

A Preferential Introduction to WESTERN MUSIC for EFL Students

VOCABULARY: band, artist, singer, composer, musician, instrument, instrumental, style, (sub)genre, rhythm, beat, melody, acoustic, electric, lyrics, lip-synch, album, Pop Charts /Top40, live music, concert, bootleg, teenybopper, boy band, "one-hit wonder", hit song/album, catchy, (Sth. gets) stuck in Sb.'s head, know Sth. by heart, (Be) into Sth., dig Sth., feel Vs. not feel Sth., record, vinyl, cassette tape, compact disc (CD), streaming service, MP3, playlist, mixtape, remix, round, verse, chorus, music snob, hipster, (music) scene, record label, collection VS. library, pretentious, backup band/singers

Classical (Pre-20th Century): Includes subgenres baroque, renaissance, opera, etc. Some call more recent orchestral music "modern classical" or "avant-garde" farther below. Very serious stuff!
Examples of composers: Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Handel, Bach, Chopin, Mendelsson, Mussorgsky, Ravel, Bizet, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Coplin, Haydn, Strauss, Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Liszt, etc.

A Cappella: The opposite extreme of orchestral music is made using *only* the human voice as an instrument. A cappella groups are very popular on college campuses and TV singing pageantry shows. The Youtube era has ensured *every* popular song has an a cappella version. Beatboxing is a percussive variation. Examples: Chanticleer, Hyperpotamus, Rockapella, and various "barbershop" groups.

Easy Listening: Includes polkas, waltzes, "show tunes" (from vaudeville acts and musicals), lounge music, as well as some "new age", smooth jazz, and ambient music. Some refer to these styles as "background" music or disparagingly as "elevator" music. It is never loud, but many still find it annoying! Most U.S. cities have one or more radio stations which play these kinds of music, but they are usually on AM radio, not in "stereo" sound, and not listened to by young people. In Asia, however, it seems softer Western tunes can be appreciated by young and old alike. Examples of artists: Lawrence Welk, Frankie Yankovic, Kenny G, John Tesh, Richard Claderman, Englebert Humperdinck, Tom Jones, Kenny Williams, Mannheim Steamroller, Tangerine Dream, Air, George Benson, David Sanborn, The Yellowjackets, Jeff Lorber, Elton John, Michael Bolton, Celine Dion, George Michael, James Taylor, Harold Budd, Spyrogyra, Enya, Steve Roach, Yanni, Steve Halpern, Shadowfax.

Gospel/Religious: Includes hymns, spirituals, and any other style of music whose lyrics are intended for worship. Many religious groups in the West have given funding for record labels and radio stations to make Christian music in the popular styles of rock and roll, hip-hop, and even electronic music and heavy metal. This is not to say that there are many churches which play loud popular music but often a reaction to the themes of contemporary pop music being offensive or simply not "wholesome". Examples of artists: Mahalia Jackson, Rosetta Tharpe, Aaron Neville, Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, Sonik Boom of Love, Cloud2Ground, Stryper, Jars of Clay, Creed, Whitecross, DC Talk, Half-Handed Cloud, Danielson Famile, Vocal Union, Third Day, Newsboys, Bebe Winans, Amy Grant.

Jazz: Includes ragtime (early 20th century), big band (1910's-40's), swing, bop, ska, etc. So-called "free jazz" might be better categorized as experimental music. It is one of few fully American styles. Examples of bands/musicians: Sousa, Count Basie, Miles Davis, Cab Calloway, Billie Holiday, Sun Ra, Carl Tjader, Dizzie Gillespie, TheLonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Lester Young, Charles Mingus, Louis Armstrong, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Jelly Roll Morton, Johnny Mathis, Oscar Peterson, Dave Brubeck, Ornette Coleman, Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, Chet Baker, Anita O'Day, Wayne Shorter, John Coltrane. Newer jazz acts: Adhds, The Bad Plus, Bazooka, Gold Sparkle Band, Hotel X, Maetar, Misinterprotato, George Pajon Jr., Aaron Parks, Trio Poursuite, Erik Truffaz, Build, Isotope 217, The Thing, John Zorn, Matthew Shipp, Wynton Marsalis. So-called "fusion" music is a term which may be fading from use—it attempts to incorporate instruments, techniques, and sounds from all styles into individual songs, with some sounding more like jazz, rock, blues or others. A lack of prominent fusion artists to list here may contribute to its demise.

