harmonies from another. Experiment and see what sounds you can come up with.

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Serialism

Serialism was used in one form or other by most composers from the 1940s through to the 1970s. Its influence still very much affects the way composers think about manipulating notes and melodic lines. If you've never tried using it, you might enjoy experimenting with it and finding out how it works. Several of the set-works use aspects of serialism, though not in the strict sense as Schoenberg might have thought about it (see below). Here are the basics of the technique.

Serialism: the basics

Serialism is a method of composing pioneered by the Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) in the 1920s. Schoenberg was writing a type of music so chromatic that it could no longer be contained within the old system of major and minor keys (this is often referred to as atonal music): serialism provided a new way of composing. It is sometimes known as 12-note music. Here are the basic rules that govern the system.

- Serialism in its purest form uses all 12 notes of the chromatic scale (for instance, C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B). Without duplicating or repeating any of these notes, they can be arranged into a series of 12 notes, in any order you wish. Here is a row by the composer Anton Webern (1883-1945):



- This 12-note melody is the basis of the whole composition. It is the basis for all the melodies, the chords, inner voices and accompaniments; you can use the notes in any octave you like (this is sometimes known as octave displacement).

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- Here is an example of the row arranged into melody and accompaniment (notes 1-6 form the left hand and 7-12 are the melody).



- One of the main rules is that the order in which the 12 notes appear in the row must be maintained at all times; no note in the series can be repeated until all 12 notes have been heard. The example above shows how these rules can be “stretched”. Notes 1-6 are in the left hand while 7-12 are heard simultaneously in the RH.
- The 12-note melody can be transposed, which means it can have 11 transpositions.
- It can also be played backwards (retrograde), inverted and the inversion also played backwards (retrograde inversion). These three other versions of the 12-note melody can also be transposed, giving us 11 further possible transpositions each. This gives us 48 versions of the 12-note melody in total to choose from and move between.
- The type of 12-note melody you write is very important, because it will define the character and emotional world of the music you write. For instance, the 12-note melody given above is characterised by 3rds and semitones and these will suggest a particular kind of atmosphere.

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- The following 12-note melody (it forms the basis of Alban Berg's 1935 Violin Concerto) has interlinked major and minor chords (G minor, D major, A minor, E major) together with a whole-tone scale at the close. This does not produce traditional major/minor music, but it evokes that world.



- Intervals in a row can be expressed in several ways; a minor 2nd can also be a major 7th, a major third can be a minor 6th and so forth.

Using serialism

Serialism changed the way composers thought and led them to organise music very systematically. But composers have changed and adapted many aspects of traditional serialism to their own needs.

Serialism which uses all twelve notes of the chromatic scale is naturally chromatic, but a row might consist of any number of notes. For instance, Stravinsky uses just 5 in his *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954):



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Some composers repeat notes several times in a row. Here is Peter Maxwell Davies using a 19-note row in his *Second Taverner Fantasia*:



- rows don't necessarily need to be inverted, used in retrograde, or retrograde inversion;
- a row might have decorative notes added to it (as in Andrew Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia* – the highlighted notes are the main row or, in this case, a ground bass by Bach):



- the idea of using a 12-note row might be used very freely – in Rhian Samuel's *Ariel* the opening ten bars freely repeat and introduce notes until all but one of the 12 are in play – the missing note (a D) is only heard at the end of the opening section.
- the original order of notes doesn't necessarily need to be maintained – they can be intuitively re-ordered or systematically re-ordered. (See 'Rotations' below);
- other aspects of the music can also be serialised: rhythm, dynamics, instrumentation or even the structure as a whole (See 'Total Serialism').

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Serial techniques

There are many ways of using serialism; a few basic techniques are suggested below. You can adapt these ideas to other aspects of your compositions if you wish.

Rotations

Some composers are anxious to avoid the monotony of always having the same order of notes. One way of avoiding this is called rotation. Look at the note rows in the example below from Stravinsky's *Movements* (1959). The row is split into two sections (notes 1-6 and 7-12). You'll see that with every repeat of the row, the first and seventh notes are moved to the end of the row so that the order is constantly varied:

The image shows five staves, labeled I through V, each containing a 12-note row. The first six notes of each row are grouped under the label '[first hexachord]' and the last six notes under '[second hexachord]'. The rows are rotated such that the first and seventh notes of one row become the last two notes of the next row. For example, the first row (I) has notes 1-6 and 7-12. The second row (II) has notes 7-12 and 1-6. This pattern continues for the third, fourth, and fifth rows, creating a constantly varied order of notes.

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Total serialism

You don't have to limit your use of serialism to pitches, but can also apply it to rhythms, dynamics and even the overall structure of your piece (this technique was pioneered by Olivier Messiaen). This is known as 'Total Serialism' (also sometimes as 'Integral Serialism'). Here is an example of a 7-note row that has dynamics and note values: there are 7 different notes values ranging from 1 quaver to 7 and 7 different types of dynamic.

It is also possible to also apply this to the overall structure of your piece. For instance:

- The piece might reflect the row by having 7 sections;
- Each note of the row would act as the main tonal centre for each of the 7 sections;
- The note durations could be extended to act as the overall proportions for each of the sections;
- The dynamics could act as an overall indication of the character of a section (quiet, very loud etc.).

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Activity

There are many ways in which you can write melodic lines. Why not try working with some of the ideas below?

Devise a melodic idea and share it amongst the instruments you are using. Look at the way Rhian Samuel playfully shares a series of 2 or 3 note groups between the flute and piano in the opening 10 bars of *Ariel* (as well as later in the work).

Try the idea of writing a line of music without any harmony at all – it could be written using serial techniques or it could even be a simple diatonic line (or a line using some of the modes described in the section “Melody”). This could be supported by pedals or the occasional addition of other notes – take a look at what Lynne Plowman does in the final movement of *Night Dances*.

If you have several instruments to hand, you could double the line, always changing the texture so that it constantly evolves new colours in the way Adès does in *Ecstasio* (bars 25-40).

