

I can choose  
some good  
**dynamics**  
for my piece



# ‘Dynamics’

is the musical word for **volume**

**Dynamics** tell us

how **loud** or

**soft** to play

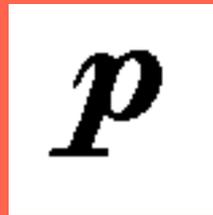


We use **Italian** words  
and special **symbols** for the  
**dynamics**



This is the  
symbol for  
**forte**

It tells us to play **loud**



This is the  
symbol for  
**piano**

It tells us to play **soft**

# Did you know...

Sometimes it can be a bit confusing that piano means soft, when it is also the instrument we're playing too!

Actually, the formal name for the piano (the instrument!) is the 'pianoforte'

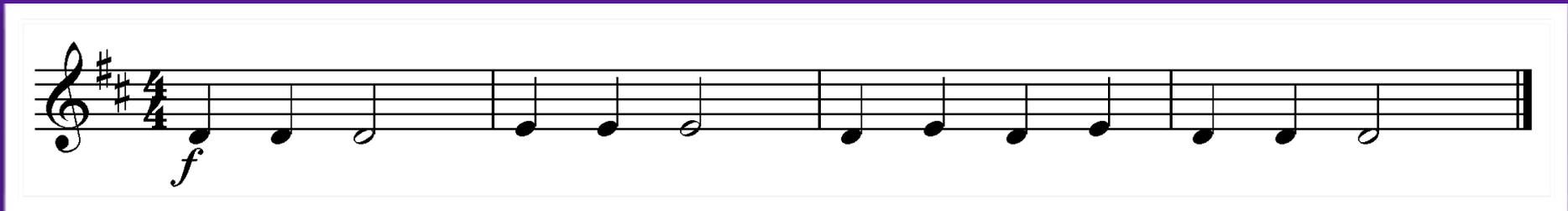
So when we translate it into English, the instrument is called the 'soft-loud'!

This is because it was the first keyboard instrument that could play both loud and soft

Similar instruments at the time, could only play at one volume

Time  
to  
play!

Let's practise!

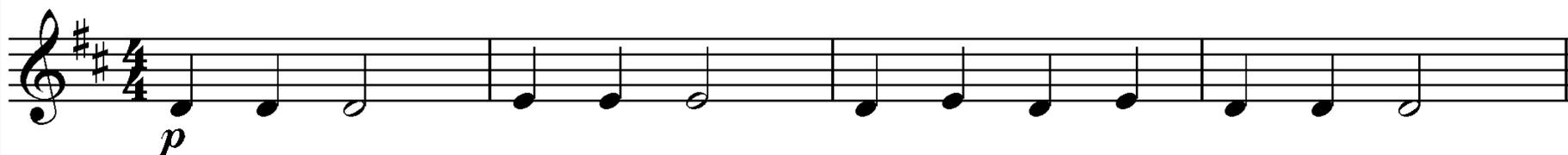


*f*

The forte symbol  
tells us to play loud.

Time  
to  
play!

Let's practise!



The piano symbol  
tells us to play softly.

**Dynamics help to make a piece more interesting**

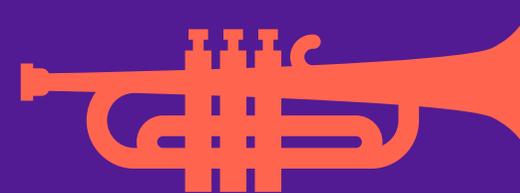
**They can also help us to play expressively**

**What dynamic might you use to convey anger?**



**What dynamic might you use to make a calm sound?**

Listen to how these  
composers used dynamics  
in their music



In the Hall of the Mountain King  
from Peer Gynt by Grieg



Nimrod from Enigma Variations  
by Elgar

Slavonic  
Dance  
number 8  
by Dvorak

Can Can from Orpheus in the Underworld  
by Offenbach

Dynamics can also make repeated phrases sound more interesting

Try playing this tune without dynamics first  
Then try it with the dynamics

A musical score for a 4/4 piece, consisting of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, followed by a quarter rest, then D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, and C6. The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and follows the same melody. The third staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic, then a piano (*p*) dynamic marking, and follows the same melody. The fourth staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and follows the same melody, ending with a double bar line.

Your turn!



Play it first to help you find any patterns in the music. Once you've found the patterns, think about what dynamics you could make each section to make the music interesting

Two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff contains 8 measures of music, and the second staff contains 8 measures, starting with a measure rest. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes.

More?

*pp*

*p*

*mp*

*mf*

*f*

*ff*

Pianissimo

Piano

Mezzo  
Piano

Mezzo  
Forte

Forte

Fortissimo

Very soft

Soft

Moderately  
soft

Moderately  
loud

Loud

Very loud

