

Overview



Carnatic Music – An overview

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First Edition.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL

This section presents an overview of the Carnatic Music through the ages.

1.2 MAIN ELEMENTS OF CARNATIC MUSIC

Carnatic music has two main elements: Raaga (Raagam) and Thaala (Thaalam). Raaga is the mode and Thaalam is the rhythmic cycles. There are numerous raagas and thaalams and with their combination you can sing different and wonderful songs. The major raagas are Sankarabharanam, Mohanam, Aarabhi, Hindolam, Kamas etc. The major thaalams are Aadi, rupakam, dhruva, tripura, jhampa, matya.

All the Raagas are based on Swaras. There are seven basic swaras in Indian Classical music. They are Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da and Ni. With different combination of these swaras different ragas were created. The group of first four swaras of the Saptha Swaras - Sa, Ri, Ga, and Ma - is known as the Purvanga. The group of last three notes - Pa, Da, and Ni - is known as Uttharanga.

1.3 DWADASA SWARASTHANAS

Out of the seven swaras, Shadjam (Sa) and Panchamam (Pa) are constant. They are called Achala Swaras. The remaining five swaras admit varieties and they are called Chala Swaras. Both Achala and Chala swaras yield 12 different musical notes and they are called Dwadhasa Swarasthanas.

The Dwadasa Swarasthanas are:

1. Shadjam.....Sa
2. Suddha Rishabam.....Su Ri
3. Chatusruthi Rishabam.....Cha Ri
4. Sadharana Gandharam.....Sa Ga
5. Anthara Ghandaram.....An Ga
6. Suddha Madhyamam.....Su Ma
7. Prathi Madhyamam.....Pra Ma
8. Panchamam.....Pa
9. Suddha Dhaivatham.....Su Dha
10. Chatusruthi Dhaivatham.....Cha Dha
11. Kaisiki Nishadham.....Kai Ni
12. Kakali Nishadham.....Ka Ni2

There are two basic elements for a raaga; the Aarohanam (the ascending notes of raaga on scale) and the Avarohanam (the descending notes of raaga on scale). Arohana and Avarohana together is called Moorhana.

1.4 STHAYI

A series of swaras, beginning with Sa and ending with Ni, is called Sthayi. The Sthayi in which we normally sing is the madhya sthayi. There are Five Sthayis:

- Anumandra Sthayi
- Mandra Sthayi
- Madhya Sthayi
- Tara Sthayi
- Ati-Tara Sthayi

2 THALAM

In Indian Carnatic Music is a time measure or rhythm cycle. As heart beat is to life for a man, Thaalam lends life for whole of a concert. It is said "Sruthi Maata Laya Pitha" which means, the drone emanated from the Tambura is Mother to the music and the Thaalam is like father. The thaalam or time in Carnatic Music is a series of counts made by wave of hand or tap of the hand on the lap or by using both the hands in a manner of clap.

It is very important to understand the following ten terms (Dasha Pranas) related to a thaalam.

2.1 ANGAM

Angam means a limb, unit, or part a thaalam. There are six angams or parts and how they are denoted in musical script are denoted in the following table.

Please note, in the Suladi Saptha (35-thaalam) scheme, only thaalam that require the use of the first three angams are used.

Angam	Script notation	Units represented
Anudrutam	U	1
Drutam	O	2
Laghu	I	Varies: 3,4,5,7,9
Guru	8	8
Plutam	1 8	12
Kakapadam	+	16

2.2 KAALAM (SPEED)

Each composition is rendered at different speeds or kaalam. For example, first speed is the slowest or vilamba kaalam and second speed (twice the first speed) is called Madhyama kaalam and third speed is called Duritha kaalam (twice the second speed).

2.3 KRIYA (ACTION)

Kriya means execution. Earlier, it was mentioned that a thaalam is a cyclical concept with a beginning and an end. During a concert, how will a musician show the beginning, middle or end of a thaalam-cycle? Obviously, this requires some physical display of kriya or time execution.

The physical display is accomplished by the use of hands and fingers. There are three kinds of kriyas: (1) Ghata or beat; (2) Usi or hand wave and (3) Counting with the fingers.

There are two types of kriya - sabdha kriya or action with sound and nishabdha kriya or silent display.

In the sabdha kriya, a person hits the palm of the hand on the thigh or on the other palm, creating a sound. This type of display is made both when starting the first count of a Laghu (A laghu is when a palm is hit on a thigh or the other palm and is followed by a count of fingers).

For example, in the Adhi thaalam (8 aksharas or unit), the laghu (the first 4 aksharas) is represented by the hitting of the hand followed by a count of three fingers (the count of the fingers illustrate the nishabdha or silent action). A hit followed by a wave of the hand is called Drutham (2 units). In Adhi thaalam, there are two Druthams ($2 \times 2 = 4$) following hit and the count of the three fingers (the laghu with 4 aksharas) to make the 8 aksharas.

The Anudrutham is half of the Drutham or is of one akshara or unit.

Anudrutham is used less frequently (e.g. Jhampa thaalam).

2.4 GRAHAM

Graha denotes starting point of the music. A song does not always start at the beginning of a thaalam cycle. There are three types of starting possible.

When a song begins precisely at the beginning of a thaalam, it is called sama graham, e.g. Eva Sudha (Sahana). When a song starts after the thaalam starts, it is called anagata graha - e.g. Nidhi Sala Sukhama (Kalyani); Gnanamusogaradha (Poorvi Kalyani). When a song starts (very rare), at the end of a thaalam's cycle, it is called atita grha - e.g. Sivagama Sundari (Mukhari).

2.5 LAYA

Laya means speed or tempo. The performers must maintain perfect laya, meaning they should neither speed up nor slow down the tempo of a song.

There are three layas: Vilamba laya or slow speed (also known as Chowka kalam), Madhyama laya or medium speed and Duritha laya or fast speed.

2.6 KALA AND MATHRA

Kala represents the fractions of the various units discussed in the Kriya and angam definitions.

A thaalam-cycle is divided into various sub-units - for example, Adhi Thaalam has eight units (a laghu of four plus two druthams of two each). Suppose, if each of these units are further sub-divided into equal time intervals called mathra.