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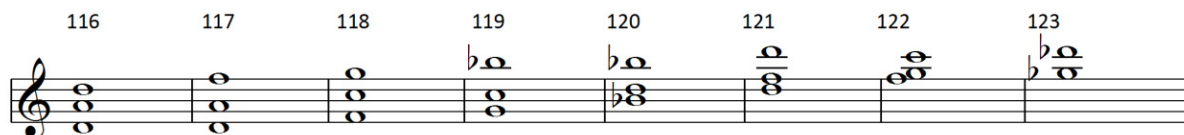
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Harmony & Tonality

In the 21st century, no two composers any longer use harmony in the same way. In the set works by contemporary composers you will find quite different attitudes towards the use of harmony.

Other ways of thinking about harmony

Whilst contemporary composers might use traditional major / minor chords, 7ths and other similar harmonies they rarely use the rules of classical harmony. Look, for instance, at bars 116-23 of Adès's *Ecstasio* (below): superficially, the harmony looks quite simple and even traditional, but take a closer look.



- There are often bare 5ths without 3rds;
- Common chords are heard next to 4th chords (chords made up of superimposed 4ths);
- The tonality moves around, without the preparation normally required in traditional music.

Adès mixes ordinary chords with 4th chords. It could all sound very confused, but the effect is carefully judged and, is characteristic of the piece as a whole. *The important thing about harmony is to be consistent in the way you use it.* Below are some thought on different ways in which you can construct chords used in your compositions.

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Major and minor chords in a non-traditional context

The contemporary set works contain plenty of major and minor chords (and various types of 7th) but often used in unfamiliar ways or combined with other notes. Take a look at the following examples:

- In *Ariel* (see bars 10-12, piano part) Rhian Samuel has a clear series of major and minor chords (B flat major, G major, F major, E minor, A minor and E minor) to which are added one extra note, a semitone apart from one of the other notes in the chord, producing a sharp astringent tone quality:



- In the second movement of *Night Dances* (see bars 11-19), Lynne Plowman uses chords in the piano consisting of various types of 7th, common chords and unresolved appoggiaturas producing a soft mysterious, veiled harmony.
- The whole of the first section (bars 1-29) of Sally Beamish's *Boardwalk* (from *Opus California*) is made up of common chords, 7ths and unresolved appoggiaturas to which she adds further notes in a very free manner.

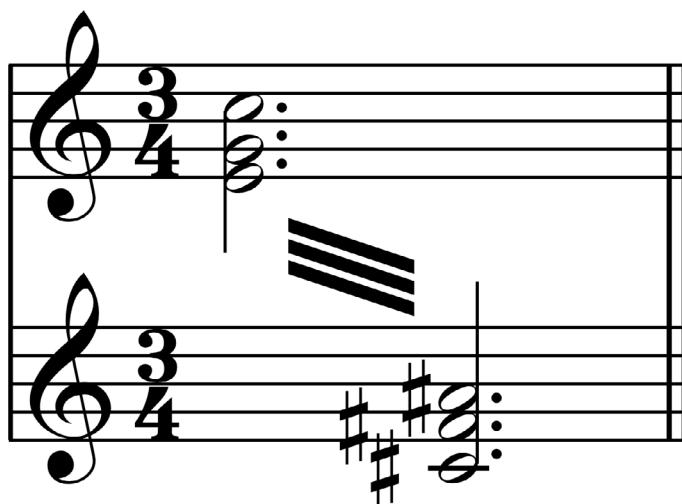
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Bi-tonal chords

Something implied in nearly all the above examples is the use of bi-tonality. This happens when a composer writes in or combines chords from two different keys at the same time. One of the most famous examples of this is the bi-tonal chord from Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* (1911) combining C major and F# major chords:



Another is the famous repeated chord from Part 1 of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913), combining chords of an E flat major 7th and F flat major:



Although these examples come from over a century ago, this kind of harmony is still frequently used in many of the set works.

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White note harmony

“White note harmony” is sometimes also called ‘pandiatonicism’. It happens when all the notes of any major or minor scale are combined freely without the usual conventional resolutions or chord progressions (sometimes in a quasi-contrapuntal way). However, there is still a strong sense of tonality due to the absence of any chromatic notes. Take a look at the second movement of Night Dances (see bars 11-19) where Lynne Plowman uses this kind of harmony.

- The music is rooted around C major / A minor;
- the bass strongly emphasises the tonic and dominant of both key which helps to focus the harmony above;
- the notes above are more difficult to identify in terms of traditional harmony but are all drawn from the ‘white’ notes of those two keys, producing a series of soft unprepared and unresolved dissonances.

Fourth chords

While traditional harmony grows out of chords of superimposed 3rds, there was a move towards building chords out of superimposed 4ths for much of the last century. These produce an altogether cooler, more austere sound.

- Chords can also be built superimposing 5ths;
- Other intervals (including augmented 4ths, or even 3rds and 2nds can be introduced into the chords to soften their austere effect;
- There is no limit to the number of notes than can be found in a chord or this kind;
- Fourth chords can be inverted and re-voiced in many ways other than simply stacking 4ths on top of one another. For instance:



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Cluster chords

Cluster chords contain three or more adjacent notes separated by a semitone. In very rhythmic music (particularly on instruments such as the piano) or quiet music where the emphasis is on texture (for instance, using strings) they are highly effective. These are dissonant chords without resolutions, not found in functional harmony and their effective use depends very much on careful judgement on the composer's part. Here is an example:



Occasionally cluster chords dispense with conventional notation, usually when a composer wishes all the notes within a certain range to be played:



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Static harmony

In traditional harmony a sense of forward movement and progression is essential, but since the time of Debussy composers have been attracted to harmony that doesn't seem to move forward or is rooted in one place. This often evokes a sense of stillness or timelessness, but is also very effective in fast moving music. In the 21st century its use amongst composers has increased; we often find music that is harmonically either static or which moves only very slowly. It is often found in minimalism (for instance, Steve Reich and Philip Glass) and is a feature of one of the most influential American orchestral works of the last few years, John Luther Adams's *Becoming Ocean* (2013).

