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Hey there and welcome to a brand new episode of Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music-loving families. My name is Carly Seifert, I'm the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and I'm so happy that you're joining me today.

Over the years, we've learned about many different composers here on the podcast. And while all of those composers have their own unique styles and contributions that they've made to music history, we tend to group composers of Western classical music into four eras, based on when those composers lived and the styles, patterns and instrumentation of their work. These periods are called the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th Century and beyond. Today is the first in a 4-part series that will focus on these periods, beginning with the Baroque.

Now to be clear, music didn't begin during the Baroque era – which spans 1600–1750. Of course, music existed BEFORE that. However, music theory tends to focus on these four key periods. For a more in-depth study of music during ancient and medieval and renaissance times, be sure to check out my Busy Kids Do Music History course, which I will link to in the show notes.

For our purposes today, let's get started by learning about the Baroque era of music.

Do you hear that fancy sounding instrument that carries along the stringed instruments for a fast and intricate ride? That's the harpsichord, an early keyboard instrument that is one of the most significant instruments of Baroque music. Sound is produced by plucking strings when the key is pressed. Doesn't it make an interesting sound?

The music – and well, just about everything during the Baroque era – was exaggerated and fancy. The clothing and hairstyles that people wore, the architecture, the art and of course the music –

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were all about being overly decorated and even a little bit odd. Can you hear all the decorations in this music? There's a lot of notes being played very quickly, aren't there? If you celebrate Christmas, perhaps you decorate a tree with ornaments to make it look more elegant and beautiful. Composers in Baroque music used something called ornamentation (do you hear the word ornament in there?) and added extra notes and rhythms to the melody to make the music more fanciful and elegant, too.

Some of the Baroque composers we've learned about on this podcast are also the most well-known of the Baroque period – Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel. And I'll link to the episodes about them in the show notes in case you want to give them a listen. You are probably familiar with many of their works, such as Handel's Hallelujah Chorus or Bach's Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring. Another very well-known piece from the Baroque period is Johann Pachelbel's Canon in D Major. Does this music sound at all familiar to you? Many have walked down the aisle to it on their wedding day! What are some of the other instruments you hear in addition to the harpsichord in the music we've been listening to in this episode? You may have noticed the string instruments, such as the violin and viola and cellos. Woodwind instruments – such as recorders and wooden flutes – were also part of the Baroque orchestra, as well as the organ and timpani.

If you were to attend a music concert tomorrow, it would probably be a bit of an event. You would have to purchase tickets and attend a concert hall with lots of other people. You might even dress up in some of your nicest clothes.

In the baroque era, a public performance such as this was rare. Many compositions were performed as part of a church service or at a private celebration in the home of a wealthy patron. As the Baroque Era went on, however, public concerts became more common in some of the European cities, and even middle class people would attend performances of operas and oratorios.

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The end of the Baroque period is marked by the death of perhaps the greatest composer from that period, Johann Sebastian Bach, in the year 1750. When we return for the next episode of Busy Kids Love Music in 2 weeks, we'll learn more about the period of music which came after the Baroque Period – the Classical Era.

I'd love for you to check out this episode's show notes, where I've put together a curated playlist for you with some of the music from today's episode as well as other examples of Baroque music. It's a wonderful chance to see some of the instruments that we talked about today and watch how musicians play these instruments. You can find the show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/78](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/78). I've also shared some links to previous episodes about some of the composers mentioned today as well as other music resources I think you'll enjoy. Again, all of that is at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/78](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/78).

Thanks so much for joining me today to learn about the Baroque Era. I look forward to connecting with you again in 2 weeks to continue our series on the 4 Musical Periods. Bye for now!