Folk: The "music of the people" usually uses only acoustic instruments. As noted in the last section, traditional music of any culture can also be called folk music. Examples of bands/artists: Bob Dylan, Nick Drake, Damien Jurado, Jack Johnson, The Fugs, Simon & Garfunkel, Kings of Convenience, Aimee Mann, Joni Mitchell, Cat Stevens, Donovan, Buffalo Springfield, Burl Ives, Slim Whitman, Arlo Guthrie, Gordon Lightfoot, John Prine, Janis Ian, David Wilcox, John Fahey, Richie Havens, Pete Seeger Damon McMahon, Songs: Ohia, M. Ward, Sin Ropas, Nina Nastasia, Liz Durrett, Chad Van Gaalen, Townes Van Zandt, Joan Baez, Woody Guthrie, Grant-Lee Phillips, Pete Seeger, Robbie Fulks, John Fahey, The Weavers, Indigo Girls, Leo Kottke, Bert Jansch, Phil Ochs, Dock Boggs.

Country: Includes bluegrass music (also can be folk music). This is most popular in the American South, and not surprisingly, in rural areas throughout the USA. "Twang" makes it unique & identifiable. Examples of bands/artists: Hank Williams, Garth Brooks, Nickel Creek, Crooked Still, Dolly Parton, Lucinda Williams, Patsy Cline, Wilco, Travis Tritt, Billy Ray Cyrus, Dixie Chicks, Ronnie Milsap, Kenny Rogers, Conway Twitty, George Strait, Randy Travis, Shania Twain, LeAnn Rimes, Vince Gill, Brooks & Dunn, Alabama, The Judds, Brooks&Dunn, Steve Earle, Willie Nelson, Loretta Lynn, Toby Keith.

Blues: Includes "delta blues" (acoustic), "Chicago blues" (with electric guitars), and rhythm and blues (said to be the father of rock music). Blues songs often talk about having "the blues" (being unhappy) for various reasons, and other topics tend also to be sad—even turning happy situations into blues songs. Jazz and blues are both very American. Examples of artists: Robert Johnson, Leadbelly, John Lee Hooker, Stevie Ray Vaughn, The Black Keys, Buddy Guy, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, Johnny Guitar Watson, Creole Kings, Fats Domino, Etta James, Little Richard, Ike & Tina Turner, Memphis Minnie, Son House, Mississippi John Hurt, Bo Carter, Skip James, Timber Timbre, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Blues Traveler, No Neck Blues Band, Bessie Smith, Albert King.

Rock and Roll: The most popular style of music from the 1950's to 1990's, some say it is "dead"—others say it will never die! Elvis Presley is considered the "King of Rock and Roll". The Beatles are widely believed to be the most popular band of all time, and The Rolling Stones have been performing concerts for the longest period of time. Most rock fans prefer a particular style or era of the music, as evidenced in the All Music Guide's glee in splitting over 100 of them. While the stereotypical rocker is male, (and almost all the bands below are also), there are many notable female rock artists and women-fronted bands such as Patti Smith, Joan Jett, Stevie Nicks, Alanis Morissette, Sheryl Crow, No Doubt, Siouxsie Sioux, Sleater-Kinney, Hole, bis, L7, Rilo Kiley, Cat Power, Liz Phair, Kittie, Andrea Alvarez, Basia Bulat, Brazilian Girls, Anna Calvi, The Gossip, PJ Harvey, Kacey Johansing, Kaki King, Komeda, Midaircondo, Amy Millan, My Brightest Diamond, Scout Niblett, Soley, Papercranes, Plumerai, Shelley Short, Sia, Superhumanoids,, Maria Taylor, Toenut, The Tuna Helpers, Velocette, Veruca Salt, Yva Tania, White Hinterland, Woodbine, Y La Bamba and countless others.