- Many examples of static harmony can be found in the music of the Polish composer Witold Lutosławski (1913-94) where he often uses a chord consisting of many notes distributed as fast moving ostinati amongst the instruments. The result can be very exciting, but without any sense of forward movement, almost as if you are rooted to the same spot in the middle of a motorway with vehicles moving around you at great speed. For examples of both fast and slow moving static music listen to Lutosławski's *Chain 2* (1984).
- Static harmony is also found in the first movement of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances*. Bars 17 50 & 104-39 are fast moving, but listen in the piano part to how the bass is rooted around the same two or three pitches whilst the right hand uses just a couple of different chords. The sense of forward movement is provided by the rhythm and melodic line in the flute.
- Thomas Adès also uses static elements in *Ecstasio* through long pedal notes over which short fragments are repeated – see particularly bars 25-40 or 149-172.
- *Whilst the use of static harmony or pitches is often found in contemporary music, be careful not to base your whole piece around these ideas.* They should be one of many different techniques that you might employ in your pieces.

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Harmony in serial music

Serial harmony is not something unconnected to what has already been discussed, but is a consequence of how the underlying rows are constructed. Depending on how a row is manipulated it can produce harmony in any style required. Consider this row:



If notes 1-3, 4-6, 7-9 & 10-12 are presented vertically we arrive at these four common chords:



However, rows do not have to necessarily follow the order 1-12 and can be partitioned in other ways. If notes 1,4,7,10 and 2,5,8,11 and 3, 6, 9, 12 are presented as three 4-note chords we arrive at this very different series of three rich dissonant harmonies:



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Spectral harmony

A new kind of harmony that has swept through Europe in the last forty years has become known as Spectralism.

- Spectral composition originated in France in the early 1970s with composers such as Gérard Grisey (1946-98) and Tristan Murail (b.1947) marrying sounds used in electronic music to traditional instruments.
- Spectral music is drawn from the analysis of sound spectra, translated into traditional notation with pitches rounded off to the nearest quarter-tone or even eighth-tone—dividing the octave into 24 or 48 discrete pitches, instead of the usual twelve for Western music.
- The term “spectral music’ has come to encompass any music that uses timbre as an important element of structure or musical language.

Listen

Du cristal ...à fumée (From crystal into smoke) is an orchestral work in two parts by the Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho (b.1952). Listen to the first seven minutes or so to hear how she uses spectral harmony.

- In spectral music the harmony changes very slowly.
- Most of what you will hear in *Du cristal* comes from the opening bell chord: for the first seven minutes or so just this chord dominates.
- The orchestration constantly changes with certain parts of the chord highlighted, taken apart and put under a microscope: it’s as if we are inside the chord, moving around and looking at all its details.

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Texture & Sonority

For many contemporary composers, creating textures using instrumental colour is an important aspect of composition. How texture is used can take a lot of different forms:

- Texture can decorate a very simple idea. In the *Ecstasio* movement of Adès's *Asyla* (bars 116-48) simple block harmonies (one to a bar) are decorated with a complex multi-layered orchestral texture, driving the music forward and giving it energy.
- Texture can be used to make a simple repeated chord sound strange and ethereal, as in bars 32-39 of the final movement of Sally Beamish's *Opus California* where three string instruments play in harmonics against low pizzicato. (see 'Writing for Instruments and Voices in the 21st Century' for more details of harmonics).

Texture can also be used to create music whose power comes entirely from building textures. There are several classic pieces that have had an important influence on contemporary composers. Listen to the *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960) by the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki (b.1933). Here the music's power is conveyed almost entirely by unusual textures and string effects (similar in parts to the famous "shower" music by Bernard Herrmann in Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*). For more details of different effects see 'Writing for Instruments and Voices in the 21st Century'.

Forms

Forms are frameworks to support your ideas and help give them shape and coherence. Many contemporary composers invent their own forms to suit the music they write, but even when using the most contemporary techniques it is worth remembering that the most powerful and coherent forms are often very simple.

- At its most basic level, a piece will usually be divided into sections;
- In one way or another, some of the sections might repeat music that has already been heard;
- However complicated your music might be, always try and contain it within a simple overall shape.

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Can traditional forms be adapted to music in the 21st century?

Many contemporary pieces are based on forms that have been around for hundreds of years:

- simple ideas like ABA forms (as in the first movement of Sally Beamish's *Opus California*);
- sonata form (the last movement of *Opus California*);
- passacaglia (Andrew Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia*);
- ABAB forms (the first and second movements of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances*).

In each case these composers have found new and interesting ways of adapting old forms, using them very freely as a starting point for something new. Don't feel that with more traditional forms that you have to stick to the rules as if you were writing in the Western Classical style.

Below are some tips on how the composers of the set works have used form:

Repetition as a form: Thomas Adès

In *Ecstasio* (from *Asyla*), the form uses repetition - a powerful feature of contemporary dance music.

- The piece is based on regular 8-bar repetitions;
- The repetitions are never exactly the same; Adès always adds something to or changes them;
- In the first section (up to bar 115), Adès keeps the interest by gradually building up a unison melodic line, adding a few more notes or details each time;
- He avoids the monotony of repetition by putting syncopations and rhythmic irregularities into the unison line and nearly always ends the 8-bar repetition by shortening the final bar into something like a 7/8 bar.
- Note how Adès controls the big shape of the music with a gradual build-up of energy to three big climaxes.

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Old wine in new bottles: Sally Beamish

In *Opus California*, Sally Beamish has written a totally new piece using fragments of a Beethoven string quartet (the first movement of Op.18, No.4). This might sound like an easy option, but her whole 68-bar first movement is based on just four bars from the opening of Beethoven's quartet (see example on page 52) .

- the harmonies from bars 1-4 of the original quartet are given completely new rhythmic values, drawn from jazz;
- varied repetition is important (as in the Adès work) in extending the original fragment into a longer whole;
- the music emerges both from the chords and a fragment of melody above them. Chords and melody are separated out into two ideas which interact and “talk” to one another.

