



# Musical Ornaments

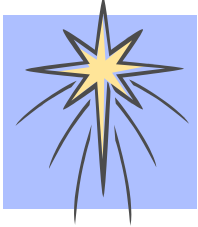


Name \_\_\_\_\_

Form \_\_\_\_\_

Ornaments (or grace notes as they are sometimes called) are “extra” notes used to decorate a melodic line. They may appear as very small notes printed among the main notes of a melody; or they may be indicated by special signs – a kind of “musical shorthand”.

Ornament sign or symbol	Ornament Name	Written & Performed
	Trill	
	Upper Mordent	
	Lower Mordent	
	Appoggiatura	
	Acciaccatura	
	Turn	
	Inverted Turn	



## Listening to Musical Ornaments

Listen to a recording of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”, shown on the score below, which has been decorated and embellished with a number of different musical ornaments, following the score as you listen.

Slowly

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef, 2/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Slowly'. The score is decorated with various ornaments: fermatas, mordents, and trills. The first staff contains a fermata, two mordents, a fermata, a trill, and three mordents. The second staff contains a trill, a fermata, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a fermata, and a fermata. The third staff contains a trill, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a trill, a mordent, a mordent, and a mordent. The fourth staff contains a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, a mordent, and a mordent.

Next, label each of the different ornaments on the score above.



# Musical Ornaments



## TEACHER'S NOTES

Read the text at the top of page 1. Next, using **Ornaments Audio 1**, describe each of the musical ornaments given on page 1 demonstrating each of the ornaments on a piano or keyboard or by using **Ornaments Audio 1**, pausing after each example to discuss the effect each ornament has. Pupils can be encouraged to make notes if required alongside each musical ornament as they are modelled.

The ornaments given on **Ornaments Audio 1** appear as follows:

- Extract 1 – Trill**
- Extract 2 – Upper Mordent**
- Extract 3 – Lower Mordent**
- Extract 4 – Appoggiatura**
- Extract 5 – Acciaccatura**
- Extract 6 – Turn**
- Extract 7 – Inverted Turn**

Teachers may like to explain the difference between a turn being “on” the note and “between” the notes if desired. It’s up to individual teachers how much theoretical knowledge is used at this point.

Play **Ornaments Audio 2**, a highly ornamented version of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and ask pupils to follow the score on page 2 as they listen. Allow pupils a few moments to label each of the ornaments used on the score to familiarise themselves with the signs and symbols used for melodic decoration. *Answers are given below in the following discussion script:*

The following script may be useful in forming a basis of class discussion:

*Ornaments (or grace notes as they are sometimes called) are “extra” notes and may appear as very small notes printed among the main notes of a melody. They may also be indicated by special signs and symbols – a kind of “musical shorthand”.*

*We’re going to learn about the seven most common musical ornaments. We’ll be introducing you to each musical ornament in turn, together with an explanation of how the musical ornament works and how they are performed.*

*Let’s begin with the trill, or “shake”, which is shown by the letter T-R shown in small italics, often with a wavy line afterwards. To perform a trill, you play the note shown and the note immediately above it, in the key of the piece, one after the other as quickly as possible. You’ll see how a trill is written and performed, first as a stand-alone musical ornament and then within the context of a short phrase, by following the musical notation as we listen to the trill in action.*

### **Extract 1 – Trill Example**

*Did you notice the fast repetition between the note that is indicated by the trill and the note above? This time, as you listen again, see if you can circle the notes used in the trill in the short “performed” section of the musical phrase.*

### **Extract 1 – Trill Example**

*There were eight notes used in this trill, the two sets of four semiquavers alternating on high G and high A for two crotchet beats, which adds up in total the minim G, shown with the trill symbol above it in the previous bars. The musical ornament and the notes used to perform it must always add up the original value of the note where the ornament is given. You can’t add or take away any beats or subdivisions of beats when performing any of the musical ornaments we’re learning about here.*

*Now let’s take the next two ornaments together since they are very much connected – the upper and lower mordents. The word “mordent” comes from an Italian word meaning “biting”. You’ll see that the musical symbol for an upper mordent looks very like the wavy line which sometimes comes after the letters T-R in the symbol for a trill. To perform an upper mordent, you play the main note, the note above and the main note again, in quick succession to give a “biting” feel. You’ll see from the notation example how an upper mordent is written and performed and there are three upper mordents in our musical phrase. As you follow the score, circle the notes which make up the three upper mordents in the “performed” section of the musical phrase.*

### **Extract 2 – Upper Mordent Example**

*All three upper mordents were on the note G and involved the quick successive playing of G, A and back to G again. However, did you spot the differences in note values for each of the upper mordents? The first upper mordent was written above a crotchet G so used demisemiquavers for the rapid alternation of the first G and A with the remaining note value that of a dotted quaver in this case, for the last G. The next upper mordent was written over a quaver so the note values here had to be halved – hemidemisemiquavers used for the first two notes of the upper mordent and a dotted semiquaver for the last G. Finally, the last upper mordent was written over a minim so can be performed slower, this time using semiquavers, finishing on a dotted crotchet. Listen again so that you can hear the difference in upper mordents being performed on notes of different time values.*