To use a simple analogy, a minute is divided into 60 minutes or 60 mathras. Suppose, if each units of an adhi thaalam is divided into, say 4 mathras or intervals of time each, the thaalam cycle will have a total of 8 units x 4 mathras = 32 mathras.

Depending on the kalam, the same adhi thaalam can also be sub-divided into 2, 4, 8, 16, mathras per count and accordingly, the total mathra count for a 8-akshara Adhi thaalam will vary from 16, 32, 64, 128 mathras.

When one swaram is used per kriya (e.g. each finger count or hit), it is called Eka Kala or first kala. When we use two swaras for each kriya, it is called Vi Kala or second Kala and when we use four swaras for each kriya, we have Chaturasa Kala.

2.7 MAARGAM

Maargam means path. Denotes how the thaalam is displayed in various songs and the number of swaras used within them. There are six maarga or paths. However, the first three (Daskhina, Vartika, and Chitra maarga) are used only in Pallavi's. The other three (Chitratara, Chtratama, and Atichitratama marga) are more common.

Chitratama represents 1 kala or 4 mathras each. For example, the kriti Darini Telusu Konti (Suddha Saveri) or Saroja Dala Nethri (Poorvi Kalyani) are sung in 1 kala.

Chitratama represents 1/2 kala or 2 mathras each. For example, Vatapiganapathim (Hamsadvani) is sung in 1/2 kala.

Atichitratama represents 1/4 kala or 1 mathra for each count. For example, Manasa Etulo (Maalayamarutham) is sung in 1/4 kala.

As the kala goes down, the speed of counting the aksharas in a thaalam will go up. They are inversely related.

2.8 PRASTHARAM

Represents spreading out the angam of a thaalam into its component sub-units. This is more of theoretical interest today.

2.9 YATI

Denotes rhythmic patterns used. There are six types of yatis.

Sama yati: When the rhythmic patterns are of equal scale. For example, look at the following swara pattern.

s s r r g g m m p p d d n n s s

The above has groupings of 4 swaras each and shows the sama yati pattern.

Gopucha Yati (Cow's tail): Denotes rhythmic patterns where it starts with a wide grouping of swaras and it slowly tapers down to the narrow groupings.

- Thyaga Raja Yoga Vaibhavam
- Aga Raja Yoga Vaibhavam
- Raja Yoga Vaibhavam
- Yoga Vaibhavam
- Vaibhavam
- Bhavam
- Vam

Srotovaha Yati: Is the diametric opposite of Gopucha Yati. It starts with a narrow rhythmic or swara pattern and slowly widens to the maximum.

- Sam
- Prakasam
- Tattva Swarupa Prakasam
- Sakala Tattva Swarupa Prakasam
- Siva Saktyadi Sakala Swarupa Prakasam.

The other types of Yatis include: Damaru Yati, Mridanga Yati, and Vishama Yati.

2.10 SULADI SAPTHA TAALAMS

Though there are many thaalam systems in Carnatic Music, the Suladi Sapta Thaalam systems are the most famous since the time of Purandaradasa (1484-1564) and most of the Compositions currently sung are part of the Suladi Sapta Thaalam systems.

Seven Thaalam systems in Carnatic Music (Suladi Sapta Thaalam systems)

<u>Dhruva Thaalam</u> 1-Laghu 1-Dhruta 2-Laghus	<u>Matya Thaalam</u> 1-Laghu 1-Dhruta 1-Laghu	<u>Jampa Thaalam</u> 1-Laghu 1-Anu Dhruta 1-Dhruta	<u>Ata Thaalam</u> 2-Laghus 2-Dhrutas
<u>Tripata Thaalam</u> 1-Laghu 2-Dhrutas	<u>Rupaka Thaalam</u> 1-Dhruta 1-Laghu	<u>Eka Thaalam</u> 1-Laghu	

These seven Thaalam are subdivided, based on the change in the Thaalam due to change in the following five Jaathis (*Jaathis of the Thaalam means that the amount of beats that a laghu can take*):

- Tisra (3 counts - one beat and two finger counts)
- Chatusra (4 counts - one beat and three finger counts)
- Khanda (5 counts - one beat and four finger counts)
- Misra (7 counts one beat and six finger counts)
- Sankeerna (9 counts - one beat and eight finger counts)

Thus totally we get 35 Thaalam after allowing the seven thaalam to be subdivided on the basis of five Jathis. These 35 Thaalam allow further subdivision based on five *gathis* (*Gathis means speed*). The five gathis are once again the same as the above namely Tisra, Chatusra, Khanda, Misra and Sankeerna. These Gathis are also called *Nadis*. Finally, after Jathi subdivision and Gathi subdivision of the Principal Seven Thaalam, we get a total of 175 Thaalam in Classical Carnatic Music. Hence when we try to describe a particular Thaalam we have to take into consideration three elements, which each of the thaalam represents:

- The Name of the Jaathi
- The Name of the Thaalam
- The Name of the Gati

Assume that the name of the Thaalam is Dhruva, the Jaathi is Chatusra and the Nadai is tisra it is called in the following way:

Chatusra Jaathi Dhruva Thaalam Tisra Nadi

There are also other thaalam systems available like 72 Melakarta Thaalam, Navasandhi Thaalam and Chapu Thaalam of which 108 Thaalam are called "Sanda Thaalam" using which most of the Arunagirinathar's Thiruppugazh compositions are done.

3 RAAGAM

Classification of Raagas

- There are two types of raagas - parent raagas or Janaka raagas (also called by the names of Melakarta raaga, Karta raaga, or Sampoonna raaga), and child or children raagas called Janya raagas.
- Janya raagas or child raagas are born from or created from the Janaka or parent raagas.
- There are 72 Janaka or Melakarta raagas.

The twelve Chakras of the 72-melakarta scheme.