Creating a story – Rhian Samuel & Lynne Plowman

Many composers use music to illustrate and tell stories. In *Ariel* Rhian Samuel gives the flute and piano two identities:

- The flute is spontaneous and demonstrative, doesn't take the feelings of others (such as the piano) into account and rushes headlong into situations without considering the consequences.
- The piano, ever patient, tries all sorts of ways to partner the flute, but is sometimes daunted by the situation.

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In Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances* there is less of a story and more of a series of atmospheres based on different times of night, from a wild, intoxicating night-time dance, through a gradual uncoiling of energy to sleep itself. A big structural shape emerges as it moves from energetic rhythmic music through to a slower, bluesy and bittersweet atmosphere to sleep itself.

This is a great way of creating your own form and the details of the story will often suggest musical themes and ideas.

But you do need to plan carefully otherwise the music can become incoherent and shapeless.

Some tips on creating a narrative form

- Avoid following the story too literally; aim instead to convey its atmosphere, characters and just one or two key events.
- Take a couple of the key characters and give them contrasting themes. If there are other particular dominant themes in the story (for instance, a particular place or emotion), you might give them their own themes or sections.
- You might also consider giving characters, places or emotions particular contrasting keys, tonal centres or distinctive textures.

Listen: Here are several recent classics that tell a story: Oliver Knussen's *Ophelia Dances*, Thomas Adès's *These Premises are Alarmed*, Peter Maxwell Davies's *Orkney Wedding and Sunrise*.

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A journey around other music – Andrew Wilson-Dickson

Andrew Wilson-Dickson creates a form by progressing through different musical styles. His *passacaglia tango* moves gradually from the eighteenth century world of Bach through romantic composers, such as Arnold Bax, though to the world of tango at the piece's centre. He gives this rather wild idea form and coherence by basing the whole work on a theme by Bach. The theme is always present in the music – sometimes in the bass, sometimes hidden in a middle part or sometimes singing out as the main melody at the top of the texture.

Activity
<p>Taking Andrew Wilson-Dickson's idea as a starting point, here are some tips for doing something similar:</p> <p>Come up with several musical styles that you would like to use as a basis for your own music;</p>
<p>Think about the drama you can draw from the way these styles or types of music bounce off one another;</p>
<p>Make sure that you have a unifying musical idea that can tie all these different styles together – it might be a single theme that can be transformed in each of the different styles or a bass line that is always present.</p>

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Making your own forms

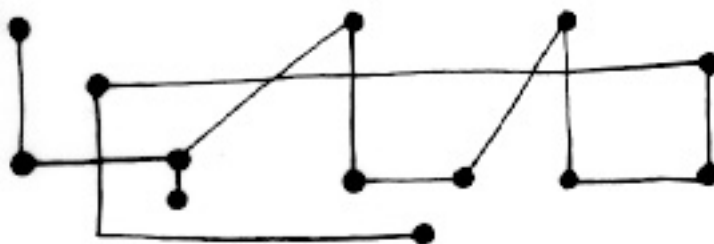
The above pieces suggest ideas you might like to use for your own piece, but you might want to come up with your own form. Here are a few more thumbnail sketches of formal ideas that have been used by contemporary composers.

Chain form. Lutosławski wrote three pieces called *Chain 1, 2 & 3*. The formal idea is very simple and can be applied in all sorts of ways: one section (or idea) begins before the previous one has ended. They therefore all overlap, forming a kind of musical chain.

Moment form. Pioneered by Karlheinz Stockhausen in the 1950s and 60s, pieces in 'Moment' form are made up of self-contained moments – short fragments lasting no more than perhaps a minute at the most. Stockhausen wrote, "each moment can stand on its own and at the same time is related to all the other moments".

Planning out the form of your piece

Composers have always mapped out the shape of their music, but many contemporary composers find that making a drawing or diagram of their form helps to fix the shape of the piece in their mind. Stravinsky claimed his music looked like this:



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Numbers

Music has always had a relationship with numbers. Medieval composers used numbers containing religious symbolism as the basis of pieces and Bach used them in some of his music. Many contemporary composers use numbers to help plan out their music's proportions, generate rhythms or to embed symbolism in the music. Here are some ways in which you can use numbers to help you plan your music.

Calculating the length of a composition

Some composers find it very useful to work out approximately how many bars their piece will be, together with indications of where new sections begin or particular events or climaxes take place. Here's a very simple example of how you might do this – it's pretty straight forward:

- If the piece is going to be three minutes long, in 4/4 time and the metronome mark is *crochet* = 100, then we know it'll be approximately 75 bars long. How? Divide 100 (bpm) by 4 (i.e. bars of 4/4): that gives us 25 bars of 4/4 per minute. $3 \times 25 = 75$ bars.
- Now decide how long each section will be. If your piece is in ABA form, then you might decide to make each section a minute long. This gives us approximately 25 bars per section.
- Already, we can see the final section will probably be a varied repeat of the first, so the amount of music that needs to be composed is 50 bars. This will help you to get a much better sense of direction in what you are doing and work with an overview of the piece as a whole.

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Using Golden-Section

You might consider using 'Golden Section' proportions to help you plan your composition. The Greeks devised the Golden Section, a geometrical proportion that divides a line with a longer side and a shorter one. Many natural objects conform to the proportion which has been used for centuries in architecture and painting. Since the time of Debussy, many composers applied it to musical structures. What though is its practical benefit? Although he did not consciously use it, the central climax of the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony occurs more or less exactly at the Golden Section. You would probably automatically apply the same proportion if you were taking a photograph of, say, a tree. Rather than put the tree dead centre, you would probably compose your photo so that it was more to the left or right (where the Golden Section might fall).

There are several ways of working out where to find the Golden Section. Many composers (including Bartók) have applied it using Fibonacci numbers (where each number is the sum of the previous two: 1,2,3,5,8,13,21,34,55 etc.) which also conform to the Golden Section. So, if you write a piece that is 34 bars long, the Golden Section falls either at the end of bar 21 or bar 13. Take a quick look at the first movement of Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* (1937) and you'll see all the main sections begin at the end of bars 21 & 34 and the whole is 55 bars long.

