

Here's our top tips on writing a fanfare:

So, what is a Fanfare?

It's a short, celebratory call to attention. It's a piece of music used to signal that something important is about to happen – it needs to be exciting and immediately engaging/arresting.

Things to think about when writing your Fanfare:

You need to get people's attention straight away! Composers usually do this by beginning with a loud and energetic start... but you are the composer, so the choice is yours.

Structure – Do you want to start and finish the piece loud? Do you want to take the listener on a journey that builds as they go? Do you want there to be an element of surprise? You can play games with your music.

Rhythm – Fanfares are usually based around short and energetic rhythmic motifs. Some fanfares are very bold and simple rhythmically, and others more complex with dotted patterns and cross-rhythms. The possible options are endless.

Melody – Most fanfares are based predominantly on triad notes from the harmonic series; 1/3/5. So think harmonically as well as melodically! Also, remember that your performers need to breathe! Allow space for this in your music in the form of rests, even quick ones, or breath marks between musical phrases. Your musicians will be very grateful!

Instrumentation - Although fanfares can be written for any instrument, the bolder the better. We'd like you to write your fanfare for three trumpets. Think about the trumpet, how it sounds, and write music that will work well for the instrument. This means that your fanfare will travel into the ears of people far and wide... which is exactly what a fanfare should do!

Length – remember your fanfare needs to be short and sharp, so no longer than two minutes please.

Inspiration - Listen to lots of trumpet fanfares and think about which musical features crop up often; this could help you to create an effective piece of music. The best piece of advice that we can give is to write about what inspires and excites you – and it will come through in your composition.

Good luck!