1. Indu
2. Netra
3. Agni
4. Veda
5. Bana
6. Rutu
7. Rishi
8. Vasu
9. Brahma
10. Dishi
11. Rudra
12. Aditya

3.1 MELAKARTHA CHART

'Mēlakartā Rāgas'					
'Suddha Madhyamam'			'Prati Madhyamam'		
No.	Raga	Scale	No.	Raga	Scale
1.Indu Chakra			7. Rishi Chakra		

1	Kanakangi	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	37	Salagam	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'
2	Ratnangi	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	38	Jalarnavam	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
3	Ganamurti	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	39	Jhalavarali	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'
4	Vanaspati	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	40	Navaneetam	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
5	Manavati	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	41	Pavani	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'
6	Tanarupi	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	42	Raghupriya	S R ₁ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'
2. Netra Chakra			8. Vasu Chakra		
7	Senaovati	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	43	Gavambhodi	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'
8	Hanumatodi	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	44	Bhavapriya	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
9	Dhenuka	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	45	Shubhapantuvarali	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'
10	Natakapriya	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	46	Shadvoidamargini	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
11	Kokilapriya	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	47	Suvarnangi	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'

12	Rupavati	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	48	Divyamani	S R ₁ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'
3. Agni Chakra			9. Brahma Chakra		
13	Gayakapriya	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	49	Dhavalambari	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'
14	Vakulabharanam	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	50	Namanarayani	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
15	Mayamalavagowla	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	51	Kamavardani	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'
16	Chakravakam	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	52	Ramapriya	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
17	Suryakantam	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	53	Gamanashrama	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'
18	Hatakambari	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	54	Vishwambari	S R ₁ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'
4. Veda Chakra			10. Disi Chakra		
19	Jhankaradhwani	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	55	Shamalangi	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'
20	Natabhairavi	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	56	Shanmukhapriya	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
21	Keeravani	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	57	Simhendramadhy amam	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'

22	Kharaharapriya	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	58	Hemavati	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
23	Gourimanohari	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	59	Dharmavati	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'
24	Varunapriya	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	60	Neetimati	S R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'
5. Bana Chakra			11. Rudra Chakra		
25	Mararanjani	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	61	Kantamani	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'
26	Charukesi	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	62	Rishabhapriya	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
27	Sarasangi	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	63	Latangi	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'
28	Harikambhoji	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	64	Vachaspati	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
29	Dheerasankarabharanam	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	65	Mechakalyani	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'
30	Naganandini	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	66	Chitrambari	S R ₂ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'
6. Rutu Chakra			12. Aditya Chakra		
31	Yagapriya	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁ S'	67	Sucharitra	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁ S'

32	Ragavardhini	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂ S'	68	Jyoti swarupini	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂ S'
33	Gangeyabhushani	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₃ S'	69	Dhatuwardani	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₃ S'
34	Vagadheeswari	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₂ S'	70	Nasikabhushani	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₂ S'
35	Shulini	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₂ N ₃ S'	71	Kosalam	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₃ S'
36	Chalanata	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₁ P D ₃ N ₃ S'	72	Rasikapriya	S R ₃ G ₃ M ₂ P D ₃ N ₃ S'

3.2 JANYA RAAGAS

Janya Raaga	Melakartha
AbhEri	--- 22
abhOgi	--- 22
AHiri	--- 8
amarasenapriya	--- 60
amrithavAHini	--- 20
amRuthavarshiNi	--- 66
Anandhabhairavi	--- 20
AndhOLika	--- 22
Arabhi	--- 29
ardhradhesi	--- 15
asAvEri	--- 8
atAna	--- 29
bAgEshrI	--- 22
baHudhAri	--- 28
balaHamsa	--- 28
ban'gALa	--- 29
begada	--- 29
bEHAg	--- 29
bhairavam	--- 17
bhairavi	--- 20
bhUpALam	--- 8

bhUshavaLi	---	64
bilaHari	---	29
bindhumAlini	---	16
bowLi	---	15
brindhAvanasAran'ga	---	22
chandhrajyothi	---	41
ChAyAnAta	---	34
ChAyAtharan'giNi	---	28
chinthAmaNi	---	56
chiththaranjani	---	22
dhanyAsi	---	8
dharbAru	---	22
dhesAkshi	---	29
dhEvagAndhAri	---	29
dhEvakriya	---	22
dhEvamanOHari	---	22
dhEvAmRuthavarshiNi	---	22
dhilipakam	---	22
dhipaka	---	51
dhvijAvanthi	---	28
gamakakriya	---	53
gamanakriya	---	53
gambhiranAta	---	36
gAnavAridhi	---	34
Gantha	---	20
garudaDhvani	---	29
gopikavasantham	---	20
gopriya	---	62
gowLa	---	15
gowLipanthu	---	15
gowri	---	15
gujjari	---	15
gumma kAmbhoji	---	15
gundhakriya	---	15
HamirkalyANi	---	65
HamsaDhvani	---	29
HamsanAdham	---	60
HamsAnandhi	---	53
HaridhAsapriya *	---	28
HindhoLam	---	20
HindhoLavasantha	---	22

HindhusthAni bEHAg	---	29
HindhusthAni kApi	---	22
HusEni	---	22
IshamanOHari	---	28
jaganmOhini	---	15
janaranjani	---	29
janjUti	---	28
jayamanOHari	---	22
layanArAyaNi	---	22
layanthasEna	---	22
layanthashrI	---	20
JinAvaLi	---	39
jingla	---	20
jujAHuli	---	28
kadhana kuthUHalAm	---	29
kaikavAsi	---	60
kalagada	---	13
kalAniDhi	---	22
kalAvathi	---	16
kalyANa vasantham	---	21
kamalAmanOHari	---	27
kamAs	---	28
kAmbhOji	---	28
kAnadA	---	22
kannada	---	29
kannadaban'gALa	---	15
kannadagowLa	---	22
kApijingla	---	22
kApinArAyaNi	---	28
karnAtaka bEHAg	---	28
karnAtaka kApi	---	22
kedhAragowLa	---	28
kEdhAram	---	29
kiraNAvaLi	---	21
koiAHalam	---	29
kOkilaDhvani	---	28
kRushNaveNi	---	15
kunthalavarALi	---	28
kuraN~ji	---	29
kuthUHalAm	---	29
lalithA	---	15