Tempo, Rhythm & Metre

Ever since the premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in 1913, rhythm has been at the centre of contemporary music. Arguably, rhythm is the most important element in music; without which it can't move forward. Many innovations and techniques have been introduced over the last hundred years, taken for granted by today's composers. This section introduces a few of those techniques with suggestions for ways you can use rhythm in your music.

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Accommodating rhythm in 21st century music

There are many ways in which you can break away from the conventional idea of fitting your musical ideas into the straightjacket of 4/4, 3/4 or 6/8. Here are a few of them:

Irregular divisions of the beat in duple time

Virtually all the contemporary set work use standard time signatures, but divide the bar into different accents and introduce all sorts of rhythmic subtleties.

- One of the most common ways is to divide the beats into 3 + 3 + 2 quavers as can be found in the 4/4 bars in the first movement of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances* (bars 17-49). This rhythm can also be expressed as 3+2+3 or 2+3+3 in a 4/4 bar.



- Sally Beamish constantly displaces the beat throughout the first movement of *Opus California* (*Boardwalk*) with regular accents constantly shifted (see the section on 'Metre' in the analysis resource for this piece for a detailed explanation).
- A different kind of displacement is found in bars 1-10 of Rhian Samuel's *Ariel* where we lose any sense of where the bar line is. The space between the beginning of each group of 2 or 3 notes in both instruments gradually open out by a quaver and then closes back in again: 2:3:4:5:5:3:3 etc.

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Unusual time signatures

Try experimenting with more unusual time signatures and see what happens – 5/4, 7/4, or 5/8 or 7/8 for instance. These are what are called irregular time signatures; they are usually made up of a combination of 2 + 3 beats or 3 + 4.



Changing time signatures

You don't have to stay in one time signature throughout a piece. Changing time signature can help give the music fluidity and freedom. Here are some examples:

- In much of *Ecstasio*, Thomas Adès writes a series of regular 8-bar sections in 4/4 but gives each of these a twist by changing the time signature at the end of each section to a 7/8 bar (written as 2/4 + 3/8) or something like a 5/8+6/2.
- Bars 1-50 of the first movement of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances* alternate 4/4 and 3/8, adding to the sense of the music's wildness.

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Additive rhythm

Additive rhythm is a well-known technique found in Stravinsky. It consists of taking and repeating a small phrase, but with each repeat notes are either added to or subtracted from it. You can find a really good example of this in the section starting at bar 84 in Adès's *Ecstasio*:

- There are two alternating phrases: in the wind (bars 84-85) and a descending brass phrase in triplets (bars 86-87);
- These two alternating patterns are repeated, but always changing the rhythms by adding or subtracting notes.

Polyrhythm

A polyrhythm is where two different metres (or time signatures) are played simultaneously. A very simple example would be two beats against three or four against five. The device can be found in both in Adès's *Ecstasio* and Rhian Samuel's *Ariel*.

- In *Ecstasio*, Adès writes several polyrhythmic passages of considerable complexity. In the long bar 111 there are 8 bars of simple 4/4 in the bass drum against which is a different series of changing metres in the woodwind, brass and percussion that pass through 2/4, 3/8, 2/6, 4/4, 2/4, 2/6 and so forth.

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- In Samuel's *Ariel*, between bars 102-08, the piano reiterates a 5/8 rhythm (though noted in 3/4) against a constantly fluctuating rhythmic passage in the flute (from 102 in quavers: 5+3+3+2+3+3+5+4+3+3+3+3+2 etc.):

- A more simple kind of polyrhythm can be found in bars 19-22 of Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia* where a 3-part polyrhythm is heard: a 3-beat phrase in the flute, a series of chords in the piano RH 1½ beats apart (and out of phase with the flute) and a duple rhythm in the bass.

Metric modulation

Metric modulation (sometimes called 'Tempo modulation') was devised by the American composer Elliott Carter (1908-2012) in the 1940s and 50s and is now a standard method of changing the underlying pulse of music. Here is a very simple example: the 3 beats of a 3/4 bar change into the 4 beats of a 12/16 bar. The underlying tempo remains the same, but the pulse has now become quicker, because it has lost a semi-quaver:

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Here is another example from the beginning of Harrison Birtwistle's *Silbury Air* (1977) where the bar lengths change between 3/16, 4/16 and 5/16, so that the underlying pulse is always in flux:



Time-based rhythm

Time-based rhythm removes the bar line, time signature and even conventional note values altogether from music and, instead, calculates events in units of seconds.

Writing for Instruments and Voices in the 21st Century

Composers have found many different ways of stretching and extending what we expect instruments to do in the last fifty years. The German composer Helmut Lachenmann (b.1935) has composed works where a series of scrapes, scratches and sighs are made by playing instruments in unconventional ways, almost replacing notes themselves. There's a brave new world out there waiting to be discovered but, for the moment, we'll concentrate on some of the most established instrumental techniques that can be found in the scores of most composers of the present time.

Needless to say, if you are going to use anything at all unusual, it needs to be written down meticulously and should not consist of anything that's likely to damage a player's instrument. The other thing to say is that techniques that are easy on one instrument (glissandi for instance) do not always transfer so well to others.

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Articulations

Here are some of the articulations or effects which are often found in today's music. Some of them (*sul ponticello* used in strings for instance) can be found back in the music of Beethoven, but today's composers regularly use these articulations as a matter of course.



