

Timbre terminology

The following words can be used to describe the ‘timbre’ or quality of sound of an instrument, voice or sound source.

sweet
bright
clear
glittering

sparkling
shimmering
silvery

airy
breathy
muffled
muted

light
husky
raspy

piercing
metallic
brassy
blazing

squeaky
harsh
shrill

nasal
reedy
thin

murky
wheezy
twangy

distorted
coarse
dark

muddy
abrasive
gritty

majestic
strong
grand

powerful
booming
rich

electronic
synthetic
scratchy

artificial
buzzing
grainy

hollow
dry
percussive

sizzling
rumbling

resonant
mellow
warm
smooth

full
pure
lush