madhuvanathi	---	59
madhyamAvathi	---	22
malaHari	---	15
mAlavashrI	---	22
mAlavi	---	28
malayamArutham	---	16
mallikA vasantham	---	15
mAnd	---	29
mandhAri	---	51
mangaLakaishiki	---	15
maNirangu	---	22
manjari	---	22
mAnji	---	20
manOHari	---	22
mArgaHindhola	---	20
mEchabowLi	---	15
mEchakAn'gi	---	53
mEGaranjani	---	15
mOHana	---	28
mOHanakalyANi	---	65
muKAri	---	22
nabhOmaNi	---	40
nAdhachinthAmaNi *	---	22
nAdhanAmakriya	---	15
nAdhatharan'gini	---	22
nAgasvarAvaLi	---	28
naLinakAnthi	---	27
nArAyaNagowLa	---	28
nArAyani	---	28
nAta	---	36
nAtakuraN~ji	---	28
navarasa kalAnidhi *	---	28
navarasa kannada	---	28
navaroj	---	29
nAyaki	---	22
nIlAmbari	---	29
pAdi	---	15
panchama rAga	---	22
phalamanjari	---	22
pharaz	---	15
prathApa varALi	---	28
pravAlajothi	---	28

punnAgavarALi	---	8
pUrNachandhrika	---	29
pUrnalalitha	---	19
pUrnashadjam	---	22
pUrNashajja	---	20
pUrvi	---	15
pUrvikalyANi	---	53
pushpalathika	---	22
rAgapanjaram	---	28
rAma manOHari	---	52
ranjani	---	59
ravichandhrika	---	28
rEvagupthi	---	15
rIthigowLa	---	22
rudhrapriya	---	22
saHAna	---	28
saindhavi	---	22
sAlakabhairavi	---	22
sAma	---	28
sAramathi	---	20
sAran'ga	---	65
sAran'ganAtha	---	15
sarasvathi	---	64
sarasvathi manOHari	---	28
sAvEri	---	15
shrIrAga	---	22
shrIranjani	---	22
shruthiranjani	---	61
sidhdhasEna	---	22
sindhu bhairavi	---	10
sindhu kannada	---	28
sindhu mandhAri	---	29
sindhu rAmakriya	---	15
sowrAshtram	---	17
sudhdha ban'gALa	---	22
sudhdha dhanyAsi	---	20
sudhdha dhanyAsi	---	22
sudhdha dhesi	---	20
sudhdha rAga	---	57
sudhdha sAvEri	---	29
sudhdha tharan'gini	---	28
supOshini	---	28
supradhIpam	---	17

surati	---	28
svarabhUshani	---	22
svarAvaLi	---	28
svaravEdhi *	---	28
thakka (a)	---	15
thakka (b)	---	15
thilan'g	---	28
thivravAHini	---	46
umAbharaNam	---	28
valachi	---	16
varALi	---	39
vasanthA	---	17
vasanthabhairavi	---	14
vegavAHini	---	16
vijayanAgari	---	58
vijayashrI	---	41
vijayavasantha	---	54
vINA vAdhini	---	28
vIraivasantham	---	24
vivardhini	---	28
yadhukulakAmbhOji	---	28
yamunAkalyANi	---	65

3.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF MELAKARTHA RAAGAS

- They carry all the seven swaras (s r g m p d n) in the ascending order and the same seven swaras (s r g m p d n) in the descending order.
- The notes ascend and descend in exactly the same order.
- Each swaram must occur only once in the Arohanam and only once in the Avarhonam
- Both the arohanam and the avarohanam must have the Tara Sthayi (upper s) as one of the notes.

Remember: Although there are seven swaras, there are varieties with them (e.g. Antara Gandharam and Sadharana Gandharam, Sudha Dhaivatam, Chatussruthi Dhaviatam and so on; using one of these notes in combination with the other six swaras will create a new raaga).

3.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF JANYA RAAGAS

- A janya raaga originates from a Janaka or a parent raaga. Each parent raaga can have several child raagas originating from them.
- Therefore, the child raaga uses the same scale as the parent. That is, it takes the same swaras that the parent uses.
- However, unlike the Janaka or parent raaga, a Janya raaga may not use the same seven swaras in both ascending and descending order. For example, it can use one type of a swara (e.g. Suddha Rishabam) in the arohanam while a different type of the same swara (e.g. Chatussruti Rishabam) in the avarohanam. For example, Bhairavi:

s r g m p d n s
 .
 s n d p m g r s

- Similarly, a Janya raaga need not use all the seven notes of the parent. It may use all seven notes in the ascending order while it can use six notes in the descending order or even use other combinations. For example, the raaga Saramathi has the following swara sequence:

s r g m p d n s
 .
 s n d m g s

- Also, unlike the parent, a Janya raaga can repeat a swara. For example, the raaga Sahana has the following sequence:

S r g m p m D n s
 .
 s n d p m G m R g r s

- Sometimes, a janya raaga can take one or two swaras not present in the parent raaga.

Varja Raagam

- Is a characteristic of Janya raagas.
- Either in the arohanam or in the avarohanam, one or two swaras may be omitted. These omitted swaras are called varja swarams.
- When a raaga has only six of the seven notes of the parent in both avarohanam and the arohanam, it is called Shadava. For example, Sriranjani raaga:

.

s r g m d n s

.

s n d m g r s

- When a raaga takes only five of the seven notes of the parent, it is called audava. For example, Mohana:

.

s r g p d s

.

s d p g r s

- Other combinations include, seven swaras in arohanam and six on the avarohanam (Sampoorna – shadava); six in the arohanam and five in the avarohanam (Shadava – audava) etc.

Vakra Raagam

- When one or two swaras, either in arohanam or the avarohanam occur out of order or in an irregular manner, it is called a vakra raagam. For example, Sriraagam, where the avarohanam is vakram or not in the order of swaras.

.

s r m p n s

.

s n p d n p m r g r s

- In non-vakra raagas, notes go up and down in a regular order
- In vakra raaga, a prior note could repeat itself (e.g. n and r in the above example). However, this is not always true (e.g, Mukhari).

- There are three kinds of vakra raagams.
 - Raagas in which only the arohanam has vakra swarams (irregular order). Example: Anandhabhairavi.
 - Raagas in which only avarohanam has vakra swarams (irregular order). Example: Sriraagam
 - Raagas in which vakra swaras (irregular order) occur both in arohanam and avarohanam (e.g. Sahana).

