

Glossary of Common Terms Found in String Music

Reprinted from "Fundamentals for Strings" appendix in Masters thesis by Albert Jeung

<i>A Tempo</i>	Return to the original tempo or previous tempo
<i>Accelerando</i>	Gradually get faster
<i>Adagietto</i>	A little faster than adagio
<i>Adagio</i>	Slow
<i>Agitato</i>	Agitated
<i>Allegro</i>	Lively, quick
<i>Allegretto</i>	A little slower than allegro
<i>Allegro ma non troppo</i>	Allegro but not too much
<i>Andante</i>	Walking tempo, nor fast nor too slow
<i>Andantino</i>	A little faster than andante
<i>Animato</i>	Animated
<i>Arco</i>	With the bow
<i>Assai</i>	Very
<i>Attaca</i>	To the next section without interruption
<i>Cadenza</i>	Solo section, passage
<i>Cantabile</i>	In a singing style
<i>Col legno</i>	Play with the stick of the bow
<i>Con arco</i>	With the bow
<i>Con moto</i>	With motion
<i>Con sordino</i>	With the mute
<i>Detaché</i>	Legato bow changes and notes—not separated
<i>Dolce</i>	Sweetly
<i>Largetto</i>	A little faster than largo
<i>Largo</i>	Very slow
<i>Leggiero</i>	Lightly
<i>L'istesso tempo</i>	Continue with the same tempo or beat
<i>Louré</i>	Slurred notes with space between them to be played in a legato manner
<i>Ma non troppo</i>	Not too much
<i>Marcato</i>	Accented, heavy notes
<i>Martelé</i>	Accented, heavy notes
<i>Meno mosso</i>	Less motion
<i>Morendo</i>	Dying away
<i>Non divisi</i>	Play all the notes
<i>Obbligato</i>	A second part or accompaniment to solo parts
<i>Ossia</i>	An alternative way to play a section
<i>Pesante</i>	Heavily
<i>Piu</i>	More
<i>Pún mosso</i>	More motion
<i>Pizzicato</i>	Strings to be plucked
<i>Poco á poco</i>	Little by little
<i>Portato</i>	Slurred notes with space between them played in a legato manner
<i>Presto</i>	Very fast
<i>Prestissimo</i>	As fast as possible
<i>Ritenuo</i>	Slower than the previous section
<i>Rubato</i>	Taking a little more time on some notes for musical expression
<i>Saltato, saltando</i>	Off the string at the tip of the bow in a ricochet, thrown manner
<i>Sautillé</i>	Fast, short notes to be played off the string, but close to the string
<i>Scherzo</i>	In a playful style
<i>Segue</i>	Continue without interruption
<i>Sempre</i>	Always—continue bowing, tempo, or style as before
<i>Senza sordino</i>	Without the mute
<i>Sostenuto</i>	Sustained
<i>Spiccato</i>	To be played off the string
<i>Staccato</i>	Very strong, short notes on the string
<i>Stringendo</i>	Increasing the tempo suddenly and continually
<i>Sul ponticello</i>	To be played near the bridge
<i>Sul tasto</i>	To be played on the fingerboard
<i>Tacet</i>	Do not play
<i>Tempo primo</i>	Return to the first tempo of the movement or piece
<i>Tenuto</i>	Hold out to the fullest value of the note
<i>Tremelo</i>	Play as many notes as fast as possible, usually at the tip of the bow
<i>Tutti</i>	All play accompaniment part
<i>Vivace</i>	Lively, quick
<i>Vivo</i>	Lively