BPM stands online metronome for beats per minute. It measures how fast music moves. With a tempo of 60 BPM there is one beat per second; at 120 BPM there are two.

Typical BPM ranges

Ballads usually sit between 60 and 80 BPM. Pop and rock fall between about 100 and 130 BPM. House music is usually 120–130 BPM, and drum and bass is much faster at 160–180 BPM.

BPM and Italian tempo terms

Older scores describe tempo with Italian terms. Adagio is slow, roughly 66–76 BPM; Andante, a walking pace, is about 76–108 BPM; **metronome** Allegro is lively, about 120–156 BPM.

Measuring a song's tempo

Tap tempo is the quickest method: tap along with the beat and a tool averages the gaps between taps into a BPM number. Counting beats for 15 seconds and multiplying by four also works.

Knowing the BPM helps you practise songs at their real tempo, sync effects and talk about tempo clearly with other musicians.