

What is rap music?

Rap music is a style of popular music, developed by disc jockeys and urban blacks in the late 1970s. It is a musical form of vocal delivery that incorporates "rhyme, rhythmic speech, and street vernacular", which is performed or chanted in a variety of ways, usually over a backbeat or musical accompaniment.

5 The components of rap include:

- The content (the message, what is being said),
- The flow (rhythm, rhyme),
- The delivery (cadence, tone).

10 Rap differs from spoken-word poetry in that rap is usually performed in time to an instrumental track. Rap is often associated with and is a primary ingredient of hip-hop music, but the origins of the phenomenon predate hip-hop culture.

Rap is usually delivered over a beat, typically provided by a DJ (abbreviation of *Disc Jockey*), turntablist, Beatboxer, or performed A capella without accompaniment. Stylistically, rap occupies a gray area between speech, prose, poetry, and singing.

15 **Etymology**

The word 'rap' predates the musical form. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* gives a date of 1541 for the first recorded use of the word 'rap' with the meaning "to utter (esp. an oath) sharply, vigorously, or suddenly." The word is now used to describe quick speech or repartee. It had been used in British English since the 16th century. It was part of the African American dialect of English in the 1960s meaning "to converse", and very soon after that in its present usage as a term denoting the musical style. Today, the term rap is so closely associated with hip-hop music that many writers use the terms interchangeably.

History

25 The earliest precursor to the modern rap is the West African griot (i.e. a West African historian, storyteller, praise singer, poet, or musician.) tradition, in which "oral historians", or "praise-singers", would disseminate oral traditions and genealogies, or use their formidable rhetorical techniques for gossip or to "praise or critique individuals." Griot traditions connect to rap along a lineage of Black verbal reverence that goes back to ancient Egyptian practices, through James Brown interacting with the crowd and the band between songs, to Muhammad Ali's quick-witted verbal taunts and the palpitating poems of the *Last Poets*. Therefore, rap lyrics and music are part of the "Black rhetorical continuum", and aim to reuse elements of past traditions while expanding upon them through creative use of language and rhetorical styles and strategies. The person credited with originating the style of delivering rhymes over extensive music, that would become known as rap, was Anthony Holloway, better known as *DJ Hollywood*, from Harlem, New York.

35 **Criticism**

Rap music has often been subject to criticism, especially for the issues rappers tackle in their songs. Other than some social issues, the main subject matter is sex, violence, and drugs.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)