Subject headings for vocal music

Music Cataloging at Yale [1] | Subject cataloging [2]


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>
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<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 heading 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 | Choruses, Sacred
    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
  OR
- when the form heading in LCSH (eg. Psalms (Music)) is not to be qualified by medium of performance.
Subject headings for vocal 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>
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<td>11–113</td>
<td>10–112</td>
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<tr>
<td>114–115</td>
<td>113</td>
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<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>114–115</td>
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<tr>
<td>117–146</td>
<td>116–145</td>
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<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>146–147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148–150</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** OR **two or more non-keyboard instruments from the same instrumental family** [8]
  - with string ensemble
  - This would include string quartets, quintets, etc.
  - with woodwind ensemble
  - This would include woodwind quartets, quintets, etc.

- 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 ensemble:
  - with orchestra
  - with band

- When there are **two or more of the same solo instruments (one to a part)**, use the name of that instrument followed by "ensemble":
  - with violoncello ensemble
### Works for one voice with or without accompaniment

See also: Songs vs. solo cantatas

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accompaniment</th>
<th>Songs (High voice)</th>
<th>Sacred songs (Low voice)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied</td>
<td>Songs (Medium voice), Unaccompanied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accompaniment</th>
<th>Solo cantatas, Secular</th>
<th>Solo cantatas, Sacred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied</td>
<td>Solo cantatas, Secular</td>
<td>Solo cantatas, Sacred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accompaniment

Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase "with ________,."  

Accompaniment of one instrument:

- Songs (High voice) with piano
- Sacred songs (Low voice) with violoncello

Accompaniment of one to two keyboard instruments:

- Songs (High voice) with pianos (2)
- Sacred songs (Medium voice) with organs (2)

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

- Songs (High voice) with piano and harp
- Songs (High voice) with string quartet

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

### Solo cantatas

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

**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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific forms of Part songs</th>
<th>Polyphonic chansons</th>
<th>Motets</th>
<th>Anthems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other forms

Canons, fugues, etc. (Vocal quartet)
### 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal duets, Unaccompanied</th>
<th>Sacred vocal quintets, Unaccompanied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacred vocal ensembles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase "with __________.

#### Accompaniment of one instrument:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal sextets with piano</th>
<th>Vocal quartets with harpsichords (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacred voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vqual voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal ensembles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Accompaniment of one to two keyboard instruments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sacred vocal trios with pianos (2)</th>
<th>Vocal trios with instrumental ensemble</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacred vocal ensembles</td>
<td>Vocal trios with piano and harp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 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: Vocal sextets with piano

Works for two or more voices, two or more to a part See also Choruses vs. cantatas [11]

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:

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
- AND

Number of voices is indicated only when these conditions apply:

- a. 8 parts or fewer
- AND

- b. accompaniment of either
  - one instrument (i.e., piano, violoncello, harp, etc.)
  - two of the same keyboard instrument

#### Choruses, Secular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choruses, Secular (Women's voices, 4 parts) with piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choruses, Secular (Children's voices)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Choruses, Sacred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 4 parts) with pianos (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choruses, Secular (Children's voices, 3 parts), Unaccompanied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Unaccompanied choruses are qualified as such:

- Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices, 4 parts), Unaccompanied
- Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices), Unaccompanied

Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase "with ________.”

- Choruses, Sacred (Women's voices) with piano
- Choruses with organ
- Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices, 4 parts) with violoncello

### Accompaniment of one or two of the same keyboard instrument:

- Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices, 5 parts) with pianos (2)

### Accompaniment of two different keyboard instruments (indicated as "keyboard instrument ensemble"): Choruses, Sacred (Men's voices) with keyboard instrument ensemble

### Accompaniment of one keyboard instrument and one non-keyboard instrument

#### two or more non-keyboard instruments is indicated as "instrumental ensemble"

- Choruses, Secular (Mixed voices) with instrumental ensemble
- Choruses, Sacred (Children's voices) with instrumental ensemble

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).

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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.

- Collections for mixed voices or for more than one voice grouping
- Single works for mixed voices

Single works and collections for one voice grouping other than mixed voices

Add:
- voice grouping (other than "mixed voices")
  - women's voices, men's voices, children's voices,
  - equal voices, unison [not unison voices]

The number of voices is not designated in subject headings for cantatas.

### Accompaniment

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

### Oratorios

The heading "Oratorios" implies a sacred text. The heading is used without the designation "sacred.”

For oratorios with secular texts, use "Secular oratorios." Unlike the subject headings for choruses and cantatas, the heading is in direct order (not "Oratorios, Secular")

Vocal grouping (mixed voices, women's voices, etc.) is not indicated in subject headings for oratorios.

### Accompaniment

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

Works with accompaniment reduced for a keyboard instrument include the subject subdivision [12]

- Oratorios ‡v Vocal scores with organ
- Secular oratorios ‡v Vocal scores with piano

### Other forms

Works in a specific form are assigned with the medium of performance "Chorus” added.

- Canons, fugues, etc. (Chorus ...)
- Waltzes (Chorus ...)
- Polkas (Chorus ...)

### Accompaniment
Unaccompanied works are not indicated as such: Canons, fugues, etc. (Chorus) 
Rondos (Chorus) 
Waltzes (Chorus)

Accompaniment is indicated by the phrase "with __________." Polkas (Chorus with orchestra) 
Waltzes (Chorus with piano) 
Waltzes (Chorus with piano, 4 hands)

**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))

**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 ǂv 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:

- 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
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[1] http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music
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[10] http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/chorcant#ensembles
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