String articulations

WHAT	HOW	EFFECT
<i>Sul tasto</i>	Bow over the fingerboard	Wispy, warm, gentle sounds
<i>Sul ponticello</i>	Bow very close to the bridge	Glassy, metallic sounds
<i>Col legno</i>	Using the wood of the bow to tap the string	Percussive effect, with a high pitch
Practice Mute	Attach a larger mute to the bridge	An extreme version of the standard mute. Very quiet
Extreme vibrato 	A wider, less controlled version of vibrato	Bending of pitch - hysterical sounding

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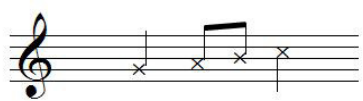



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Non vibrato	Playing deliberately without vibrato	Sparse, pure tone colour
Bartok <i>pizz</i> 	Plucking hard allowing the string to hit the wood of the fingerboard	A sharp, loud snap
Left hand <i>pizz</i> 	Plucked with the left hand	A quick change between arco and <i>pizz</i> (where the <i>pizz</i> is an open string). Sometimes bowing and plucking is possible at the same time

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<p>Bowing on the tailpiece (write as “Bow tailpiece”)</p>  <p>Also sometimes uses this notation</p> 	<p>Bowing lightly on the tailpiece</p>	<p>A ghostly whisper</p>
<p>Tapping (write as “tap body” or “shoulder”)</p> 	<p>Using your hand to tap the shoulder or body of the instrument</p>	<p>A tap or knocking sound to add rhythm or effect</p>
<p>Scratch tone (write “scratch tone” and use a cross at the end of the note stem as above)</p>	<p>Pressing the bow hard into the string</p>	<p>A harsh unpitched grating sound</p>
<p>Highest note of the instrument (no definite pitch)</p> 	<p>Play as high as possible on top string</p>	<p>A harsh shrieking sound</p>

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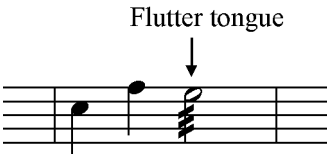
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<p>Bow behind the bridge</p>  <p>Arpeggio on all four strings behind the bridge</p> 	<p>Bowing behind the bridge where the string is very short</p>	<p>A screech-like sound</p>
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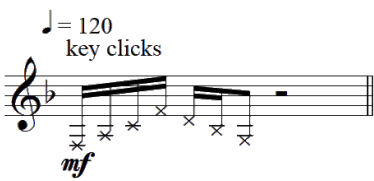
Wind articulations

WHAT	HOW	EFFECT
<p>Flutter Tonguing</p> 	<p>Performers flutter their tongue to produce a tremolo sound. More effective on flutes, clarinets and saxophones than double reed instruments</p>	<p>A fluttering sound</p>
<p>Harmonics. Notated with a small circle (o) above the note.</p>	<p>Partial found in the overtone series fingered in the lowest register of the instrument.</p>	<p>A high washed out transparent sound</p>

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Air Tone. Write air tone above the notes you want to use	Blowing through the instrument, often with the mouthpiece or reed removed.	A windy white noise
<p>Key Slaps and Clicks</p> 	Notes produced by rapidly shutting the pads upon the holes they cover. Most effective on flutes and saxophones	A percussive clicking sounds with some suggestion of the original pitch
Timbral Trills (also known as bisbigliando). Write bisbig and a trill above the note	A trill between two notes of the same pitch	A rapid alternation between the same two notes
Multiphonics Consult players first and specialist multiphonic websites or books	Produced using new fingerings or different embouchures	Several notes produced simultaneously

Brass articulations

The brass share many articulations with the woodwind.

WHAT	HOW	EFFECT
Flutter Tonguing. See woodwinds for notation	This is in many cases easier than on most woodwind instruments	A fluttering sound

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Air sounds. See woodwinds for notation	Blowing air through the instrument, whistling, humming or singing into it or reversing the mouthpiece and blowing through the back end. Make sure you specify exactly what sound you require.	Hollow empty resonance or white sound
Smacking Sounds and Mouthpiece pop. Write “Smacking Sound” or “Mouthpiece Pop”	Smacking the lips against the mouthpiece and slapping the mouthpiece with the palm of the performer’s hand	Smacking can produce a sustained line whilst popping is a percussive effect
Mutes	These are inserted into the bell of the instrument. In the case of trumpets and trombones a wide variety of different mutes and sounds are available.	The sounds vary considerably, sometimes cutting through the texture and sometimes soft and sweet
Timbral Trills. See woodwinds for notation	A trill between two notes of the same pitch	A rapid alternation between the same two notes

Harmonics

String harmonics: These are high-pitched fluty, ethereal sounds, devoid of overtones produced by lightly touching the string. Composers use them regularly, especially when they want to create a still other-worldly quality. Harmonics are often at their best in slow moving music, although they can be used in rapid passages (but do consult a string player if you are going to do this). They are also at their best when played quietly; loud harmonics marked *mp* or *f* can be possible, but the sound is likely to disintegrate due to the pressure on the string.

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There are two kinds of harmonics: real and artificial. More information on this is given below, but if in doubt, write your harmonics as artificial ones.

- Natural harmonics are produced by lightly touching an open, vibrating string (the fundamental) at one of the nodes located at $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, etc. the length of the string. Only certain notes can be produced in this way – you can find a very handy table showing you which at andrewhugill.com/manuals/violin/harmonics.html
- Artificial harmonics can be produced by touching the string a 4th higher than the note to be produced resulting in the note two octaves higher (artificial harmonics can also be produced stopping string at major and minor 3rds and 5ths).



Handy Tip: If you are unsure about using natural harmonics, always use artificial ones stopped at the 4th.

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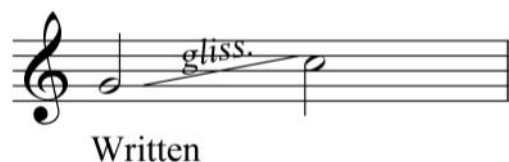
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Glissando

Western music tends to be played by moving from one note to another, cleanly without any type of glissando (or portamento). Certain instruments, such as strings, trombones or timpani, can easily slide between notes whilst for others (piano, harp, xylophone, marimba) it involves sliding the finger rapidly over the strings or keys between the two notes. Then there are many other instruments such as woodwind, and most brass that can only achieve a limited glissando, by altering lip pressure. This works better for some instruments than others: the famous clarinet glissando at the opening of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* can be attempted also on the saxophone, but would be impossible on the flute, oboe or bassoon.

Glissandi are notated by placing a line between the two notes involved.



You can find many examples of it in Adès's *Ecstasio* (see the strings particularly in the long bars 112-113).