Oldies (1950's-60's): Elvis, Beach Boys, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly, Bo Diddly, Bill Haley, The Everly Brothers, Carl Perkins, The Kinks, Roy Orbison, The Kingsmen, Link Wray

Surf Rock (1950's-Present): The Mermen, Red Elvises, Laika & the Cosmonauts, Dick Dale, The Chantays, The Surfaris, The Atlantics, Chee-Shays, Jerry Cole, Al Casey, Shimmering Stars.

Classic Rock (1960's-1970's): Zepplin, Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, The Eagles, Jefferson Airplane, The Who, The Yardbirds, Fleetwood Mac, Aerosmith, Bob Seger, Ma, Bon Jovi, The War on Drugs

Glam Rock (1970's-1980's): David Bowie, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Prince, Roxy Music, Suede, Placebo, Spacehog, The Auteurs, Gary Glitter, Sweet, Velvet Underground, Brian Eno, The Darkness

Progressive (AKA "Prog") Rock (1970's-present): Moody Blues, King Crimson, Wishbone Ash, Silver Apples, Jethro Tull, Can, ELO, Moody Blues, Queen, Rush, Yes, ELP, Dream Theater

Jam Bands, Psychedelic Rock: The Grateful Dead, Phish, Pink Floyd, Allman Brothers, Widespread Panic, Dave Matthews Band, Medeski Martin & Wood, Dengue Fever, Traffic, Love, Electric Prunes

Folk Rock: Neil Young, My Morning Jacket, Ani DiFranco, Leonard Cohen, Richard Thompson, Crosby Stills & Nash, The Byrds, Johnny Cash, Ry Cooder, Devendra Banhart, Rodriguez, Fleet Foxes

Soft Rock: John Denver, The Police, Matchbox 20, Jackson Browne, Richard Marx, Corey Hart, Genesis, Loggins & Messina, Hall & Oates, Supertramp, Steve Miller Band, Huey Lewis & The News

New Wave (Late 1970's- Early 1980's adds keyboards): XTC, Devo, B-52's, The Cars, Elvis Costello, Duran Duran, Eurythmics, Talking Heads, Flock of Seagulls, Adam Ant, Blondie, The The

Alternative Rock (1990's-present): The Cure, Radiohead, Coldplay, Primus, Violent Femmes, Superfurry Animals, Doves, Echobrain, Cake, Beck, Ocas, Sublime, Spacehog, Superfurry Animals, REM

Chamber Pop (rock music using classical instruments w/ guitars): Decibully, Spheres, Head of Femur, Devotchka, Aloha, Aluminum Group, Pernice Brothers, Belle & Sebastian, Patrick Phelan,

Olivia Tremor Control, Alamo Race Track, Big Scary, The National, Vampire Weekend, Yeasayer, Hollow & Akimbo, Caesar, Canon Blue, Grizzly Bear, Field Music, Freelance Whales, AmPop,

Bodies of Water, Bon Iver, Mad Gregs, The Hidden Cameras, Fruit Bats, Loch Lomond, Lost in the Trees, Menomena, Mew, Pas/Cal, Pale Young Gentlemen, Rheostatics, Salako, Peter Von Poehl

Emo: Day Real Estate, The Promise Ring, Fugazi, Get Up Kids, Weezer, Braid, Jimmy Eat World, Fall Out Boy, Jets to Brazil, Joan of Arc, Castor, Chisel, Clinic, Statistics, The Heliosequence

Shoegaze: Starflyer 59, My Bloody Valentine, Lush, Ride, Slowdive, Galaxie 500, A.R. Kane, Spacemen 3, Cranes, Jesus and Mary Chain, Should, darkdarkhead, Cocteau Twins, Swervedriver

Garage: The White Stripes, The Strokes, French Kicks, Caesars, Killers, Modey Lemon, The Hives, 13th Floor Elevators, The Nuggets, The Kingsmen, The Kills, Bloc Party, Guided by Voices, Spoon

Grunge: Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr., Soundgarden, Alice in Chains, Mudhoney, Bush, Candlebox, Foo Fighters, Everclear, Melvins, Mother Love Bone, Stone Temple Pilots, Smashing Pumpkins

Indie Rock: Yo La Tengo, Fiery Furnaces, Of Montreal, Arcade Fire, The Walkmen, Sea and Cake, Decemberists, Blonde Redhead, Dodos, Telekinesis!, The Wrens, His Name Is Alive, Starlight Mints

