

# Italian Musical Terms

## Speed (or tempo) (from slow to fast)

|                 |                             |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| adagio.....     | slow                        |
| largo.....      | slow and broad              |
| lento.....      | slow                        |
| andante.....    | at a moderate walking speed |
| moderato.....   | at a moderate pace          |
| allegretto..... | fairly fast                 |
| allegro.....    | fast and lively             |
| vivace.....     | fast and lively             |
| presto.....     | very fast                   |

## Changes of Speed

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| accel. or accelerando..... | gradually getting faster   |
| rall. or rallentando.....  | gradually getting slower   |
| rit. or ritardando.....    | gradually getting slower   |
| rit. or ritenuto.....      | held back (slower at once) |
| a tempo.....               | back to the previous speed |

## Dynamics (from quiet to loud)

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>pp</i> (pianissimo).....  | very soft       |
| <i>p</i> (piano).....        | softly          |
| <i>mp</i> (mezzo piano)..... | moderately soft |
| <i>mf</i> (mezzo forte)..... | moderately loud |
| <i>f</i> (forte).....        | loud            |
| <i>ff</i> (fortissimo).....  | very loud       |

## Changes in Dynamics

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| cresc. (or crescendo).....    | gradually getting louder  |
| decresc. (or decrescendo).... | gradually getting quieter |
| dim. (or diminuendo).....     | gradually getting quieter |

## Other useful words

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| legato.....              | smoothly                 |
| cantabile.....           | in a singing style       |
| da capo (or D.C.).....   | from the beginning       |
| dal segno (or D.S.)..... | from the sign $\text{S}$ |
| staccato.....            | short and detached       |
| fine.....                | the end                  |