### **Extract 2 – Upper Mordent Example**

*The lower mordent is very similar to the upper mordent. Its symbol is identical, except that it has a vertical line through it. To perform a lower mordent, you perform the main note, the note below and the main note again. Look at the first lower mordent shown on the musical score. What is the musical symbol placed beneath it?*

*It’s a sharp sign, indicating that the note below the written note is to be performed as a sharp, in this case G, F sharp, and G, which is shown in the “performed” section. The musical phrase we’re using to demonstrate the lower mordent here is the same as we’ve used for the upper mordent above. You’ll see that the ornaments are performed almost identically, except the lower mordent uses the note below, in this case F sharp, whereas the upper mordent uses the note above.*

### **Extract 3 – Lower Mordent Example**

*As you've done before, listen again and circle the notes which make up the three lower mordents in the "performed" section of the musical phrase.*

### **Extract 3 – Lower Mordent Example**

*Our next musical ornament, the appoggiatura, comes from the Italian word for a "leaning" note. The appoggiatura sounds rather like a wrong note followed by the right note. It's shown by a small quaver note written just before the main note. The appoggiatura is a note one step above or below the main note which takes the place of the main note in this chord. It then moves to the note of the chord giving the impression of "leaning" on this note. The appoggiatura takes half the value of the main note. You can see this in the example given on the score. The first two appoggiaturas are shown against minims and when they are performed they divide the minim into two crotchets, one for the appoggiatura and one for the main note.*

*Let's hear the appoggiatura in action now, following the score as you listen for the "leaning" effect created by this musical ornament.*

### **Extract 4 – Appoggiatura Example**

*Listen again, circling the notes which make up the performed version of the appoggiaturas from the musical phrase example – there are three in all.*

### **Extract 4 – Appoggiatura Example**

*The first appoggiatura ascended from the note B to C, the second followed immediately descending from B to A forming four quavers. The last appoggiatura was shown on the last minim of the phrase being performed as two crotchets, the appoggiatura stealing half the value of the main note.*

*The acciaccatura also comes from an Italian word meaning a "crushed" note and its symbol is similar to the appoggiatura except for the addition of a diagonal line through the small quaver note. Unlike the appoggiatura, the acciaccatura is to be played as quickly as possible giving its characteristic "crushing" sound. Listen to the acciaccatura now so that you can hear its faster and more urgent performance from the slower appoggiatura.*

### **Extract 5 – Acciaccatura Example**

*When performing an acciaccatura, you'll see a small arrowhead in the "performed" sections of the score. This is the musical symbol for an accent, indicating to the performer to give an emphasis on this note, allowing it to stand out. Listen again and circle the notes making up the acciaccaturas in the "performed" section on the score. It's the same musical phrase we used for the appoggiatura example earlier.*

### **Extract 5 – Acciaccatura Example**

*The acciaccaturas were quite easy to identify since the accent symbols and the note following made up the three examples in the musical phrase.*

*We'll take out last two musical symbols together, since, like the upper and lower mordent, they are similar in symbol and performance. The turn is a more elaborate pattern of embellishing notes. The symbol for the turn is almost like an incomplete "figure of eight" on its side! A turn consists of the main*

*note, the note above, the main note again, the note below and finally the main note. Listen to the sound of the turn as you follow the score.*

### **Extract 6 – Turn Example**

*Now, listen again and see if you can circle the notes which make up the turn in the “performed” section in the musical phrase which is taken from a piano sonata by Mozart.*

### **Extract 6 – Turn Example**

*The inverted turn can be represented by two musical symbols. Sometimes the symbol for a turn is used with a vertical line crossed through it, other times it can be shown as the turn symbol, only the opposite way around. As the name suggests the inverted turn is similar to the turn only using a slightly different pattern. Let’s listen to the inverted turn now and see if you can hear and see the difference between the turn and the inverted turn.*

### **Extract 7 – Inverted Turn Example**

*The inverted turn changes the order of notes within the musical decoration. Here we have the main note, the note below, the main note, the note above and the main note again. Finally, circle the notes which make up the inverted turn in the musical phrase as you listen again.*

### **Extract 7 – Inverted Turn Example**

*“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” - only embellished and decorated with a number of musical ornaments which you have learned about. First, let’s listen to this ornamented version of the melody. Follow the score as you listen.*

### **Listening to Musical Ornaments – Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**

*The ornaments on the first line, left to right are: turn, upper mordent, lower mordent, turn, trill, mordent and finally two lower mordents – one with a flat sign and one with a natural sign underneath.*

*The ornaments on the second line are: trill, turn, upper mordent, upper mordent, lower mordent, mordent, followed by two turns.*

*The third line started off with six consecutive acciaccaturas followed by a trill – with a couple of appoggiaturas at the end, followed by two turns.*

*The last line has two acciaccaturas, a turn followed by four appoggiaturas ending with a trill with a couple of appoggiaturas added.*