Math Rock: Pinback, Modest Mouse, Turnerjoy, Polvo, Slint, 90 Day Men, U.S. Maple, Euphone, Cul de Sac, A Minor Forest, Chavez, Ativin, Iceburn, Trunk Federation, Volcano!, Ester Drang

Punk Rock (Late 1970's-present): The Ramones, New York Dolls, Blink 182, Rancid, Propagandhi, Pansy Division, Social Distortion, NOFX, Iggy Pop/Stooges, Buzzcocks, Richard Hell, The Clash,

The Jam, Sex Pistols, Wire, Crass, Dead Boys, Swell Maps, Pere Ubu, Mission of Burma, The Fall, Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Misfits, Les Savy Fav, Mekons, Uz Jsme Doma, Death, Lagwagon

Ska/Swing (upbeat, brass-heavy dance music sometimes grouped with Punk): Cherry Poppin' Daddies, The Toasters, Squirrel Nut Zippers, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Hepcat, Aquabats, The Specials

Metal (Late 1970's-present) & Nu-Rock/Hard Rock: Metallica, Aerosmith, Judas Priest, Black Sabbath, Quiet Riot, Megadeth, Van Halen, Yngwie Malmsteen, Bon Jovi, Faith No More, Tomahawk,

KoRn, Slipknot, Sevendust, Filter, Kid Rock, Motley Crue, Poison, L.A. Guns, Warrant, Cinderella, Def Leppard, Great White, Skid Row, Winger, Boston, Foreigner, Kiss, Cheap Trick, Styx, AC/DC,

Rob Zombie, Alice Cooper, Opeh, Rage Against the Machine, Evanescence, Kid Rock, Steve Vai, Ayreon, Tourniquet, In Flames, Transatlantic, Extreme, Twisted Sister, Dokken, Nickelback

Grindcore/Speed Metal: Slayer, Carcass, Anal Cunt, Godflesh, Brutal Truth, Anthrax, Motorhead, Sepultura, Voivod, Carnivore, Flotsam & Jetsam, Cattle Decapitation, Carcass, Napalm Death, Phobia

"Urban Music" (Funk, Soul, R&B): Most popular in the 1960's and 1970's in urban areas, these are thought to have brought hip-hop and rap into being much in the same way that rhythm and blues preceded rock and roll. "Motown" of 1950's Detroit was the major influence on these artists, often featuring African American bands and vocalists. James Brown is considered the "Godfather of Soul". Popular women singers of these styles are often called "divas". Examples: Isaac Hayes, Parliament/Funkadelic, R. Kelly, Barry White, Seal, Marvin Gaye, Al Green, Aretha Franklin, The Four Tops, Curtis Mayfield, Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding, Smokey Robinson, Sly & The Family Stone, Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Kool & The Gang, Earth Wind & Fire, Boyz II Men, Toni Braxton, Whitney Houston, Lauryn Hill, Janet Jackson, Sade, TLC, Babyface, Anita Baker, Luther Vandross, Bill Withers, The Temptations, The Supremes, The Miracles, The Marvelettes, The Drifters, Mary J. Blige, Enourls Barkley, Nino Moschella, PM Dawn, Slicker, Soweto Kinch, Us3, Yerba Buena, The O'Jays, Rick James, Brian McKnight, Corinne Bailey Rae, Queen Latifah, Rihanna, Alicia Keys

Disco: A much-maligned style of music, disco in the Western sense was very popular in the 1970's and early 1980's, growing largely out of urban music to be the style of choice for dance halls. Even in these years, however, T-shirts with the words "DISCO SUCKS" were widely worn. Although disco is said to have "died" in the 1980's, many in Asia still use the term to describe high-bpm electronic dance music (rave music, mostly) played in dance halls, though the music sounds very different from the style of music which coined the term "disco". Examples of Artists: BeeGees, Jackson 5, Village People, Donna Summer, KC & the Sunshine Band, B.T. Express, Diana Ross, Boney M., Sister Sledge, Sylvester, Gloria Gaynor, Trammms, Pointer Sisters, Lipps Inc., Chic, Van McCoy, La Flavour.

