

## - Art and Culture -

# UPSC Prelims

**MUSIC**

(Classical and Folk)



## Salient Features of Indian Music



- Bharatmuni's Natyashastra is considered as the earliest treatise on music.
- Samveda is considered the Veda of music.
- It mentions near about 16000 ragas and Ragini i.e. melodies.
- The later part of Samveda is known as Gandharva Veda which is considered as the rule book of the music
- Indian music has remained essentially melodic. In melody, one note follows the other, making for a continued unity of effect, whereas in harmony musical sounds are superimposed on one another.
- It is generally believed that the music of India was more or less uniform before the 13th century.
- Today we recognise two systems of classical music: Hindustani and Carnatic.
- Carnatic music is confined to Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- The classical music of the rest of the country goes under the name, Hindustani Classical Music.
- The present Indian music has grown from ancient times. Almost every tribe or people have lent their own share in this growth. What therefore, we now call a raga might have started as a tribal or folk tune.





## Basics of Indian Music



**A. Swara:** It refers to the note, tone and frequency

■ In Indian Music there are **7 'pure notes'** (shuddha swara) which are:

- **Sa:** Sadja
- **Re:** Reshabha
- **Ga:** Gandharva
- **Ma:** Madhyam
- **Pa:** Pancham
- **Da:** Dhavaita
- **Ne:** Nishadh

- **Shruti:** is the feeblest sound which human ears can perceive.
- There are 22 shrutis in the Indian system of Swara

**B. Rag:**

■ It is a different combination of Swara. For the formation of Raga, **at least 5 distinct Swara's** must be there.

■ On the basis of distinct notes, there are **3 types of Raga**

- **Odhava Raga:** 5 distinct Swara
- **Sadhav Raga:** 6 distinct Swara
- **Sampoorna Raga:** all 7 distinct Swara

**C. Taal:**

■ It is the rhythmic cycle or arrangement of beats in a cyclical manner.

■ On the basis of a number of cycles :

- **Thisra:** 3 rhythmic cycle
- **Chatusara:** 4 rhythmic cycle
- **Khanda:** 5 rhythmic cycle
- **Misra:** 6 rhythmic cycle
- **Sankirtana:** 7 rhythmic cycle

		Ni3	Kakali	
	Shatshruti	<b>Dha3</b>	• Ni2	Kaisika
	Chatushruti	<b>Dha2</b>	• Ni1	Suddha
	Suddha	<b>Dha1</b>		
		Pa	Panchamam	
	Prati	Ma2		
	Suddha	Ma1		
Dhaivatam				Nishadham
Madhyamam				

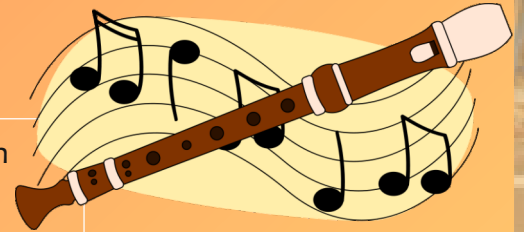




Rishabam	{		Ga3	Anthara	}	Gandharam
		Shatshruti	Ri3	Ga2		
		Chatushruti	Ri2	Ga1		
		Suddha	Ri1			
			Sa	Shadjam		

## HINDUSTANI CLASSICAL MUSIC

- Initially, there was no difference between North and South Indian Music. The differentiation started to happen during the Delhi Sultanate period.
- Amir Khusrau** is considered as the pioneer figure of Hindustani.
- From the very beginning the singers of Hindustani started to follow the **Time Season and Mood theory of Raga**.



*Amir Khusrau's Musical Sonnets*

## Types of Hindustani Music

### A. Classical Hindustani

#### Dhrupad

- It is the **oldest classical music** in India that emerged from the temples of Braj and Awadh.
- It is a **simple and sober composition** that requires effort from the lungs and vocal cords.





- It involves a **very high levels of frequency**.
- Dhrupad performance starts with Alaap followed by:
  - **Alaap->Jod->Sthayi->Antara-> Sanchari->Abhaga**
- **Raja Mansingh Tomar** of Gwalior popularized Dhrupad.
- In the court of Akbar, there were many famous Dhrupad singers like **Baiju Bawra and the most famous Tansen**.
- Tansen was originally known as Ramtanu Pandey, impressed by his singing **Akbar gave him the title of Miyan (Master of Dhrupad)**
- **The popular gharanas of Dhrupad include:**
  - *Dagari Gharana*
  - *Darbhangra Gharana*
  - *Betiah Gharana*
  - *Vishnupur Gharana*

### Khayal

- Khayal is a **Persian** word that means **thought or imagination**.
- The origin of Khayal can be attributed to **Amir Khusrau**.
- As compared to Dhrupad there is **more freedom to singers** in Khayal in terms of structure and form but they need to emphasize on thought.
- Khayal is **romantic** in nature.
- **Khayal performances take place in 2 stages:**
  - **Chota Khayal and Bada Khayal**
- The popular gharana of Khayal includes : *Kairana Gharana, Gwalior Gharana, Patiala Gharan, Jaipur Gharana and Agra Gharana*.