Upanga and Bhashanga Raagas

- A upanga raaga is a janya raaga that only takes swaras belonging to its parent (e.g. Mohanam (child of Harikamboji which has the swaras Sa, Ri (chatusruthi), Ga (Antara), Ma (Suddha), Pa, Da (Chatusruthi), and Ni (Kaisiki) – s n d p m g r s)

.
 s r g p d s
 .
 s d p g r s

- A bhashanga raaga is a janya raaga that takes both swaras belonging to its parent and also one or two foreign swaras - e.g. Kambhoj. (also a child of Harikamboji which has the swaras Sa, Ri (chatusruthi), Ga (Antara), Ma (Suddha), Pa, Da (Chatusruthi), and Ni (Kaisiki) – s n d p m g r s)).

.
 s r g m p d s
 .
 s n d p m g r s

Gana Raagas

- The characteristics or true nature of a Gana raaga is revealed by singing the thanam (Ghanam); also, known as the Madhyama Kalam.
- Examples of Ghana raaga include: Nattai, Gowlai, Arabhi, Varali, and Sri in which Sri Thyagaraja has composed the pancharathnas.

It also includes the raagas – Kedaram, Narayanagowlai, Saranganata, Bauli, and Ritigowla.

3.5 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RAAGAS

The thirteen characteristics of a Raaga, mentioned in the Sanskrit works on music which established the swaroota or melodic entity of the Raga, are known as Raga Thrayodasa Lakshanas. They are: Graha, Hamsa, Madra, Thara, Nyasa, Apanyasa, Sanyasa, Vinyasa, Bahutwa, Alpatwa, Sampurna, Shadava, Audava.

- Gruha Swaram: The note on which the Raga is commenced. Starting note of a Sangathi or Item or Ragam. There may be One, Two or even more Graha Swaras in a Ragam.
- Hamsa/Jiva Swaram The note which revealed the melodic entity or the Swaroota of the Raga; (Soul of the raga). To show the Swaroota of the Raga in an Alapana or sangathi, this note is sung repeatedly, very often. This can be considered as the Main swara of the raga. There can be 1 or more Hamsa swaras in a raga.
- Nyasa Swaram Ending note of the raga; the note on which the Raga was concluded.
- Madram and Tharam the lowest and highest notes respectively, beyond which the Raga sancharas should not extend. Madram defines the notes that are singable in the Mandra Stayi for the particular Raga. The swaras lower than that should not be sung/performed. Similarly, Thara Swaram defines the notes in Thara Stayi which are allowed in the raga.
- Apanyasam A Raga Alapana is done in different sections or parts or stages. Apanyasam is the starting note of each section.
- Sanyasam is the ending note of each section in the raga alapana.
- Vinyasam In each section of the Raga alapana, Vinyasa is the note used to show the Raga 'Kalai'/Chhaya or the essence of raga.
- Bahutwam the note that is used frequently in the raga. It has two sub types -
 - Alanganam and Abhyasam Sancharas revolve around these note.
- Alpathvam the note that is used sparingly in the raga. Two subtypes
 - Langanam The swara is pronounced, but the note sung is actually the neighbouring tone. So though the Langanam Swara appears to be performed, the actual sruti/frequency of that swara is rarely performed. It's like creating an illusion of that swara being sung, while the actual swara sounded is different.
 - Anabhyasam is a note that's completely omitted or rarely performed.

- Sampoornam A raga consisting of all 7 Swaras in both Arohanam and Avarohanam is called a Sampoorna Raga. All the sapta swaras are used when performing this raga.
- Shadavam is a Raga constituted of 6 notes.
- Audavam is a Raga constituted of 5 notes.

3.6 RAAGAS FOR VARIOUS PERIODS OF A DAY

Although today we do not differentiate between raagas suited for various periods of a day, certain raagas are best sung at certain times of the day. The following list gives a brief overview of raagas that are appropriate for a certain time of the day.

Suitable Raagas	Time
Bhoopalam, Bauli, Malayamarutham	Early morning and before sun rise
Bilahari, Kedaram, Dhanyasi	Mornings and after sun rise
Asaveri, Saveri, Devamanohari	Before mid-day
Sriraagam, Manirangu, Madhayamavati	Noon to Midday
Mukhari, Begadai	Late noon (1 to 4 PM)
Vasantha, Nattakuranji, Poorvikalyani	Evening
Neelambari, Kedaragowla	Night
Bhairavi, Kamboji, Shankarabharanam, Kalyani	Any time of the day

Source: Splendor of South Indian Music by Dr. Chelladurai

3.7 RAAGAS EXPRESSING VARIOUS EMOTIONS

Certain raagas bring out certain emotions when they are rendered. The following gives a brief example of such raagas.

Emotion	Examples of Raagas
Karuna or Compassion	Sahana, Nadanamakriya, Kanada
Sringara (Romance)	Surai, Khamas, Huseni
Raudra (Anger)	Atana, Arabhi
Veera (Valor)	Bilahari, Devagandhari, Hamsadvani

Hasya (Humor)	Mohanam, Hamsadvani	Kedaram,
Mangalam (conclusion of auspicious or happy occasions)	Saurashtram, Madhyamavati, Yadukulakamboji	Surari,
Arpuda (amazement)	Saranga, Hindustani Behag	
Bibatsa (Disgust)	Atana	
Bhayankara (Fear)	Punnagavarali	
Shantha (Peace)	Sama, Vasantha	

Source: Splendor of South Indian Music by Dr. Chelladurai

4 MUSICAL FORMS

Musical forms or structures can be classified into two basic formats: Abhyasa Gaanam or those useful for the purposes of learning and practicing music and Sabha Gaanam, those useful for the purposes of performing such as, in a concert or public gathering.

Early music lessons begin with Sarali Varisa (S R G M P D N) , Jantai Varisa (SS RR GG MM PP DD NN SS), Thara Sthayi and thakku sthayi varisas, Dhattu Varisa, Alankaram, Geetham, Swarajathi, Jatiswaram, and Varnam. Similarly, at the next higher stage, students begin learning Varnams, Kritis, Padam, Javali, Thillana, Raagamalika etc. These are Sabha Gaanam.