Hip-Hop/Rap: This is currently the most popular style of music in most Western countries. Bands often include an MC (who sings or raps) and a DJ who plays records or makes songs from "samples", and a "producer" who mixes and guides the production of each song and album. As it is so popular, some prefer to distinguish from "hip-pop" made for popular music radio stations and "underground" music which tends to celebrate the artistry and roots of the music. Turntablism, one of the newest styles of music (in which the primary or only instrument is a record player/turntable on which vinyl records are intentionally and rhythmically "scratched"), is included here. Examples of artists: Run DMC, Dr. Dre, Grandmaster Flash, Jurassic 5, Aesop Rock, Dizzee Rascal, Roots Manuva, Brotha Lynch Hung, Kool Keith, Tribe Called Quest, Digable Planets, NWA, Arrested Development, De La Soul, Busta Rhymes, Rahzell, LL Cool J, Public Enemy, Mos Def, Missy Elliott, Remy Ma, Lil' Kim, Foxy Brown, Nicki Minaj, Snoop Dogg, Beastie Boys, KRS-One, Notorious B.I.G., Tupac Shakur, Wu-Tang Clan, Fabolous, Antipop Consortium/Airborn Audio/Beans, Marley Marl, Black Sheep, Coolio, Chuck D, Del tha Funkee Homosapien, DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince, Heavy D, Funkmaster Flex, House of Pain, Wyclef Jean, Jeru the Damaja, Jungle Brothers, Master P, Redman, The Roots, Mobb Deep, 2 Live Crew, Young MC, Gang Starr, Count Bass-D, Prince Paul, The Pharcyde, MC Solaar, Asian Dub Foundation, Bigg Jus, Brooklyn Knight, Busdriver, Curse Ov Dialect, daKAH Hip-Hop Orchestra, Hieroglyphics, Honeycut, Infesticons, Jel, Kid Koala, Nuuk Posse, Omid, Prefuse-73, Quro, Radioinactive, The Rammellzee, Roots Manuva, Rob Swift, TTC, Kendrick Lamar.

Electronic: Like rock and roll, there are many kinds of totally different-sounding electronic music, which is any kind created primarily by machines such as keyboards, drum machines, samplers and sequencers. Electronic musicians are sometimes called "knob-twiddlers" because they often make their music by adjusting the knobs on these machines, rather than using any traditional instruments. Popular electronic music in the 1980's and 1990's was often called "techno", "electro" (in the UK), or "electronica" (by record labels in the USA eager to open the U.S. music market, which generally preferred rock and hip-hop), though all of these names have become rare as distinct styles of electronic music emerged and developed. The term "dance music" is highly temporary and misleading, as almost all kinds of music have been used for and can be danced to. The kinds of electronic music which today's globetrotting "superstar DJ's" play in sets around the world is more accurately called rave, trance, and house music, and these sound quite different from other subgenres, most notably for the characteristically thumping 4/4 electronic bass drum beat. Pioneers of electronic music include Raymond Scott in the 1950's, Kraftwerk, Brian Eno, and Steve Reich in the 1970's. It wasn't until the 1980's that electronic music actually resembled anything "popular". Dubstep, at the time of writing, was becoming young people's choice for confusing old people with new kinds of popular music, with flagship artist Skrillex leading the way. Brogan Bently is softer but still edgy.

