

ORCHESTRATION AND INSTRUMENTATION: THE BAROQUE ERA

INTRODUCTION

Much like the Renaissance, the Baroque era was an important era in regards to both instrumentation and orchestration. Some instruments fell out of use, such as the shawm and the wooden cornet, but many new instruments were born and came into widespread use, such as the cello, contrabass (or double bass) and the fortepiano, an early version of the modern piano. Instruments such as the hurdy-gurdy and recorder were also used in Baroque music.

THE BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

As far as orchestral or instrument grouping, the Baroque era saw the following:

1. **Woodwinds:** Baroque flute, Baroque oboe, racket, recorder and the bassoon
2. **Brass:** Included the cornet, natural horn (precursor to the French Horn), Baroque trumpet, serpent and the trombone
3. **Strings:** Violin, viol, viola, viola d'amore, cello, contrabass, lute, theorbo (which often played the basso continuo parts), mandolin, cittern, Baroque guitar, harp and hurdy-gurdy.
4. **Percussion:** Includes the timpani, tambourine, the castanets as well as various types of drums
5. **Keyboard:** clavichord, tangent piano, the fortepiano, the harpsichord and the pipe organ