

13 TYPES OF ARTICULATIONS

Practical Guidance

All articulations can be understood as variations of legato intonation—singing with both *glissando* and a sense of resistance.

In every articulation, remember to:

- sing with arm weight.
- sing both notes with a long sense of sound movement.
- sing the first note without articulations.
- sing the first half of the interval with legato.
- sing the second half of the interval with more acceleration or arm-weight.

The reason for singing the first half of the interval with *glissando* & resistance is to let the finger muscles be prepared for articulations.

- when you feel resistance in your vocal cords this sends a preparatory sensation to your finger muscles.
- when you sing the second half of the interval with more acceleration or weight this sends a final impulse to your finger muscles to execute articulations.

In the following examples, observe how wrist motion adapts to tempo: full 3D wrist motion at slow speeds—around one note every two seconds; a flatter 3D motion at moderate tempos—about one note per second; and 2D horizontal wrist motion at fast tempos, starting from two notes per second and above.

In the video, you'll notice that I play the first note with articulation, even though I sing it without. When you begin practising the exercises in the next video, start by playing the first note without articulation, just as you sing it. Later, once the sensation of articulation has been fully internalized and becomes second nature, you will also be able to play the first note with articulation.

During playing, keep your hands loose, empty and weak while playing. Tension in your vocal cords may trigger excessive tension in the hands.

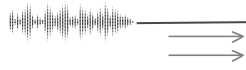
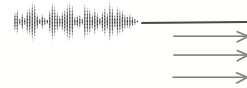
LEGATO GROUP

In vocal singing, *portamento* refers to gliding smoothly between notes with both support and a sense of resistance. In this method, we use the term intonation to describe that same *portamento* singing.

articulation	LEGATISSIMO	LEGATO	TWO-NOTE SLUR
notation			
singing	 strong resistance	 resistance	 Add a ghost note before, vocalize only two notes with emphasis on the first interval.
playing	 overlapping the notes	 slightly overlapping the notes	 connecting the notes

Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.			
	2 sec / note	1 sec / note	1 sec / 2 notes
piano → →			
← →			
forte → →			
← →	 Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.		

NON-LEGATO GROUP

moderate acceleration*acceleration**strong acceleration*

Sing the second half of the interval with acceleration.

articulation	DÉTACHÉ / ARTICULATED LEGATO / BRIOSO	LEGGIERO
notation		
singing		
playing		<i>piano (moderate / faster tempos)</i>

Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.

	2 sec / note	1 sec / note	1 sec / 2 notes
piano → →			
← →			
forte → →			
← →			
Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.			

ARTICULATIONS

Sing the second half of the interval with moderate acceleration.

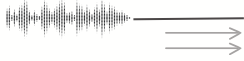
articulation	NON-LEGATO	MEZZO-STACCATO / PORTATO
notation		
singing		
playing		

Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.			
	2 sec / note	1 sec / note	1 sec / 2 notes
piano → →			
← →			
forte → →			
← →	 Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.		

STACCATO GROUP

Sing the second half of the interval with a sense of acceleration, imagining the sound of a racing car gaining speed.

The character of the staccato—whether sharper or softer—depends on this acceleration: the greater the speed, the sharper the staccato will feel and sound.

<i>articulation</i>	STACCATO	STACCATISSIMO
<i>notation</i>		
<i>singing</i>		
<i>playing</i>		

<i>Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.</i>			
	2 sec / note	1 sec / note	1 sec / 2 notes
piano → →			
← →			
forte → →			
← →			
<i>Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.</i>			

TENUTO

Sing the second half of the interval with arm-weight and acceleration.

If the acceleration becomes too strong, the tenuto will turn into an accent; if there is no acceleration at all, the note will lose its sustained, supported quality.

Allow your arm motion to follow this falling line closely, remaining roughly 90% vertical.

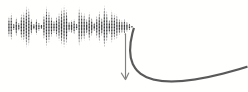
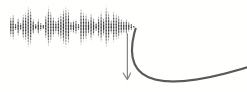
This gesture mirrors the internal sensation of opening the back of the throat and letting the sound descend through the torso, diaphragm, and down toward the pelvis.

Opening the mouth slightly wider can help reinforce this sense of depth and openness.

Begin by singing with arm-weight only, allowing the voice and the hand to align with the natural drop.

Then add a small degree of acceleration—just enough to maintain the feeling of a free, natural fall.

Avoid consciously slowing down the arm-weight; the intention is to let gravity lead the motion rather than to control the descent.

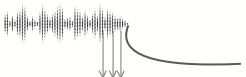
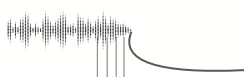
articulation	DISCONNECTED TENUTO	CONNECTED TENUTO
notation		
singing		
playing		

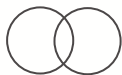
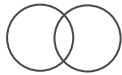
Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.		
	2 sec / note	1 sec / note
piano → →		
← →		
forte → →		
← →		
Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.		

ACCENT GROUP

Sing the second half of the interval with strong acceleration and sudden application of arm-weight. It is important to think of the acceleration first, and the arm-weight second. The weight used here should not be as deep or sustained as in tenuto.

The character of the accent—whether sharp or more rounded—depends on the combination of acceleration and weight: the greater the speed and the greater the arm-weight, the sharper and more powerful the accent will be.

<i>articulation</i>	ACCENT SFORZANDO	STACCATO FORZATO MARCATO / MARTELLATO
<i>notation</i>	 	 
<i>singing</i>		
<i>playing</i>		forte 

Be sure to use a 2D/3D wrist motion on the final note to mirror the direction of sound movement.		
2 sec / note	1 sec / note	
<i>piano</i> → → 		
← → 		
<i>forte</i> → → 		
← → 		
Remember to count "1 & 2 &" to maintain healthy tension in the hand.		

OPEN LESSONS

