

The strongest emotional signals in music come from tempo, dynamics, timbre, intensity. How the pitches relate to each other harmonically (even melodically) is a long way behind.

Emotional Content of Chords

Interval	Associated Emotions
Consonant intervals	Pleasantness, generally positive emotional valence; not as strong or active as dissonant intervals
Dissonant intervals	Generally negative emotional valence, strength, activity
Major intervals	Brightness, strength
Minor Intervals	Dullness, weakness
Large intervals	Power
Small intervals	Weakness
Minor second	Melancholy, displeasure, anguish, darkness
Major second	Pleasurable longing, displeasure (neutral as a passing tone; see Chapter 9)
Minor third	Tragedy, sadness
Major third	Joy, happiness, brightness
Perfect fourth	Buoyancy, pathos (neutral as a passing tone; see Chapter 9)
Tritone	Violence, danger, tension, devilishness (of course!) (<i>diabolus in musica</i>)
Perfect fifth	Cheerfulness, stability
Minor sixth	Anguish, sadness
Major sixth	Winsomeness, pleasurable longing (neutral as a passing tone; see Chapter 9)
Dominant seventh	Irresolution, displeasure, mournfulness
Major seventh	Aspiration, displeasure, violent longing
Octave	Lightheartedness (i.e., sudden melodic leap)

Chord	Associated emotion
Major C	Happiness, cheerfulness, confidence, brightness, satisfaction
Minor Cm	Sadness, darkness, sullenness, apprehension, melancholy, depressions, mystery
Seventh C7	Funkiness, soulfulness, moderate edginess
Major Seventh Cma7	Romance, softness, jazziness, serenity, tranquility, exhilaration
Minor Seventh Cm7	Mellowness, moodiness, jazziness
Ninth C9	Openness, optimism
Diminished Cdim7	Fear, shock, spookiness, suspense
Suspended Fourth Csus4	Delightful tension
Seventh, flattened ninth C7b9	Creepiness, ominous, fear, darkness
Added ninth C+9	Steeliness, austerity