

Beethoven's Three Periods and Styles

Early Period (through 1802)	Middle ("Heroic") Period (1803–1815)	Late Period (1815–1827)
adopt the Viennese Classical style that he learned from Haydn and Mozart use diatonic tonality and conventional genres and forms of the Classical style	Monumentality: Beethoven moved beyond the elegance of Viennese Classicism, producing musical works with an unprecedented formal scale and instrumental force Teleology: The music often displays a relentless forward-driving momentum and acceleration via motivic fragmentation, reaching a final goal at the end as a moment of satisfactory denouement Totality: the entire work coheres under the system of tonality; everything is interrelated into a totalizing unity	Silence: a heightened degree of introspection in his music, reflecting Beethoven's increasing isolation from society during the last decade of his life Freedom and extremity: an exploration in musical extremes in such areas as form, proportion, texture, and harmony Suspension of time: the harmony seems to be floating, lacking the propulsive forward drive in his middle-period works Discontinuity: the musical surface is sometimes discontinuous, juxtaposing blocks of musical materials (sometimes alternating between whimsical and serious passages)
Notable works: • Piano Sonatas, op. 10 and op. 13 (Pathétique) • Second Symphony	Notable works: • Third ("Eroica") and Fifth Symphony • <i>Waldstein</i> and <i>Appassionata</i> Piano Sonatas • Razumovsky String Quartets • opera: Fidelio	Notable works: • Ninth Symphony • <i>Hammerklavier</i> Piano Sonata op. 106 • String Quartet op. 130, Cavatina