Subject headings for vocal music


Instrumental accompaniment of vocal works | Subject headings for liturgical works
Works for one voice with or without accompaniment: Songs | Accompaniment | Solo cantatas | Accompaniment
Works for two or more voices, one to a part with or without accompaniment: Accompaniment

Works for two or more voices, two or more to a part with or without accompaniment: Choruses | Accompaniment | Cantatas | Accompaniment | Oratorios | Accompaniment

Unaccompanied works
Musicals and revues
Arrangements
Qualifying by language of text

Vocal music is assigned form headings or medium of performance headings just as instrumental music is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form headings</th>
<th>Medium of performance headings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Songs</td>
<td>Vocal trios, Unaccompanied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oratorios</td>
<td>Choruses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantatas</td>
<td>Vocal duets with harp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masses</td>
<td>Sacred vocal ensembles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Form headings are usually qualified by medium of performance (vocal range or vocal grouping) unless it is implied:

Choruses (Mixed voices) no vocal group is implied; it must be stated
Songs (High voice) no vocal range is implied; it must be stated
Masses chorus is implied

Subject headings for vocal music may also indicate:
number of voices: Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices, 4 parts [6])
type of accompaniment: __ with piano
Unaccompanied

Secular or sacred use: Choruses, Secular Songs [secular is implied] Sacred songs Vocal trios [secular is implied] Sacred vocal trios Oratorios [sacred is implied] Secular oratorios

Medium of performance headings are not assigned to works that are

- not composed in a specific form of composition
  OR
- in a form of composition not in LCSH
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OR

- when the form heading in LCSH (eg. Psalms (Music)) is not to be qualified by medium of performance.

[» Note: It is not LCSH practice to bring out the medium of performance in the majority of headings assigned to popular music.]

Subject headings for liturgical music are added when applicable. Most are given in the singular, with no medium of performance:
- Holy-week music.
- Magnificat (Music)
- Nunc dimittis (Music)
- Song of Solomon (Music)
- Christmas music.
These headings can also be assigned to instrumental music.

The subject heading "Psalms (Music)" is given in the plural, with no medium of performance. When appropriate, subdivide the heading by the specific psalm:
650 0 Psalms (Music) ‡v 23rd Psalm

The numbering in subject headings for psalms follows the Authorized version (e.g., the Hebrew and Protestant Bible) and to the table under BS1450 in the LC Classification schedule. Wikipedia [7] gives a summary:

- Catholic official liturgical texts follow the Greek numbering, but modern Catholic translations often use the Hebrew numbering, sometimes adding, in parenthesis the Greek numbering as well.
- Eastern Orthodox translations are based on the Greek numbering.
- Protestant translations are based on the Hebrew numbering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew (and Protestant) numbering</th>
<th>Greek/Latin (Catholic) numbering (also referred to as &quot;vulgate&quot;)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–8</td>
<td>1–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–113</td>
<td>10–112</td>
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<tr>
<td>114–115</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>114–115</td>
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<tr>
<td>117–114</td>
<td>116–145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>146–147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td>148–150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrumental accompaniment of vocal works

A single instrument is named following the word "with":
- with accordion
- with violoncello

The name of two of the same keyboard instrument follows the word "with" and is qualified with "(2)"
- with pianos (2)
- with harpsichords (2)

Use "keyboard instrument ensemble" when there are two different keyboard instruments:

- with keyboard instrument ensemble

Note: previous practice was to name each, in alphabetical order:
- with organ and piano

When there are
- two or more of the same non-keyboard instrument

This would include string quartets, quintets, etc.
- with string ensemble

OR

- two or more non-keyboard instruments from the same instrumental family [8]

This would include woodwind quartets, quintets, etc.
- with woodwind ensemble

use the instrumental family name followed by "ensemble"

When there are two or more instruments from different instrumental families (one to a part), use "instrumental ensemble":

- with instrumental ensemble

When there are two or more instruments from different instrumental families (two or more to a part), use the name of the:

- with orchestra
- with band
ensemble:

When there are two or more of the same solo instruments (one to a part), use the name of that instrument followed by "ensemble":

Works for one voice with or without accompaniment  
See also Songs vs. solo cantatas [9]

Songs

The heading "Songs" implies secular; for sacred works use "Sacred songs". Note that "Sacred songs" is not in inverted order.

The range of the solo voice, when known, is indicated as high, medium, or low.

Even if the specific voice type is known, it is not designated in a subject heading, unlike in a uniform title, in which either specific voice type or vocal range may be indicated.

Other forms

Variations (Voice ...)

Accompaniment

Unaccompanied
Unaccompanied songs are qualified as such:

Accompanied
Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase "with ________.")