## B. Semiclassical Hindustani

### Thumri

- It was **developed by Bhakti saints** of North India.
- It is a **semi-classical form** that is semi-devotional and semi-romantic.
- The singing highlights **love and devotion** at the same point in time.
  - **Purbi Thumri:** Slow tempo
  - **Punjabi Thumri:** fast tempo
- **Benaras and Lucknow** are 2 popular Gharanas of Thumri

### Dhamar

- It is specifically performed during the festival of **Holi**, played in Barsana, Mathura Brindaban area.
- It highlights the **love affair of Lord Krishna with the Gopis**.

### Tarana

- It **also evolved from North India** and it was very popular among the **aristocratic class** of North India.
- It was created for the purpose of **entertainment only**.
- As such it had **very few meaningful words**.

### Tappa

- It was developed by the **camel riders of North West** who used **local idioms and phrases** for the purpose of singing.



- It is noted for the **quick turn of the phrases**.
- Later singers of Punjab started songs with higher tempo under this category.

**Kawali**

- It was another contribution of **Amir Khusrau** who composed small couplets in the praise of Allah, the prophet, and Sufi saints.
- It is specifically performed during the festival of **Urs**

**Ghazal**

- It is another product of **Persian influence**.
- It is mainly **romantic poetry** but many a time there exist an **underlying Sufi element** with God as the beloved
- **Mirza Ghalib and Mir Taki Mir** were the famous initial Ghazal composers

**CARNATIC MUSIC****Evolution**

- Sangitsara of Vidyaranya is considered as a forerunner of **Carnatic Music**
- In the **middle of 17th century**, **Venkatamukhi** wrote **Chaturdandi Prakashika** which became the bedrock of Carnatic classical music.
- This book mentions **72 Raga Systems** known as **Melakarta Raga System**.
- They are **highly scientific** in nature
- In the 20th century, Carnatic music was further popularised by **Visnu Narayan Bhatkhande**

**Features of Carnatic Music**

- Carnatic singing takes place in **3 stages**:
- It starts with **Ragam** which is an improvised *Alaapana* in free time followed by **Tanam**, it is rhythmic inter-connector, and then **Pallavi** which sets melody to a Taal
- There are **2 popular versions of Carnatic** :
  - **Kriti**: the song is emphasized
  - **Kritanayi**: Music is emphasized

**Famous Personalities**

- **Purandhar Das**: Pitamah of Carnatic music
- **Male trinity**:
  - Thyagaraja
  - Shyamashastri
  - Muthuswami Dikshitkar
- **Female trinity**:
  - DK Pattawal
  - ML Vasanthkumari
  - MS Subbulakshmi







## Regional Music styles

Regional Music	Features
Rasiya Geet, Uttar Pradesh	The rich tradition of singing Rasiya Geet flourished in <b>Braj</b> which is the sacred land of <b>Lord Krishna's charming leelas</b> from time immemorial. This is not confined to any particular festival, but is closely woven into the very fabric of daily life and day to day chores of its people.
Pankhida, Rajasthan	Sung by the <b>peasants of Rajasthan</b> while doing work in the fields, the peasants sing and speak while playing <b>algoza and manjira</b> . The literal <b>meaning</b> of the word 'Pankhida' is <b>lover</b> .
Lotia, Rajasthan	'Lotia' is sung in the <b>chaitra month</b> during the festival - 'Lotia'. <b>Women</b> bring <b>lotas</b> (a vessel to fill water) and <b>kalash</b> (a vessel considered to be auspicious to fill water during worship) filled with water from ponds and wells. They decorate them with flowers and come home.
Pandavani, Chhattisgarh	In Pandavani, <b>tales from Mahabharata</b> are sung as a ballad and one or two episodes are chosen for the night's performance. The main singer continuously sits throughout the performance and with powerful singing and symbolic gestures he assumes all the characters of the episode one after another.
Shakunakhar, Kumaon	Shakunakhar are sung during religious ceremonies of <b>baby-shower, child-birth, Chhati</b> (a ritual done on the sixth day from the birth of a child) <b>Ganesh pooja</b> etc. These songs are <b>sung by only ladies</b> , without any instrument.
Mando, Goa	Goan regional music is a <b>treasury of the traditional music</b> of the Indian subcontinent. <b>Mando</b> , the finest creation of Goan song is a slow verse and refrain composition dealing with love, tragedy and both social injustice and political resistance during Portuguese presence in Goa.
Alha, Uttar Pradesh	Alha, typical ballad of <b>Bundelkhand</b> narrates the heroic deeds of <b>Alha and Udal</b> , the two warrior brothers who