Ambient/Ilbient: Boards of Canada, Terre Thaumelitz, Christ, Hoedh, Global Communication, The Orb, Single Cell Orchestra, Tim Hecker, Future Sound of London, Biosphere, Victor Bermon, Kopernik
Drum & Bass, Jungle: Roni Size/Reprazent, Goldie, Boymerang, Westside Chemical, Amon Tobin, Spring Heel Jack, Aphrodite, Adam F, Grooverider, Random, TRS-80, High Contrast, Gfs, Deigo Boymerang, Leon Lamont, Pieter K, Etherwood, Photek, Chase & Status, Wilkinson, Sigma, Rudimental, Netsky, Ben Neill, Friction, The Qemists, Brookes Brothers, Big Bud, LTJ Bukem, Noisia
IDM, Glitch, Laptop: Aphex Twin, Autechre, Plaid, Jega, Wauvenfold, Com.A, Brothomstates, Prefuse 73, Solenoid, The Black Dog, Nobukazu Takemura, Carl Craig, LFO, Mouse on Mars, B12, u-ziq, Plastikman, Pole, Safety Scissors, Recloose, As One, We, Spectre, Slotek, Mr. Neveax, Datcha, Wagon Christ, Osymyso, Dino Felipe, Byetone, Binray, Broken Spindles, Kim Hiorthoy, Ital Tek, Yppah
Lounge/Downbeat: Les Hommes, Tosca, Telepopmusik, Lemon Jelly, Howie B, Zero 7, Bonobo, Fila Brazillia, Jazzanova, David Holmes, Troublemakers, Si Begg, Butti 49, Four Tet, Cobblestone Jazz
Rave, Trance, Big Beat, and House: Paul Van Dyk, Sasha & Digweed, 808 State, Felix Da Housecat, BT, Underworld, Fatboy Slim, Moby, Safri Duo, Deep Dish, Paul Oakenfold, Astralasia, Hess Is More, ATB, Sven Vath, Christopher Lawrence, CJ Bolland, Art of Trance, Koxbox, Spicelab, Juno Reactor, Eat Static, Astral Projection, Jam & Spoon, L.S.G., ALTZ, Deadly Avenger, The Field
Synth-Pop (Keyboard-based with pop vocals): Ladytron, Laptop, Stereolab, Add N to X, The Clears, The Notwist, Björk, Gary Numan, New Order, Think Tree, Moby, Noondag Underground, Goldfrapp, Arsenal, Baldwin Brothers, Magnetic Fields/Future Bible Heroes, Architecture in Helsinki, Etienne Charry, Dntel, The Faint, Handsome Furs, Lansing-Dreiden, Fol Chen, Le Bombe, Maps, M83, MGMT, Mount Sims, Neon Indian, Phantogram, Nurses, +/-, RH+, The Show Is the Rainbow, Son Lux, Super System, Sybarite, Telephone Tel Aviv, Trabandt, We Are Enfant Terrible, Hot Chip
Trip Hop (A slower, quieter combination of urban and electronic music): Massive Attack, Portishead, Red Snapper, Pressure Drop, Sneaker Pimps, Stereotyp, Lionrock, Baby Nambos, Tricky, Pest, DJ Shadow, DJ Spooky, DJ Food, Lamb, Here, Jamie Lidell, Ernesto, Woven, UNKLE., Saint Etienne, Garbage, Gusgus, The Federation, Terranova, Morcheeba, Thievery Corporation, Death in Vegas

Dark/Dystopian Music: In contrast to most music which is usually happy or sad, several styles go out of their way to express dark, brooding feelings, anger, and evil things. Most of these are similar to rock and roll in sound, but often add electronic sounds and/or "dark" subject matter such as death, disaster, and hopelessness—even the apocalypse. Don't let dark themes scare you away, though!
Goth: Birthday Party, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Love Spirals Downwards, This Mortal Coil, Psychic TV, Cabaret Voltaire, Legendary Pink Dots, Black Tape for a Blue Girl, Voltaire, Joy Division, Bauhaus, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Xymox, Christian Death, Alien Sex Fiend, Love and Rockets, Peter Murphy, Sisters of Mercy, Flesh for Lulu, Piano Magic.

Industrial: Nine Inch Nails, Foetus, Consolidated, The The, Meat Beat Manifesto, Acid Horse, Snog, Ministry, Hednoize, Oneiroid Psychosis, Coil, Nitzer Ebb, Front242, Einsturzende Neubauten
EBM/Darkwave: Covenant, Spahn Ranch, Wumpscut, KMFDM, VNV Nation, Cleen, Frontline Assembly, Kevorkian Death Cycle, Laibach, Revolting Cocks, Die Krupps

Black Metal, Glam/Art Metal: Tool, Marilyn Manson, Gwar, Rammstein, Mr. Bungle, Tenacious D, At the Gates, Cannibal Corpse, Cradle of Filth, Deicide, Isis, Gwar, The Book of Knots, Eskorzo, Sleepytime Gorilla Museum, Stolen Babies, Dimmu Borgir, Cthonic, Tiamat, Myrkur, Emperor, Venom, Watain, Darkthrone, Immortal, Oranssi Pazuzu, Celtic Frost, Gorgoroth, Bathory