Accompaniment of one instrument:

Accompaniment of one to two keyboard instruments:

Accompaniment of one keyboard instrument and one non-keyboard instrument OR two or more non-keyboard instruments is indicated as "instrumental ensemble"

"Instrumental ensemble" could mean piano and violin; or flute and harp; or string quartet; or four horns. Indicating each would be incorrect.

Solo cantatas

The heading "Solo cantatas" implies neither secular nor sacred. Both must be indicated, and the headings are in inverted form.

The range of the solo voice, when known, is indicated as high, medium, or low.

Even if the specific voice type is known, it is not designated in a subject heading.

Accompaniment

Accompaniment for solo cantatas is not indicated in the subject heading.

Works for two or more voices, one to a part  
See also Vocal ensembles [10]

Form headings

These are some of the form headings for works for two or more solo voices:

Part songs

The heading "Part songs" implies secular.

For sacred works use "Part songs, Sacred." Note that it is in inverted order.

For secular Part songs all in one language, qualify the heading by that language.

Latin is implied in the heading "Part songs, Sacred"

For sacred Part songs in other languages are assigned 2 headings:

Specific forms of Part songs

These headings may also be used for works for choral ensemble (two or more voices, two or more to a part). Accompaniment is not indicated in subject headings for Part songs or any of the specific types of Part songs.

Secular:

Sacred:
Subject headings for vocal music  
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other forms</th>
<th>Anthems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canons, fugues, etc. (Vocal quartet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Medium of performance headings**

The headings “Vocal duets,” “Vocal trios,” “Vocal quartets,” etc. are used for groups of two to nine solo voices. For ten or more solo voices, use “Vocal ensembles.” Neither the vocal range nor voice type is designated. These headings imply secular works. For sacred works, use “Sacred vocal duets,” “Sacred vocal trios,” “Sacred vocal quartets,” etc., and “Sacred vocal ensembles.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secular:</th>
<th>Sacred:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocal duets</td>
<td>Sacred vocal duets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal quintets</td>
<td>Sacred vocal quintets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal ensembles</td>
<td>Sacred vocal ensembles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accompaniment**

Unaccompanied works are qualified as such:

| Vocal duets, Unaccompanied |
| Vocal quintets, Unaccompanied |
| Sacred vocal ensembles, Unaccompanied |

Accompagniment is indicated by the phrase “with __________.”

- Accompaniment of **one** instrument:
  - Vocal sextets with piano
  - Sacred vocal quartets with harp
  - Vocal ensembles with guitar

- Accompaniment of **one to two keyboard** instruments:
  - Sacred vocal trios with pianos (2)
  - Vocal quartets with harpsichords (2)

- Accompaniment of **one keyboard** instrument and **one non-keyboard** instrument OR **two or more** non-keyboard instruments is indicated as “instrumental ensemble”

  "Instrumental ensemble" could mean piano and violin; or flute and harp; or string quartet; or four horns. Indicating each would be incorrect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works for two or more voices, two or more to a part</th>
<th>See also Choruses vs. cantatas [11]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secular: Choruses, Secular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred: Choruses, Sacred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Choruses** See also Those darn chorus subject headings [6]

The heading “Choruses” implies neither secular nor sacred and is used without designation of secular or sacred for collections of both secular and sacred works.

For individual works or collections that are either secular or sacred, the term "secular" or "sacred" is added to the heading, in inverted form.

- Collections for **more than one voice grouping** which do not all have the same accompaniment:
  - Choruses, Secular
  - Choruses, Sacred

- Do not add:
  - voice grouping
  - number of voices
  - accompaniment

  "Do not consider solo voices in formulating subject headings for choruses.

- Single works and collections for **one voice grouping**:
  - Add:
    - voice grouping
    - mixed voices, women's voices, men's voices, children's voices, equal voices, unison [not unison voices]
    - number of voices may be added.

  "Do not consider solo voices in formulating subject headings for choruses.

- Number of voices is indicated only when these conditions apply:
  a. 8 parts or fewer
  b. AND

  - Choruses, Secular (Women's voices, 4 parts) with piano
  - Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 4 parts) with pianos (2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accompaniment</th>
<th>Choruses, Secular (Children's voices, 3 parts), Unaccompanied.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. accompaniment of either one instrument (i.e., piano, violoncello, harp, etc.) two of the same keyboard instrument continuo</td>
<td>Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices, 4 parts), Unaccompanied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices), Unaccompanied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. unaccompanied</td>
<td>Choruses, Sacred (Women's voices) with piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase “with”</td>
<td>Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices, 4 parts) with violoncello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment of one or two of the same keyboard instrument:</td>
<td>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 5 parts) with pianos (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment of two different keyboard instruments (indicated as &quot;keyboard instrument ensemble&quot;):</td>
<td>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices) with keyboard instrument ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment of one keyboard instrument and one non-keyboard instrument OR two or more non-keyboard instruments is indicated as &quot;instrumental ensemble&quot;</td>
<td>Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices) with instrumental ensemble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Instrumental ensemble" could mean piano and violin; or flute and harp; or string quartet; or four horns. Indicating each would be incorrect; use "keyboard instrument ensemble" for two or more different keyboard instruments.