	served <b>Raja Parmal</b> of Majoba. This is the most popular regional music of Bundelkhand which is popular elsewhere in the country as well.
Hori, Uttar Pradesh	Hori singing is basically associated with the <b>festival of Holi</b> only.
Sohar, Uttar Pradesh	Social ceremonies have, at times, served as a potent factor for intermingling of different cultures. <b>North India</b> has a strong tradition of singing ‘Sohar’ songs <b>when a son is born in a family</b> .
Chhakri, Kashmir	Chhakri is a group song which is the most popular form of <b>Kashmir’s</b> folk music.
Laman, Himachal Pradesh	In Laman a <b>group of girls sing a stanza and a group of boys give reply</b> in the song. This continues for hours. Interesting is that the girls singing on one of the peaks of the hill seldom see the faces of the boys singing on another peak. In between is the hill which echoes their love song. Most of these songs are sung especially in Kullu Valley.
Kajri, Uttar Pradesh	Kajri is a folk song <b>sung by women</b> , from Uttar Pradesh and adjacent region, <b>during rainy season</b> . On the <b>third day in the second half of the bhadra</b> , women sing Kajri songs all through the night, while dancing in a semi-circle.
Tappa, Punjab	Tappa is a form of semi classical vocal music inspired by the <b>folk songs of camel riders</b> in the <b>Punjab</b> area. Tappa, in Punjabi and Pashto language, is <b>set in ragas generally used for the semi classical forms</b> . It is characterized by jumpy and flashy tonal movements with rhythmic and rapid notes.
Powada, Maharashtra	Powada is the traditional folk art from Maharashtra. The word Powada itself means “ <b>the narration of a story in glorious terms</b> ”. The narratives are always odes in praise of an individual hero or an incident or place.
Teej Songs, Rajasthan	Teej is celebrated with <b>great involvement by women of Rajasthan</b> . This is a festival celebrated on the third day after the new moon or <b>amavasya</b> of <b>shraavana</b> month.





**Burrakatha,  
Andhra Pradesh**

Burrakatha is a **highly dramatic form of ballad**. A **bottle shaped drum (tambura)** is played by the main performer while reciting a story. The ballad singers, like stage actor, wear make up and a highly stylised costume.

**Bhakha,  
Jammu and Kashmir**

The Bhakha form of folk music is popular in **Jammu** region. Bhakha is **sung by the villagers when harvesting** is done. It is considered to be the regional music with most melodic and harmonious elements. It is sung to the accompaniment of instruments like harmonium.

**Bhuta song,  
Kerala**

The basis of Bhuta song is rooted in **superstitions**. Some communities of Kerala do Bhuta rituals to **send away the evil ghost and spirits**. This ritual is accompanied with **vigorous dancing** and the music has a piercing and eerie character.

**Daskathia,  
Odisha**

Daskathia is a form of ballad singing prevalent in Odisha. Daskathia is a name derived from a unique musical instrument called **“Kathi” or “Ram Tali”**, wooden clappers used during the presentation.

**Bihu songs,  
Assam**

Bihu songs (biyu geet) are the most distinctive type of folk songs of Assam, both for their literary content and for their musical mode. Bihu songs are **blessings for a happy new year and the dance is associated with an ancient fertility cult**

**Sana Lamok,  
Manipur**

Sana Lamok is **sung at the time of coronation ceremony** by the Maaiba (priest). It may also be sung to **welcome the king**.

**Songs of Lai Haraoba Festival,  
Manipur**

The **meaning** of Lai Haraoba is the **festival of Gods and Goddesses**. It is performed for the **Umang-Lai** (forest deity). **Ougri Hangen**, song of creation and Heijing Hirao a ritualistic song is sung on the last day of Lai Haraoba festival.

**Saikuti Zai (songs of Saikuti),  
Mizoram**

Saikuti, a poetess of Mizoram composed songs **in praise of warriors, brave hunters, young men aspiring to be great warriors and hunters** etc.



**Chai hia (songs of the Chai Dance),  
Mizoram**

As per Mizo custom during the **Chapchar Kut festival** not only singing, dance should also continue throughout the festival. Special occasion for singing and dancing is called 'chai' and songs are known as 'chai hia' (chai songs).

**Basanti/ Basant Geet,  
Garhwal**

**Basant or spring season** is welcomed in a unique manner in Garhwal. Land is filled with different colourful flowers. On Basant Panchmi, **floor designs are made with the rice flour and the green oats bundles are used to put impressions with cowdung.**

**Ghasiyari Geet,  
Garhwal**

**Young women** of mountains have to go in far off forests to **get grass** for their cattle. They go to the forest dancing and singing in groups. Along with entertainment emphasis is laid on the **importance of labour** in the Ghasiyari Geet.

**Sukar ke Biah,  
Bhojpuri Song**

The **story of Shukra and Brihaspat** is sung even today – how Shukra forgets the wedding ornament and comes back to take it, where he finds his mother drinking rice water, which is poor man's food. On asking mother about this, his mother answers that she doesn't know whether Shukra's would be wife will even give her rice water or not. Shukra decides to remain unmarried.

**Villu Pattu, "Bow Song",  
Tamil Nadu**

The songs revolve around **theological themes** and the **conquest of good over evil** is emphasised.

**Ammanaivari,  
Tamil Nadu**

Ammanaivari are songs sung **in praise of Chola monarch**. Ammanai is a wooden ball and the women folk sing appropriate songs while playing the ball. This game of Ammanai is still current in Tamil Nadu.