Experimental: Here we get into the far reaches of sound, beyond what most would call "bad" music and into what many would not recognize as music at all. These do not follow "traditional" song structures, instrumentation, or recording methods, and the majority do not have lyrics. Much "modern classical" composition can fall under this label. Those who listen primarily or exclusively to experimental music, and they are a small minority of the population, are often interested in hearing something new, different, and unpredictable, often deriding popular music as too simplistic, formulaic, or otherwise not interesting. Experimental music is difficult to find in stores or on the radio, as comparatively few people buy or listen to it. Improvisation, a technique of unplanned or unwritten music often without structure, is shared with some forms of jazz. For those who might dismiss it on the wrong side of the "music VS. noise" divide, remember that all styles started with experimentation!

Modern Classical, Minimalist, Avant-Garde: Glass, Kronos Quartet, Steve Reich, Alarm Will Sound, John Cage, Frank Zappa, Terry Riley, John Adams, Yoko Ono, Cerberus Shoal, The Boxhead Ensemble, DAAU, Dominic Frasca, Hauschka, Diego Amador, Aufgang, Lars Hornthved, Johan Johansson, Todor Kobakov, Cliff Martinez, Gregory Spears, J.G. Thirlwell (Manorexia, Steroid Maximus), David Throssell, Yann Tiersen, yMusic, Henryk Gorecki, Anohni, Tod Dockstader, Robert Ashley, Pierre Boulez, Zbigniew Karkowski, Bernard Parmegiani, Elliott Carter, Pauline Oliveros
Post-Rock: Godspeed You! Black Emperor, A Silver Mount Zion, Bark Psychosis, Esmerine, Explosions in the Sky, Octopus Project, Cerberus Shoal, Tortoise, Low, Battles, Brokeback, Concentrick, Do Make Say Think, Early Day Miners, Errors, FCS North, From Monument to Masses, Gastr del Sol, Glorie, Japancakes, Kanada, Macha, The Most Serene Republic, Out Hud!!!, The Sterling, Ui
Instrumental, Guitar-Based: Algemorn, Beaten by Them, Character, Cheval de Frise, Darediablo, Dirty Three, Hella, Hermatovore, Lakuna, Larval, Octafish, Oya Yang, Secret Chiefs 3, Kanada
Sound Collage/Pastiche: Negativland, Steinski, Evolution Control Committee, The Books, People Like Us, Yasuhiro Otani, Headless Household, The Residents, Elders of Zion, Girl Talk, IQU, Kaada
Electronic, Noise: Merzbow, Oval, Aube, Codec Soleil, Electric Company, Moscow Coup Attempt, Chrome, Government Alpha, C.C.C.C., Main, Datcha'i, Scorn, Colongib & Christopher, Oneohtrix Point Never, Per Mission, Silver Apples, Thumbtack Smoothie, Zammuto, Dan Deacon, Xiu Xiu, Thumbtack Smoothie, Jean Michel Jarre, Conrad Schnitzler, Shamall, Jeff Pearce, Alex Moulton
Other Noisy or Experimental Stuff: Liars, Legion of Two, Lichens, Need New Body, Parts & Labor, Pest, Philosophy Major, Pram, A Quiet Revolution, Squonk Opera, Text, When So-called "outsider" music may also fall into this category, as a reaction by "hipsters" and others to what is seen as "overproduction" of contemporary popular music. Some see a need to return to what is "real" artistic and emotional expression and thus are drawn to eccentric musicians who often have an aesthetic all their own, either in ignorance or defiance of what is popular or, more objectively, technically proficient. "Song Poems" set regular folks' poetry to music, often with "outsider" production quality. Prominent outsider musicians (if such a status is possible) include Frank Zappa, Captain Beefheart, Jandek, Daniel Johnston, Momus, The Shaggs, Half Japanese, Wesley Willis, Kimya Dawson, Atom & His Package, Beat Happening, and others so obscure that writing their names here would diminish their cult status.

