

Mozart Symphony 41

I will take a number of short extracts from this piece and give performance suggestions for each.

1. 1st Movement: Bars 1-4

Mozart gives us two strongly contrasting motifs in the first four bars. I like the first motif, which strongly reinforces the tonic, to crescendo and its final note is sent into the stratosphere. Bars 3-4 give us contrast in texture and volume, but also take us straight into the dominant, G. The final note of the 1st violins in bar 4 should not be too short or quiet as it is the 7th of G which is not resolved until the final note in the 2nd violins in bar 8.

The musical score for bars 1-4 of the first movement of Mozart's Symphony 41 is presented in four staves. The time signature is common time (C). The first two bars (1-2) feature a strong first motif with triplets and a crescendo from forte (f) to piano (p). The final note of the first violin in bar 4 is the 7th of G, which is not resolved until the final note in the second violins in bar 8. Bars 3-4 show a second motif with a change in texture and volume, moving to the dominant key of G major.

2. 1st Movement: Bars 5-8

Again crescendo in bar 5. This works well whenever this motif comes - whether in forte or in piano. When in piano (e.g. 24-25) the crescendo helps to set the woodwind off on their downward scales. Bars 7-8 return us to the tonic and so the dynamic can just come away a little in bar 8.

The musical score for bars 5-8 of the first movement of Mozart's Symphony 41 is presented in four staves. The time signature is common time (C). Bars 5-6 feature a strong first motif with triplets and a crescendo from forte (f) to piano (p). Bars 7-8 show a second motif with a change in texture and volume, returning to the tonic key of C major.

3. 1st Movement: Bars 56-59

Here's a great example of competing principles! If you follow the common idea of Mozart's day that slurs diminuendo, then bar 1 diminuendos to bar 2. But if you go with the principle of giving more weight to the 'away' feeling of the dominant it would be the other way round. You could perhaps ask the firsts to dim and seconds to cresc, but I don't think that works. In general I think it better to go with the harmonic if there's a conflict of interests and that is what I would recommend here. So the first bar goes to the second, and the third comes away to the forth. But please note this is only a subtle thing, I'm not advocating huge dynamic changes! Also note that in the third and fourth bars there is no tension between these principles as they work together. Whatever your solution you need at least to be aware of the issues.

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing a string quartet or similar ensemble. The first two staves are in treble clef, and the last two are in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff has a piano (p) dynamic marking. The second staff also has a piano (p) dynamic marking. The third and fourth staves have piano (p) dynamic markings. The music features slurs and a trill in the final bar.

4. 1st Movement: Bars 71f

Here's a wonderful fragment for the violas (and bass section) taken from the motif in bars 3-4 at the very start of the movement. Mozart is getting very operatic here. The bars just before this are very gentle and light and then these bars interrupt with a miniature outburst of passion. The violins reply with a delicate and almost nonchalant tune, and the process is repeated. Hence I like these bars to come out strongly from the texture. At the same time the whole bar should not be completely legato as there are two slurs.

The image shows a musical score for a bass clef instrument in 3/4 time. It features a motif with two slurs, one over the first two notes and another over the last two notes.

5. 1st Movement: Bars 105-108

The harmony of this passage suggests that the second and fourth bars should be stronger than the first and third. Also care should be taken not to make the third bar sound as if the slurs are one note later than written. In other words observation of slurs as phrasing should be employed.

The image shows a musical score for a bass clef instrument in 3/4 time. It features a passage with slurs and a piano (p) dynamic marking.

6. 1st Movement: Bars 144-46

A good example of how Mozart uses dots as articulation. In the first bar I would diminuendo in each group of four notes: the slur suggests it, and the dots are only there to stop a second slur being added (so I would bow it out and not do two up-bows on the dotted notes). In the third and fourth bars the dots again caution against adding slurs.

The image displays a musical score for two staves, likely a violin and a cello or double bass. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music consists of four measures. The first measure features a group of four notes with a slur and a dot above each note. The second measure continues with a similar group of four notes, also with a slur and dots. The third and fourth measures show more complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and dots, indicating articulation points. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 4/4 based on the note values.

