

Heavy Metal  
by  
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Everyone has heard of heavy metal, but do you realise how many metal subgenres there are? Put simply, there are a lot and many of them are quite frankly, bizarre. If not plain dumb. Intrigued? Then read on, but please bear in mind, the following are just the main ones...

Alternative metal: I'm not exactly sure what this is, but after some light research I came to the conclusion that no-one REALLY does. It just seems to be metal that's a little different, often in some vague, hard to define way. Having an identity crisis and don't really know how to label yourself? Alternative metal is for you, and you are not alone.

Black metal: Part of the problem with spotting devil worshipping psychopaths, is that they blend into society and look just like everyone else, much of the time. (When they're not cutting themselves and committing acts of arson, I mean). However, the moment you see someone wearing a Burzum t-shirt, you don't have to think another second about him. Antisocial personality disorder diagnosed, just like that.

Cello metal: This is just symphonic metal...

Christian metal: Pretty self-explanatory. Amazingly you can get Christian black metal bands, though. Yes, considering black metal is mainly dedicated to Satan, it doesn't really make sense, does it? This is the subgenre for those with multiple personalities.

Dark metal: This is renamed black metal. Just because you sing about the devil a little less, that doesn't mean you can come up with another style of music and claim you're special. That is also one hell of a vague name. I can think of hundreds of metal bands that are dark... Black Sabbath, Metallica, Rammstein. Could be virtually anyone.

Death metal: One of the heaviest forms of music on the planet. It also features some of the most unreasonable and unfair lyrics in the world.

Djent: As rhythmically complicated as this music is, there's no escaping the fact that almost all djent bands sound exactly the same. This is also maybe the style that is most based on one, yes one, repetitive note. You like listening to an E tuned an octave or so lower? Look no further.

Doom metal: One of the most unpalatable forms of music there is. It beggars belief that people can be as miserable as the performers. You are joking, right? This genre is also responsible for some pretty trippy lyrics. Ever wanted to know what it's like to be trapped inside the stomach of mythical beasts as worms crawl all over you? Listen to some Unholy, and you won't have to any more. Put simply, it would suck, that's more than clear.

Experimental metal: Personally, I thought doom metal was experimental. What's not experimental about writing music at 2 BPM and hoping the audience will kill themselves? That's how the words come across, anyway, and I'm assuming that's why there's no significant fan base - ultra peculiar, yet effective vocals. About 'true' experimental music? Could basically be anything.

Folk metal: Simply Folk meeting metal. Sound good? Sometimes. Sometimes it's silly, though.

Glam metal: Thrash metal's natural enemy. Why? People just like fighting with each other, I guess. Metallica once (roughly) said 'this song is going to kill all the fake people out there, all the posers', when referring to glam bands such as Motley Crew. What's wrong with posers? If people want to wear makeup and dress like girls let them.

Gothic metal: What separates this genre from black metal, I don't know.

Grind core: Death metal with vocals that seem to come from an unwell person's bottom.

Groove metal: This has been described as being like watered down thrash, which is kind of misleading. Listen to some Pantera, and you will hear some of the world's finest guitar riffs and solos. Not boring at all, but it is less extreme, I suppose. Only sometimes it isn't as there is some lightning fast groove metal out there. Why do things have to be so confusing?

Industrial metal: When metal meets techno, hence the name, obviously. Only joking, I have no idea why this is called what it is. Much of this music is performed by the mighty Rammstein. So German. So right. At least that's what many English people may think. Maybe not so much when they have the band's lyrics translated. As once said in South Park, 'what the fuck is wrong with German people??'

Melodic death metal: Be warned, the melodies are unlikely to come from the vocals. Despite this, this music is true to its word. Yep - you can experience real tunes, usually in the guitar parts.

Metal core: Extreme metal meets hardcore punk. I'm not sure what's hardcore about screaming like a girl, but doing so in this one is very common.

Neoclassical metal: I'm sure when Yngwie Malmsteen recorded his innovative debut album in 1984 he had no idea about the effect he would have on later 'musicians'. Put simply, the man is solely responsible for stealing away countless guitarist's sense of taste. This is whilst performing what he and other people call neoclassical. It's classical-ish I suppose, but a more fitting name would be constant-stream-of-notes-core.

Nintendocore: Don't be so ridiculous.

Nu metal: Not exactly new anymore, it's been around since the early nineties. A very shortsighted name for anything, really. Even so, whoever coined the phrase could now easily plead insanity, if he wished to save face. Nu metal lyrics are mental, and it wouldn't be a far stretch of the imagination to think those who listened to them were, too.

Pirate metal: Metal solely about pirates. Every band, every album, every song, every lyric. Excellent.

Power metal: It's no wonder the genre with the cheesiest name has some of the cheesiest music. There is some good power metal out there, but most of it is pretty annoying, with the most over-the-top choruses you can imagine. Later Hammerfall and bands like them need to have a long hard look at themselves.

Progressive metal: Almost always complicated, sometimes absolutely crazy. (Think 'Dance of Eternity' by Dream Theater and its 7 million time changes). Bands like Threshold have music that can be performed by much less skilled musicians, but even so it's not exactly foot tapping music.

Rap metal: This one is kind of unusual, in that people into rap rarely like metal, and people who like metal don't often like rap. Both are kind of aggressive though, so maybe that's why people listen to it. Still weird, though.

Speed metal: Thrash metal.

Symphonic metal: More developed and accurately titled music than neoclassical. It's prog's rival in complexity, but not so much when it comes to rhythm. (Expect lots of 4/4). See, metal heads can be sophisticated.

Thrash metal: Speed metal.

Traditional metal: Where it all started! Whilst bands such as Iron Maiden should have arguably stopped releasing albums ages ago (because their new ones suck), they do still sell millions of records. So there you go. Who am I to say that they keep abusing the same riffs, melodies and chord progressions over and over?

Unblack metal: Christian metal, basically. (It's not racist).

Viking metal: Not quite as annoying as pirate metal, but get ready to experience the same very limited variety.

Ok, so they're the main ones. Here are some of the weirder styles... Goblin metal, ocean metal, samurai death metal, dinosaur metal, Norwegian party metal.

And they're only the subgenres, what about the sub-subgenres? Samurai death groove metal, dinosaur doom metal, dinosaur nintendocore, goblin unblack metal, goblin progressive metal, Norwegian grindcore party metal, etc., etc... And... what about the sub-sub-subgenres, as in Norwegian party goblin doom metal?? Remember, I'm not joking, this stuff is real, though much of the genres sound the same as other ones. To sum up, don't be put off of metal because of me. Most of it is good. However, if new to the music you might want to stay away from the silly ones. They're easily avoidable as their names stick out like sore thumbs.