Popular: Popular music in the West since the 1990's has been a mix of different styles, but hip-hop has certainly become more popular on the "Top 40" charts and at parties. Artists unable to sustain their popularity are labeled "one-hit wonders." U.S. college radio still doggedly calls rock music "pop." Michael Jackson, the most popular artist of the 1980's has been called the "King of Pop". Popular music in a given time/place tends to be what "sells well" with teenyboppers. Chances are, if a song is sung by someone on stage at a singing pageant (as every country in the world seems to do) or in a karaoke bar, it is considered "pop" by someone. Obviously, popular music changes over time in a given country and culture. Almost all the styles listed above were the most popular in a given time period. Today's Western pop music, with examples listed below since approximately the 1980's, tends to be popular for shorter and shorter periods of time --many of the examples below were extremely popular for a while, but may now be seen as "out of style", "dated", or even just as extremely "uncool" as they once were popular. Note also "Weird Al" Yankovic's career as the most famous artist to write parodies (parodize) popular songs of every era. Examples: Madonna, Jay-Z, Backstreet Boys, N-SYNC, One Direction, Eminem, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Hillary Duff, Billy Ray & Miley Cyrus, Taylor Swift, Cher, Justin Timberlake, Beyonce, Mariah Carey, Black-Eyed Peas, Ricky Martin, Salt 'n' Pepa, MC Hammer, New Kids on the Block, Snow, Right Said Fred, OutKast, Ace of Base, Vanilla Ice, 50 Cent, The Monkeys, ABBA. Unfortunately, most people in any country listen mostly or even *only* to pop music (i.e. only the most popular songs)--don't be one of them!

World/Regional: Different Western cultures and areas often have their own special styles of music. What any country calls its traditional folk music would be included in "world" music. Especially popular styles include reggae (from Jamaica, most notably Bob Marley), salsa (from Mexico), and tango (from Argentina). Afrobeat from the likes of Fela Kuti is becoming more and more popular (and imitated) by Western musicians such as Antibalas, Afrobeatdown, Nomo, and Chicago Afrobeat Project. It is not possible to list all the musical styles of every country! But try to listen to it!!!!

An Opinionated Word on Karaoke Music: Music made specifically to be sung along to is called karaoke and is generally popular music with the singer taken out of the mix. In Asia it seems commonly to be a popular folk or traditional song set to a keyboard melody, often without other instruments, and often available for sale on VCD's in the 1990s-2000s and for play in karaoke bars. A number of factors have contributed to karaoke being somewhat less common in the West. One is a consideration of media: VCD's simply never existed in the USA; after cassette tapes, CDs without video remained the most popular medium to get music until the age of online streaming. Another is the concept of the concert and venues: bars in the USA tend to prefer "live" music played by bar bands, and it is more common to go out to concerts at night to hear others (who are likely to be professionals) sing than to go out and sing with one's friends. Of course, plenty of people at concerts sing along to the music, but not many people would call this karaoke. "Human development" scholars and economists would also team up to suggest that the West, being at a "more advanced" stage of development (i.e. richer), places more importance on self expression (i.e. through art and music) than less developed countries, and Westerners generally have a greater portion of their income available for entertainment. Live and different styles of music simply cost more, but a country like Japan seems comfortable enjoying both live and karaoke music. What do *you* think of karaoke culture? Why do some people like such "strange" music? Why do people like different kinds of music at all?

No two people will agree on all of the above, the divisions, and above all what is "good" or "bad" music! Many people--musicians especially--don't like to categorize music at all. Each of these styles can be and has been treated at much greater length in books and on the internet; if you're interested, get into it! Above all, broaden your horizons! In the past, much or most music was nearly impossible to hear, but the main advantage of internet streaming services is to bring less popular (but no less good and likely more interesting) music to all corners of the earth. As with movies and other media, though, if you pirate it, the people who made the art might not be able to continue making it! Some of this was compiled with the aid of the All Music Guide (www.allmusic.com). Apologies if your favorite artist wasn't listed! For lists unlimited by the constraints of paper, see also the author's website: www.omnifoo.info/pages/Favorite%20Music.html Please direct questions and comments (disagreements and debates) to: omniscientfool@tom.com