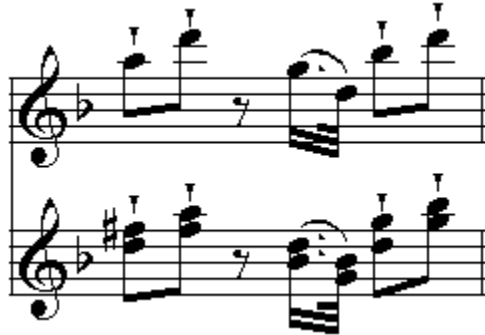
7. 2nd Movement: Bars 18f

In the string parts it seems most likely that a diminuendo is intended. No difference should be inferred from the fact that the second violin and viola pianos are written a semiquaver after those of the firsts and basses. But how should we treat the *sfp* in the wind? Again a diminuendo seems most likely, though with a lower dynamic than in the strings. An abrupt 20th century style sforzando sounds quite out of place here.

The image displays a musical score for bars 18f of the 2nd movement. The score is arranged in two systems of staves. The first system includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and two additional staves for the second violin and viola. The second system includes a grand staff and two additional staves for the first violin and first bassoon. Dynamics are indicated throughout: *sfp* (sforzando piano) is used in the string parts, while *f* (forte) and *p* (piano) are used in the wind parts. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs, indicating a complex rhythmic and melodic structure.

8. 2nd Movement: Bar 68

Mozart very clearly marked some notes with wedges in this symphony. Here he shows that these two quavers should have equal weight, and perhaps also something of an accent. The inference is that he would normally expect there to be a diminuendo on such quaver pairs (i.e. when there are no such articulation marks). There is normally a hierarchy of weight even within a beat.



9. 2nd Movement: Bar 91

The five dotted triplet notes should be played lightly, but without being exceedingly short as that brings unnecessary attention to them. On the string works well.



10. 3rd Movement: Bars 17-20

Making use of the slurs here gives this passage a swing: give an impulse on the beginning of the first and third bars (slightly more on the third than the first).



11. Trio: 9-12

A clever little foreshadowing in the first violin part of the last movement's first theme. Due to the use of daggers each note should receive a 'dig' (probably best done with extra bow speed and vibrato at the start of the note). But also contour needs adding to the line so that the third bar is the strongest (strongly suggested by the harmony).

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing a string quartet or similar ensemble. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains four measures of music, each starting with a dynamic marking of *f* and a dagger symbol (†) above the first note. The second and fourth staves are also treble clefs and contain rhythmic patterns of eighth notes. The third staff is a bass clef and contains rhythmic patterns of eighth notes. The bottom staff is a bass clef and contains rhythmic patterns of eighth notes, with a dynamic marking of *f* at the beginning.

12. 4th Movement: Bars 9-12

I've reduced the parts here. The top line (played by the woodwind) shows an appoggiatura and resolution on the second and fourth bars. Hence the first note in those bars should be stronger than the second. The violin parts have the wedge, just as in the earlier trio. The bass part shows that the harmony is again going to the third (dominant) bar and away to the fourth (tonic) bar.

The image shows a musical score for five staves, likely representing a woodwind and string ensemble. The top staff is a treble clef with a common time signature. It contains four measures of music, each starting with a dynamic marking of *f* and a wedge-shaped slur over the first two notes. The second and fourth staves are also treble clefs and contain rhythmic patterns of eighth notes. The third staff is a bass clef and contains rhythmic patterns of eighth notes. The bottom staff is a bass clef and contains rhythmic patterns of eighth notes, with a dynamic marking of *f* at the beginning and a triplet marking (3) over the first three notes.

13. 4th Movement: Bars 19-21

Although there is no marking on the dotted crotchet it would be natural to shorten it (notes of the same pitch often need shortening - brass parts in the Classical and early Romantic eras often require this treatment). Also it acts as an upbeat to the dotted minim following, and so it makes good sense to give this longer note the most weight in this phrase, with the quavers trailing off slightly in volume (though not in excitement!). Treat this phrase the same way whichever part of the bar it comes in.



14. 4th Movement: Bars 56f

Treating this as a simple crescendo and diminuendo works well. The dotted crotchet is the strongest point, with the minim slightly less than its full length.



15. 4th Movement: Bars 102-106

The three notes with the wedges can be accented, but the quavers are less important. Again it makes no difference whether a point comes on the first or second beat (minim) of the bar - it should start loud each time (and therefore down bow in the string parts).



16. 4th Movement: Bar 183

This is part of the motif discussed in 13 above for the brass and timps. As such it should crescendo to the minim.

The musical notation for Bar 183 consists of three staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is common time (C). The top two staves each contain a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, with a repeat sign over the eighth note. The bottom staff contains a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, with a repeat sign over the eighth note. The notes are: top staff (G4, A4), middle staff (G4, A4), and bottom staff (G3, A3).