

Rhythm

Rhythm is the regular repetition of a beat, accent, or rise and fall in dance, music, and language. The word comes from the Greek word *rhythmos*, meaning *measured motion*. In dancing, rhythmic patterns and variations are created by physical motions of shorter or longer duration and of greater or lesser emphasis. In music, rhythmic figures and phrases come from an arrangement of tones, organized according to their duration and stresses, or accents. Rhythm is the most primitive element of music. Unlike the other elements, it can exist independently. Any sound, even noise, can establish a rhythm. In language, rhythm is the rise and fall of sounds according to syllables, vocal inflections, physical speech accents, and pauses. Modern English and German are of the language type that has physically stressed, or accented, syllables. Greek and Latin use long and short syllables or inflections to give stress.

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