Italian tempo words have guided performers for centuries. Since the metronome appeared in 1815, each word has an approximate BPM range.

Slow markings

Grave means slow and serious. Largo is broad, about 40–60 BPM. Adagio is slow and at ease, around 66–76 BPM.

Middle markings

Andante means at a walking pace, about 76–108 BPM. Moderato sits in the middle.

Fast markings

Allegro is fast and bright, about 120–156 BPM. Vivace is ***metronome*** lively, around 156–176 BPM. Presto is very fast, and Prestissimo is as fast as possible.

Choosing the exact tempo

These terms describe mood as much as speed. Look at the time signature, the fastest notes and **metronome** the style before settling on a number.