Pizzicato glissandi: These are very effective low in the bass register of the cello and double bass. The player follows a pizzicato note by sliding the finger up or down the string whilst it is still vibrating. It is only really effective on the lower strings and doesn't work at all on the viola or violin. You can find an example in Sally Beamish's *Boardwalk* (bars 26-28 & 40-42).

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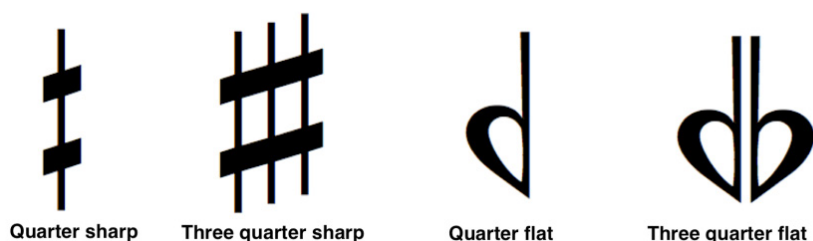
Quartertones and microtones

Contemporary composers have increasingly used quartertones and even microtones (intervals smaller than quartertones) in recent years. These are easier for some instruments than others:

- Strings can play quartertones easily.
- Woodwind instruments can play quartertones using various kinds of fingerings, but are not naturally suited to it.
- Amongst brass instruments, only the trombone can easily play quartertones.
- Fretted instruments, non-electronic keyboards, pitched percussion and harps can't play quartertones.

Although melodic lines with large leaps in quartertones can be played on suitable instruments, they are very difficult to hear and pitch. Some of the most effective quartertone writing is best done when players can move up and down by step.

These are the conventional symbols for writing quartertones:



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Inside the piano

Ever since John Cage turned the piano into a multi-voiced percussion instrument with his *Sonatas and Interludes* in 1946, composers have become alive to the wonderful variety of sounds that can be produced by exploring the inside of the piano. Here are just some of the possibilities (below).

Warning:

you really need to use a grand piano to explore these sounds fully and remember: always treat the instrument carefully and with respect (John Cage claimed he always left pianos in a better state than he found them).

ACTIVITY	HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS TO TRY OUT INSIDE A PIANO:
	Try plucking the strings or gently striking them with soft drumsticks.
	Create harmonics by touching overtone positions on the string with the finger of one hand and hitting the respective key with the other hand.
	Play glissandi across the strings using a soft drumstick.
	Mute the strings with the palm of your hand whilst playing keys with the other.
	Place (very carefully!) objects between the strings such as rubbers and experiment with the sounds produced by striking the keys.

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Singing contemporary music

No instrument has played a more prominent role in developing extended techniques than the voice. Extended vocal techniques include panting, whistling, hissing, sucking, laughing, clucking, barking, screaming, talking, yelling, and whispering. Remember though: a singer's voice is a delicate instrument, so if you are going to experiment with new vocal techniques, find an adventurous singer with an interest in experimenting or, better still, try out new techniques yourself.

Listen

Contemporary vocal classics include Luciano Berio's *Sequenza 3*, Cathy Berberian's *Stripsody*, and Peter Maxwell Davies's *Eight Songs for a Mad King* & John Cage's *Aria*.

Singers who have extended vocal techniques include Laurie Anderson, Cathy Berberian, Joan La Barbara, Meredith Monk & Jennifer Walshe.

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Notation

The 1950s and 60s saw much experimentation in the notation of music. The last thirty years or so though have seen a return to much simpler and more traditional forms of notation. One reason for this is undoubtedly practical: in Britain, rehearsal time is often limited and professional musicians need to be able to read, rehearse and perform music efficiently in the minimum amount of time – this does not leave time for the composer to explain new systems of notation or for performers to get used to this. Everything needs to be precisely notated and very clear.

How do I write my ideas down?

If your music can be written down using traditional notation (and the majority of music can be), then this is the best way to do it, especially in the context of the present Area of Study.

Sharps or flats?

In contemporary music it is often difficult to decide whether to use sharps or flats:

- If your music has recognisable tonal centres, use accidentals in the way you normally would in tonal music (as far as possible).
- Always use accidentals so that the intervals between the notes are absolutely clear (for instance, not C# to G flat, but D flat to G flat or C# to F#).
- If in doubt, a rough and ready solution is to restrict the notation of black notes to F#, C# and G# and B flat and E flat.

Key signatures

Most contemporary music does not tend to use key signatures, but if you do find yourself composing in a key (and staying in it for reasonably long periods) then don't hesitate to use a key signature.

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Influences - Remixing the Past

Nearly all the featured set works use other music as a starting point. This tradition stretching back to the parody masses of the sixteenth century through to contemporary ideas such as hip-hop. The idea isn't to copy other music, but to use it as a way of stimulating your own imagination. Here are some examples of the many different ways of approaching this.

Using a pre-existing melody

Some composers take a pre-existing melody as a starting point for their own piece, removing the rhythms, dynamics, harmony and barlines. You can use this device in many different ways:

- Use the pitches of a whole melody or just a few pitches;
- Use the melody as a starting point for series (see “plainsong” below);
- Embed the melody (possibly in long notes) in the texture of the music you write;
- Using your own rhythms, take the melody as a repeating bass line over which you build your own music.

Take a look at Andrew Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia* where Bach's original bass line is used and disguised in all sorts of ways moving between the inner voices and top line.

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Another example can be found in *a cry* by the Welsh composer Maja Palser who takes the old Welsh hymn tune *Llef* as the basis for a slowly moving hypnotic piano piece. If you follow the notes of the original tune and then look for them in the piano piece, you will see how they have been redistributed. The first example is the hymn tune and the second is the piano piece:



very still (♩=48)

Piano

p *p* *pp*

ppp

Pno.

6

ppp *pp* *p*

Pno.

