



# Classical Music and the Great Composers Who Made It

KS3 MUSIC

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## What is Classical Music?

**Classical music** is a style of music written and performed over hundreds of years, mainly from around **1750 to 1900**. It's music that uses **orchestras** (groups of musicians playing different instruments together) and follows very specific rules about how notes and melodies fit together. When people hear classical music, they often think of grand symphonies, beautiful piano pieces, or powerful operas.

The word "classical" can be confusing because it's used two ways. Sometimes it means all music written in this special style, and sometimes it means a specific period in music history called the **Classical Era** (roughly **1750-1820**). In this article, we're talking about the whole classical tradition.

Think of it like building with LEGO: classical music has strict rules about which pieces fit where, creating something beautiful and organised, just like a complicated LEGO structure.

## Why is Classical Music Special?

Classical music is special because composers wrote it to express big emotions and tell stories using only instruments (and sometimes singers). Before recording technology existed, going to a concert was the only way to hear music, making it a huge event. Composers wrote pieces that could last 20 minutes or longer, and audiences sat quietly to enjoy every note.

Classical music taught people to appreciate **melody** (the tune), **harmony** (how different notes blend together), and **structure** (how the music is organised). Today, classical music is still played everywhere—in films, video games, and advertisements—even if you don't always notice it!

## Famous Classical Composers

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756–1791) was an Austrian genius who wrote over **600 pieces** before dying at just **35 years old**. His music is bright, playful, and incredibly clever. Listen to his **Eine kleine Nachtmusik** to hear something joyful and bouncy.

**Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770–1827) was a German composer who went completely deaf but still created powerful, emotional music. His **Symphony No. 9** includes the famous "Ode to Joy" and is one of the most celebrated pieces ever written. Beethoven showed that classical music could be wild and emotional, not just neat and perfect.

**Frédéric Chopin** (1810–1849) was a Polish composer who made the **piano** sing like a human voice. His nocturnes (night pieces) are dreamy and romantic. **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840–1893) was a Russian composer famous for **Swan Lake** and **The Nutcracker**, pieces used in ballets that people still love today.

Think of it like a book series: Mozart is like an adventure novel, Beethoven is like a dramatic thriller, Chopin is like a love poem, and Tchaikovsky is like a fairy tale.

## Classical Music Today

Even though classical music was written centuries ago, it's still performed in concert halls and listened to by millions. Young people learn piano and violin using classical pieces. Film composers study classical techniques to write music for movies. Classical music proved that music could be art—something beautiful and meaningful that connects all humans.