The number of vocal parts is not indicated when the accompaniment is two or more instruments (other than two of the same keyboard instrument or continuo).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accompaniment</th>
<th>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 5 parts) with pianos (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment of two different keyboard instruments (indicated as &quot;keyboard instrument ensemble&quot;):</td>
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Cantatas

The heading "Cantatas" implies neither secular nor sacred and is used without designation of secular or sacred for collections of both secular and sacred works.

For individual works or collections that are either secular or sacred, the term "secular" or "sacred" is added to the heading, in inverted form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cantatas</th>
<th>Cantatas, Secular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collections for mixed voices or for more than one voice grouping</td>
<td>Cantatas, Secular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>Cantatas, Sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single works for mixed voices</td>
<td>Cantatas, Secular (Women's voices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single works and collections for one voice grouping other than mixed voices</td>
<td>Cantatas, Sacred (Unison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice grouping (other than &quot;mixed voices&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women's voices, men's voices, children's voices, equal voices, unison [not unison voices]</td>
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The number of voices is not designated in subject headings for cantatas.

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Accompaniment

Type of accompaniment or lack of accompaniment is not designated in subject headings for cantatas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oratorios</th>
<th>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 5 parts) with pianos (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment of two different keyboard instruments (indicated as &quot;keyboard instrument ensemble&quot;):</td>
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"Instrumental ensemble" could mean piano and violin; or flute and harp; or string quartet; or four horns. Indicating each would be incorrect; use "keyboard instrument ensemble" for two or more different keyboard instruments.

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The number of vocal parts is not indicated when the accompaniment is two or more instruments (other than two of the same keyboard instrument or continuo).

Other forms

Works in a specific form are assigned with the medium of Canons, fugues, etc. (Chorus ...)
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance “Chorus” added.</th>
<th>Waltzes (Chorus …) Polkas (Chorus …)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Accompaniment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unaccompanied works are not indicated as such:</th>
<th>Canons, fugues, etc. (Chorus) Rondos (Chorus) Waltzes (Chorus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase “with ________.”</td>
<td>Polkas (Chorus with orchestra) Waltzes (Chorus with piano) Waltzes (Chorus with piano, 4 hands)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*equal voices*: voices of the same type when employed in a polyphonic work, e.g., all sopranos or all tenors; sometimes also merely all male or all female (New Harvard Dictionary of Music)

### Unaccompanied works

The qualifier "unaccompanied" is used with vocal music subject headings *except* for with these forms: cantatas, musicals, operas, oratorios or with subject headings in which lack of accompaniment is already implied (e.g., Canons, fugues, etc. (Voices (3))

Do not add "Unaccompanied" to parenthetical qualifiers in headings of this type (for two or more solo voices) when voice is the sole medium of performance (H1917.5, 8)

### Musicals and revues

**Musical**: a theatrical production consisting of musical numbers (songs, ensembles, and dances) integrated into a dramatic framework

**Revue**: a theatrical production featuring a series of songs, dances, and other entertainments without any unifying dramatic element

### Arrangements

The qualifier "Arranged" is not used with vocal music subject headings.

The subject heading is assigned for the medium into which the work has been arranged.

A work originally for high voice and harp, arranged for voice and piano:

Correct: Songs (High voice) with piano

Incorrect: Songs (High voice) with piano, Arranged.

A work originally for chorus and orchestra; arranged for chorus and organ

Correct: Choruses, Sacred (Mixed voices) with orchestra ‡v Vocal scores with organ.

Incorrect: Choruses, Sacred (Mixed voices) with organ, Arranged.

However, LC is using "Arranged" in the subject heading "Oratorios”:

An oratorio with accompaniment originally for piano or organ, arranged for orchestra

Oratorios, Arranged.

### Qualifying by language of text

Source: *LC Subject Cataloging Manual* H 1916.3

Vocal works are qualified by the language of the text when they are:

- entirely or chiefly ballads, folk songs, children's songs, or songs
- in the original language
- in one or two languages
  - when three or more languages all from the same language group are involved, add the name of that language group [e.g., Scandanavian, Slavic, etc.]

Vocal works are **not** qualified by the language of the text when they:
Subject headings for vocal music
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- imply national emphasis
- are translations
- are in three or more languages from different language groups

Source URL: https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/subvocal

Links