Let us discuss some of these musical forms:

4.1 GEETHAM

Geetham is one of the simple musical forms and permits a student to learn a composition without the complexities of Pallavai, Anupallavi, Charanam etc. It is a stepping stone for the next higher musical form, the Kritis. Usually Geetham is sung from start to finish without a break. Geethams themselves come in various forms such as Sadharana or ordinary Geetham; Sanchari Geetham and Lakshana Geetham (highlighting the characteristics of raagas, both Janya and Janaka raagas).

Geeta lakshana: The music of the geetha is simple melodic extension of the raga in which it is composed. Its tempo is uniform. It is a continuous composition without the sections pallavi, anupallavi and charanam. The geetha is sung without repetition from the beginning to end. Some geethas have two sections

(Khandikas) and some have three. Some geethas are concluded by repeating portion of the opening part.

Sanchari Geethas: are usually in praise of God, Musical luminaries and Acharyas. Ex: The *Sapta Tala Geetha* in *Nata Raga "Gana Vidya Durandara"* in praise of Venkata Subbayya by Pydala Gurumurthy Sastry.

Geethas are set in medium tempo. There are no sangatis or variations and the flow of music is natural. Neither intricate combinations nor terse sancharis are found in its music. The swarupa is well brought out in each case. For each note of the Dhathu there is usually a syllable in the Sahitya.

Sometimes meaningless phrases are found interspersed in it. There are called Matrika Padas or Geethalankara phrases. Ex: *aa yiya yiya* in Arabi Geetham "*Rere Sri Rama*". These phrases lend a characteristic beauty to the sahitya of geethas. They are introduced for onramentation only. These syllables remind one of similar syllables occurring in samaganam. There are instances of famous Sanskrit slokas which have been cleverly introduced as sahityas for sanchari geethas. The geetha in Bhairavi Raga "*Sri Ramachandra*" and the geetha in Nata Raga "*Amari Kimari*" are well known examples.

Geethas are compositions in Ekakshara Kalam (One Swara for each count). Purandara Dasa's introductory geethas in praise of Vigneswara, Maheswara and Vishnu are sometimes referred to as Pillari Geethas. The significant introduction of vowels in the very first geetha is noteworthy and justifies the genius of the composer. *Pydala Gurumurthy Sastry* was a prolific composer of geethas after Purandara Dasa. He is referred to as '*Veyyi Geethala*' *Pydala Gurumurthy Sastry*. After him no noteworthy composer has attempted to compose Sanchari Geethas.

Geethas are sung from the beginning to the end without repeating the avarthas. If a geetha consists of two sections (Kandikas) as in Kalyani "*Kamala Jaadala*", the second section is sung after the first.

There are different categories of Sadharana Geetha

1. **Pillari Geetha:** Geethas written in praise of God like Vigneswara, Mahesara, Mahavishnu etc are called Pillari Geetha. Ex: Sri Gananadha in Malahari Ragam, Rupaka Thalam.
2. **Gana Raga Geetha:** Geethas written in Gana Ragas like Nata, Gowla, Arabi, Sri Ragam, Varaali are called Gana Raga Geethas. Ex: Re Re Sri Rama in Arabi Ragam, Triputa Thalam
3. **3. Rakthi Raga Geetha:** Geethas set to Rakthi ragas like Mohana and Kalyani are called Rakthi Raga Geethas. Ex: Vara Veena in Mohana Ragam. Rupaka Thalam.
4. **4. Raga Malika Geetha:** In a same geetha, if more than one raga is used, it's called Raga Malika Geetha. This type of Geethas are not in use today.

4.1.1 LAKSHANA GEETHAM

In a Lakshana Geetha, Sahityam will describe the lakshna of the Raga in which the Geetha is set to. There will be a small Deiva Stuthi too.

Lakshna Geethas describe the following lakshanas of the ragas:

- Melam/Janyam: Is the Ragam a Mela Kartha ragam or a derivative ragam (Janya Ragam) based on a Melam.
- Bashanga or Ubhanga Ragam
- Whether the raga is Audava, Shadava or Sampurna Raga.
- Arohana and Avarohana of the Ragam
- Vakram/Varjam - If there's any vakram or varjam in Arohana/Avarohana of the Ragam
- Jiva, Nyasa (Ending Note) and Graha (Starting) swaras of the raga.

Notable composers who wrote Geethas:

- Purandara Dasa
- Paidala Gurumurthy Sastry
- Govindhacharya
- Venkata Makhi
- Rama Mathya

4.2 SWARAPALLAVI / SWARAJATHI

A *Swara Pallavi* (also known as *Jathi Swaram*) is a kind of composition which has only the Dhathu part (Swaras) with no Sahitya. There are learnt after learning Geethas and before Varanas. These are scholarly compositions and their Dhathu has the Raga Bhavam. Usually Swara Pallavis are set to Madhyama Kalam (Medium Tempo) and set to Adhi or Chaapu Thal.

Swara pallavis can have 2 or 3 parts in the following manner:

1. Pallavi – Anu pallavi – Charanam
2. Pallavi – Charanam

In some charanams Mrudanga Jatis are heard, hence the name “Jathi Swaram”.

Swara pallavis usually have 4 to 8 charanams.

Compositional structure of a Swara Pallavi is same as that of Swara jati. The only difference is, a Swarajati has the Maathu part (Sahityam) too where Swara Pallavi lacks the Sahitya part.

Notable composers who wrote Swara Pallavis include

- Srimaan. Sri. Ramacharyulu
- Swathi Thirunaal

- Ponnaiah Pillai

Swarajati: Unlike a Geetham, a Swarajathi has divisions similar to a regular kriti into Pallavai, Anupallavi, and Charanam. It is not necessary to have all three divisions in every Swarajathi; some do not have Anupallavi. Swarajati is useful for a student to learn the intricacies of both swaras and thaalam or rhythm control at the same time. While Swarajathis are useful learning tools, not all Swarajathis are simple and some Swarajathis composed by Shyama Sastri, for example, are quite complex and requires extreme dexterity and knowledge to render.

4.3 VARNAM

Varnam is the bridge between the two musical forms, Abhyasa Gaanam and Sabha Gaanam. Learning many Varnams and in many raagams makes a student of music very proficient in the art. Varnams, not only bring out the lakshana or characteristics of a raaga but, they also render the voice flexible and mellifluous and trained in handling complex swara patterns and in obtaining control over laya or timing.

