



## WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an Austria **composer** –one of the greatest in music history. Even though he died before his 36th birthday, Mozart **created** more than 600 works.

He was born on January 27, 1756 in Salzburg. His father, Leopold was a **composer**, violin teacher and the leader of a **local orchestra**.

Young Wolfgang started playing the **harpsichord** at the age of three. He **composed** his own piano pieces at five, his first **symphonies** when he reached nine and whole **operas** at the age of 12. Wolfgang never went to school. His father taught him **languages**, geography and history, maths and, of course, music.

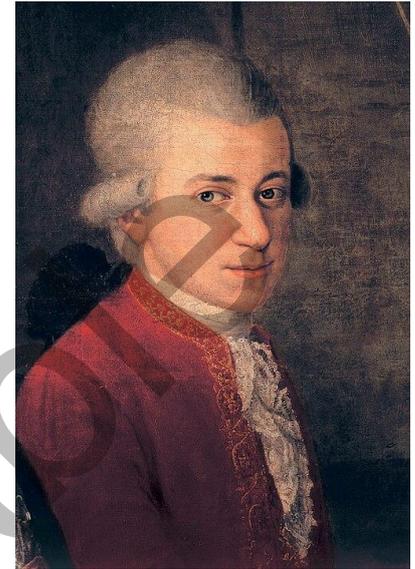
Mozart came from a **loving** family. He loved to play duets with his older sister and he was very **close** to his mother. His father **guided** him through all **stages** in his life, taught him how to **deal with** money and people, and how to **behave** in **society**.

Leopold took his son with him on many concert tours through Europe, where he **performed** before kings, queens and **noblemen** of other countries. He also gave **public performances** and met many other musicians.

When he came back to Salzburg, Mozart started working for the **archbishop**. However, he didn't really become happy in Salzburg. He wasn't paid very much and the archbishop didn't **care** very much **about** music.

In 1781 Mozart left Salzburg and went to Vienna, a town where music was very important. Here he gave piano lessons and **conducted** his own works. He got jobs from all kinds of people, but he didn't become rich. A year before coming to Vienna Mozart married Constanze Weber.

**Although** he worked very hard, Wolfgang couldn't **raise** enough **money** to live with his family. His health started getting poorer and on December 5, 1791 he died, probably of **kidney failure**.



**Detail of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart from Mozart family portrait by Croce**

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## Mozart's music

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Mozart was a musical **genius**. Most of his works became well-known after his death and today, people of all age groups **enjoy** Mozart's light and rhythmic style. The **composer** wrote just about every kind of music that was popular in his time. He wrote over 40 **symphonies**. Some of them were only **overtures** for operas and lasted only a few minutes, but others are works that **consist of** 4 movements and last for half an hour. His last and most famous symphony, Nr. 41, is nicknamed *Jupiter*.



**Tamino charms animals with his flute**

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Many of his 22 operas have become famous all over the world. The *Marriage of Figaro* (1786) and *Don Giovanni* (1787) are operas that Mozart composed with Italian words. The *Magic Flute* is probably his best-known German opera.

Wolfgang also created music that was played at **masses** in church, mostly in Salzburg. The main musical instrument of these **compositions** is the organ. His best-known piece of work is the *Requiem* (Mass for the Dead) which he began in 1791 but couldn't finish before his death.

Mozart also composed **lighter** pieces of music called serenades, which were played at outdoor concerts. One of the most famous is "*A Little Night Music*". Throughout his life, Mozart **concentrated** on music for one or two instruments. He was **fond of** writing **string quartets** for two violins, a **viola** and a cello. He also composed sonatas for solo instruments, like the piano, violin and the **flute**.

## Mozart's style

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Most of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's works are **cheerful** and full of life. He was a person with a **sense of humour** and he liked to laugh a lot and joke around. Apart from lighter music, Mozart produced **serious** works that can be found in his late concertos and symphonies.

After his death a German music lover, Ludwig Köchel, collected and numbered all of Mozart's works. This catalogue is known as the Köchelverzeichnis.