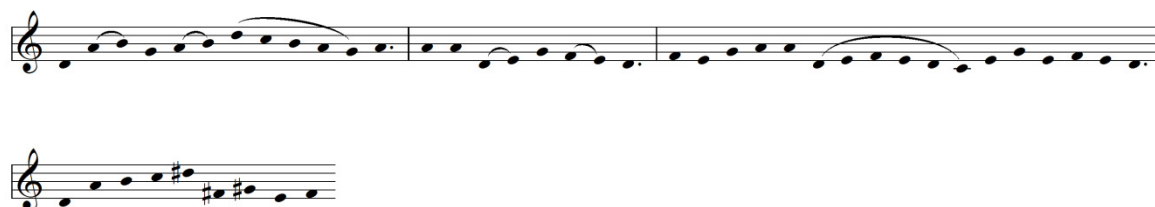
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Using plainsong

The composer Peter Maxwell Davies based many of his works on medieval plainsong, taking a fragment as the basis of a serial row. The row is then be transposed and used as the basis for a magic square. Here is the plainsong (*Ave Maris Stella*) and its transformation into a 9-note row:



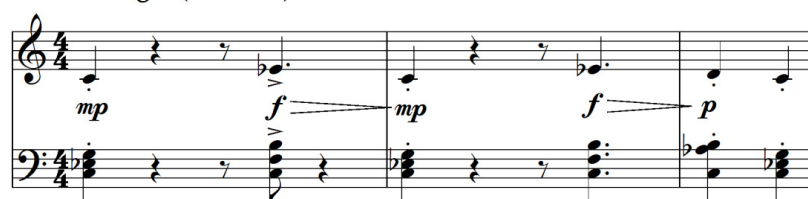
Using pre-existing harmony

We've explored the idea of using pre-existing melody, but it is also possible to take just a few chords as the basis of your work. This approach is used in Sally Beamish's string quartet *Opus California* (one of the set works). She takes the opening four chords underpinning the opening two bars of Beethoven's Quartet in C minor, Op.18, No.4, and later does the same with four chords from bars 3 and 4. Here is the Beethoven (first) and then the Beamish (second):

Allegro ma non tanto ♩ = 84



Allegro (♩ = c. 120)



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If you decide to use “found material” in this way, you can change and manipulate it as much as you wish:

- Don't feel you have to keep the original rhythms, textures, voicings or even order of the original chords;
- Not only can you use the chords in different inversions or spacings, but you can transpose them, use them in a different order and even add notes to them or take notes out. Make them your own.
- Take a look at the seven opening bars of Sally Beamish's quartet and see how she stretches two bars out to seven, repeating chords and inserting melodic material in between. She somehow makes Beethoven's darkly expressive and urgent world reflect the laid-back world of California.

Using characteristic rhythms

Evoking or wanting to share the character of another kind of music can be achieved using characteristic rhythms. Andrew Wilson-Dickson's *tango passacaglia* not only uses basic tango rhythms but many other smaller melodic rhythms that are an integral part of many traditional tangos.

The rhythmic ostinati used in the first movement of Lynne Plowman's *Night Dances* have strong overtones of both Latin-American and Eastern European dance, without ever drawing on specific models but making much use of the division of the 4/4 bar in units of 3+3+2 (or similar), or breaking the pattern up with units of 3/8.

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Early music

Composers have been particularly drawn towards using of early music (medieval, renaissance, baroque etc.). Peter Maxwell Davies combined Purcell's music with 1920s dance music in his *Fantasia on a ground and two pavans* (1968) and Steve Martland's *Remix* (1985) combined music by the French composer Marin Marais (1656-1728) with a combination of Jazz and funk. Thomas Adès takes John Dowland's 1610 lute song *In Darkness Let Me Dwell* (1610) as the basis for his piano piece *Darkness Visible* (1992). Adès explains, "No notes have been added; indeed, some have been removed". He takes the notes of Dowland and re-arranges and places them in strange and unusual registers, using almost continuous tremolo to add a ghostly shimmering surface to the original. Is this an arrangement then rather than a composition? Possibly, but so much has been added that it would be perverse to call it simply an arrangement.

Your composition

This resource has a lot of detail and ideas in it. Don't feel you have to use them all or take all of it in – browse through and look for ideas that resonate with you and use those as a starting point. Good luck!

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A thumbnail history of how composers have used pre-existing music since Stravinsky

As explained above, going back to the music of others is not new, but has become an increasingly important tool in a composer's technique over the last century or so. Here are six very influential works of the past:

Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* (1921) takes the baroque music of Pergolesi, remoulding, breaking up, fragmenting, re-harmonising it. Listen to the well-known Vivo movement with its elephantine trombone glissandi.

Bartók's *Rumanian Folk Dances* (1915) are genuine Transylvanian folk tunes harmonised with such imagination that they become a new composition in their own right.

Berg's *Violin Concerto* (1935) features a Bach chorale ("Es ist genug"), woven into the texture of the music and built into the underlying 12-note row.

Britten's *The Prince of the Pagodas* (1957) has sections that are based on Balinese gamelan music which he encountered in Bali in 1956.

Berio *Sinfonia* (1969) has the scherzo of Mahler's Resurrection Symphony running throughout its third movement alongside quotations from Stravinsky, Ravel, Debussy, Berg and many others.

Kevin Volans's *White Man Sleeps* (1986) is a string quartet drawing on traditional African music including Basotho concertina music, traditional Nyungwe music, and from Basotho lesiba music.

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Glossary

Additive Rhythm: This is a repeated rhythm, “displaced” by either adding or subtracting notes to it – this is a well-known technique that can be found in Stravinsky.

Aleatoric: music in which some element of it is left to chance or to the performers to determine.

Cluster chords: chords containing three or more adjacent notes separated by a semitone. These are dissonant chords without resolutions and are not found in functional harmony.

Microtones: These are intervals smaller than a semitone, frequently used by contemporary composers. These are often divided into quarter tones (half of a semitone), but may also be divided in other ways.

Multiphonics: This is a technique on instruments that can only play one note at a time in which several notes are produced simultaneously. They are usually found in music for woodwind using new fingerings or different embouchures. On brass instruments they usually consist of simultaneously playing the instrument and singing into it.

Polyrhythm: A polyrhythm is where two different metres or musical pulses are played simultaneously. A very simple example would be two beats against three or four against five.