Structure of Varnams

- The Sahityam part of a varnam is very minimal, and mostly of Bhakti or Srungara Rasam.
- Varnams are compositions under Chitra-Thara-Margam. So they have 4 aksharams per kriya.
- A varnam has two parts. First part is known as Purvangam and it is followed by Utharangam
 - Purvangam consists of Pallavi, Anu Pallavi, Mukthayi Swarams
 - Utharangam consists of Charanam, Ethugada Swarams (also known as Charana Swarams or Chitta Swarams)
- Varnams usually have 4 or 5 ethugada swarams.
 - 1st and 2nd ethugada swarams - 1 avartham each. First ethugada swaram is mostly made up of Dirgams.
 - 3rd Ethugada swaram - 2 or 3 avarthams. Mostly short notes, no dirga swarams.
 - 4th Ethugada Swaram - 4 avarthams. Mixture of Dirgam and non-dirgam notes. This one has janta, dhattu pryoogas and rare sancharas of the raga.
 - Understanding and practising ethugada swarams is the first step in learning kalpana swarams.

Two major varnams forms are: Tana varnam and Pada varnam; sub-classification of these include: Padajati varnam, and Raagamalika varnams.

Taana varnam, as the name implies, are in the form of tanams. In taana varnam, sahityam and lyrics are used only in the Pallavi, anupallavi, and charnam. Taana Varanams are used primarily for musical practice and are often set in madhyama (middle) or Duritha (fast) tempo.

In contrast, PadaVarnam, also known as ChaukaVarnam, is sung in slow tempo (chaukakaala meaning vilamba or slow tempo) and hence gives ample scope. Some of the well-known Taana varnams include Sarasijaakshhaa in Kedara Gowlam, Saarasakshi in Kalyani, and Mahishaasura Mardhini in Andolika (composer: Muthia Bhagavathar).

Pada varnams are very often used during dance. Padams, when repeated, allow a dancer to exhibit footwork and various expressions. Some of the well-known pada varnams include: Chalamela in Natakurunji, Pankajakshi in Kamboji, Sami Ninnekoru in Atana.

Composers who wrote Padha Varnams are: Govinda Swamy Iyer, Pallavi Seshayyar, Mysore Sadhasiva Rao.

Padajati varnam is a hybrid of tana varnam because, in padajati varnam, some of the jatis or rhythmic words spill into the main body of the varnam.

Raagamalika varnam, as the name implies, is composed in several raagas. Pallavi - One Raagam, Anu Pallavi - One Raagam, Mukthiyai Swaram - Two Raagams, Charanam - One Ragam, Chitta Swarams - Each in different Raagas. Eg: Valachi Valachi - Navaragamalika Varnam in Adi Thalam, by Patnam Subramnya Iyer

4.4 KEERTHANA

Keertana is a precursor to the kriti form of music. Keerthanams are generally in praise of God, pleading to God or narrating some mythological events. In Keertana, the lyrics are more important than the swaras or niravals. Keertanas are also somewhat similar to Kritis in that they also have Pallavi, Anupallavi, and Charanam divisions. It is also likely that there are several charanams in a Keertana. Keertanas are particularly suited for group singing and for bhajan-type environment where bhakthi and devotional singing is more important than musical talent.

4.5 KRITHI

Kriti is the highest musical form. It has clear divisions in terms of Pallavi, Anupallavi, and Charanam (although some kritis do not have anupallavis).

Most of the great composers's creations would fall under kritis. The great advantage of a kriti is unlike, Geethams, kirtanas, and other forms, a kriti give much scope for a musician to engage in creative embellishments such as niravals, sangatis, etc. It also gives scope for thaala or rhythm expositions and a kriti by starting on various starting points or eduppus such as Samam, Anahata and Athita, provide complexity during computational expositions.

4.6 RAAGAMALIKA

Raagamalika is a composition set in several raagas or a garland (malika) of raagas. Raagamalikas are not restricted only to Kriti form but also extends to Geethams, Swarajatis and Varnams. Each unit of a raagamalika will be set to a different raagam and at the end of each unit, it will be denoted by Chitta Swarams set in the same raaga as that of the Pallavi. This type of signature is called Maguda Swarams. The Sahityam or lyrics used during the Maguda Swaram is called the Maguda Sahityam and is useful for connecting the various units of a Raagamalika with the Pallavi.

4.7 JAVALI

Javali is a musical form primarily used during dance. Most Javali's are set in madhyamakaala or medium speed. They mostly express simple themes including love and other emotions expressed between a man and a woman.

4.8 THILLANA

Thillana: Thillanas are popular both in Carnatic music concerts and during dance programmes. Thillanas can range from the simple to the most complex in terms of its rhythmic arrangements. Thillanas use both sahityam or lyrics and jatis or rhythm words and generally set in medium or Madhyama kaala.

5 TIMELINE OF CARNATIC MUSIC

Time Period	Important Creations	Important Personalities	Notes
> 1000 BC	Sama Veda	-	Chants to Vedic hymns
500 - 1000 BC	Parivrajaka Upanishad Early Tamil school	Narada	Equivalent of Swara system defined
2nd century AD	Natya Sastra Silappadikaram	Bharata Ilango Adigal	Treatise on Dance and music (references to Thaalam, musical modes & forms) References to Tamil music concepts
5th century AD	Brihaddesi	Matanga	Early compilation of Raagas, then known as Jaatis
7th century AD	Kudimiyamalai inscriptions (stone) in Pudukottai district, Tamilnadu	-	Musical notations (Probably the first)
7th - 9th century AD	Tevaram Tirumurai Divyaprabandha	Appar Sundaramurti Tirugnanasambandar Manikkavachakar Other Nayanmars & Azhwars	Sacred Tamil music forms Pann concept
12th century AD	Gita Govinda Sangeeta Makaranda Panditaradhya Charita Sangeeta Sudhakara	Jayadeva Narada Palkuriki Somanatha Haripaladeva	Classification of Gamakas Various srutis identified
1210 - 1247 AD	Sangeeta Ratnakara	Sarngadeva	Desi system of music was explained in detail. The 22-sruti concept was born. Distinction between Marga and Desi given.
12th, 13th & 14th	-	-	Gradual emergence of Tanjavur and Vijayanagar

Time Period	Important Creations	Important Personalities	Notes
century AD			as seats of music. Muslim invasion of North India. Development of Hindustani music.
14th century AD	Raaga Tarangini Sangeeta Sara	Lochana Kavi Vidyaranya (1320 - 1380 AD)	Development of the concept of Raaga alapana.
15th century AD	Tiruppugazh	Arunagirinathar Purandaradasa (1484 - 1564) Annamacharya (1424 - 1503) Kanakadasa	Introduction and structuring of basic music lessons. Evolution of kriti, pada formats Growth of Namasankeertana and Bhajana Paddhati (group rendition of devotional music).
1550 AD	Swaramela Kalanidhi	Ramamatya	Explanation of the word <i>Mela</i> , Vina techniques and other musical concepts.
1609 AD	Raaga Vibodha	Somanatha	-
1660 AD	Sangeeta Parijata	Ahobala	-
17th century AD (approximately)	Chaturdandi Prakasika	Venkatamakhi	Evolution of modern music theory. Development of 72-mela system.
17th century AD	Anupa Sangeeta Vilasa	Bhavabhatta Shahoji, Maharaja of Tanjavur (1684 - 1710)	Patronage of music and composers.
17th - 18th century AD	Sangraha Choodamani	Govindacharya	Development of musical forms like Varnams. Musical treatise with the 72-melakarta scheme along with names written.
18th century AD	-	Trinity of Carnatic music - Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama	Regarded as the Golden era of Carnatic music.

Time Period	Important Creations	Important Personalities	Notes
		Sastri Other Tamil composers like Gopalakrishna Bharati	
19th century AD	-	Composers like Subbaraya Sastri, Swati Tirunal, Tachi Singaracharlu, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Vina Seshanna and Subbarama Dikshitar	Carnatic music became richer with more compositions.
1895 - 1950 AD	Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarsini	Composers like Papanasam Sivan, Koteeswara Iyer, Mysore Vasudevachar, Muthaiah Bhagavatar	Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions with notations published through the <i>Sampradaya Pradarsini</i> . Concepts like Gamakas etc explained in the same. Emergence of Sabhas. Golden era for Carnatic concert scene. Emergence of institutional education for music. Development of mass media like radio and recording companies. Influx of patriotic songs in the wake of the Indian freedom movement. Carnatic music came to be adopted in film music.
20th century AD	-	-	Technological developments as a result of the electronic and computer age. Adoption of western instruments like Guitar, Mandolin, Keyboard etc in the concert scene. Arrival of TV, cassettes,

Time Period	Important Creations	Important Personalities	Notes
			CDs, CD-ROMs, VCDs etc. Growth and globalisation of professional music.

6 WESTERN VS. CARNATIC

Carnatic Swaras and Western Notes -A Comparison		
No.	Carnatic Swara Name	Note in the Western System
1	Sa or Shadja	C (Do)
2	Suddha Rishabha	D flat (Re)
3	Chatussruti Rishabha	D
4	Sadharana Gandhara	E flat (Mi)
5	Antara Gandhara	E
6	Suddha Madhyama	F (Fa)
7	Prati Madhyama	F sharp
8	Panchama or Pa	G (So)
9	Suddha Daivata	A flat (La)
10	Chatussruti Dhaivata	A
11	Kaisiki Nishadha	B flat (Ti)
12	Kakali Nishadia	B

What is an octave?

An octave is doubling the pitch of a swara by a factor of 2. Take a look at a keyboard. You will notice the C key. In Carnatic music, the C key is called one kattai or a pitch of one. In a keyboard, the C key is followed by D, E, F, G, A, and B keys. The B key is again followed by another C key. That is, the range between a lower C to the next high is one octave. The range that begins from the next C until the next higher B is reached is Octave 2 and so on.

In Western Music, the interval between two keys or frequencies between two keys (.e.g. D and E) are of fixed intervals.

However, in Carnatic music, the intervals between two keys are not absolute intervals but relative intervals or nominal intervals.

In the keyboard, there are black keys in between the white keys that represent pitches (e.g. C, D, etc.) These black keys represent half pitches or frequencies between two swaras or notes (e.g. between C and D). In a keyboard, there are five white keys in between the seven black keys that represent the primary

notes. The twelve notes are formed when we add the seven primary notes to the five half-notes or in-between frequency notes.

The twelve divisions are common both to Carnatic music and Western music.

Notation in Indian Music

There are two basic ways to write music - *Staff notation* and *script notation*.

Western music uses the Staff notation approach. In this approach, music is written on five parallel lines. The position of the note on the line and the space between lines indicate pitch.

The script notation is common to Indian music including, Carnatic music. In script notation, music is written on straight lines. The pitch, intervals and related measures are indicated by using additional symbols. The following will give a basic understanding of the script notation.

Duration (time)	Swaras or Notes	Comments
1 akshara or unit time	s r g m p d n	
2 aksharas	S R G M P D N	
3 aksharas	s,, r,, g,, m,, p,, d,, n,, or S, R, G, M, P, D, N,	Each comma represents one aksharam or unit time
4 akshara	s,,, r,,, g,,, m,,, p,,, d,,, n,,, or S,,R,,G,,M,,P,,D,,N,,	
Reducing the time	— s s === s s	One horizontal line on top of swaras indicate that the time is one-half and two lines on top denote that the time is one-quarter and so on.
Sthayi or pitch s r g m s r g m s r g m g	A dot on the top of a note indicates that it belongs to the higher octave and a dot below the note indicates that it belongs to the lower octave. Without a dot, indicates middle range or manthra sthayi.

Swara type

- The sixteen swaras that we discussed earlier, are represented using the following vowel notations.

Swara	Notation
Suddha Rishabha	ra
Chatussruti Rishbha	ri
Shatsruti Rishbha	ru
Suddha Gandhara	ga
Sadharana Gandhara	gi
Antara Gandhara	gu
Suddha Dhaivatam	dha
Chatussruti Dhaivatam	dhi
Shatsruti Dhaivatam	dhu
Suddha Nishadam	na
Kaisiki Nishadam	ni
Kakali Nishadam	ni
Sudha Madhyamam	ma
Prati Madhyamam	mi
Shadjam (single type)	sa
Panchamam (single type)	pa