

Jazz music has a rich history and culture, and it's no surprise that jazz musicians have developed their own unique language. Here are some of the most common jazz terms:

1. Ad Lib: Make it up. Fool around with it. Mess with it.
2. Axe: This term refers to your instrument. My "axe" is the piano!
3. Backbeat: The accent on beats 2 and 4. This is the basis of African American music in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
4. Break: The band stops playing, and a soloist fills in the silence with some sort of ad lib virtuosic flourish.
5. Blues form: 12 or 16 bar form. Most often in a 3-phrase structure over 12 measures.
6. Cat: Male jazz musician.
7. Changes: Changes refer to the chord progression of a song. Musicians use this term when discussing the structure of a piece of music.
8. Chops: This term refers to a musician's technical ability on their instrument. If someone has "good chops," it means they are skilled at playing their instrument.
9. Comping: play the chords in rhythm during a jazz performance. It is an unwritten part created from the chord symbols.
10. Cool: A compliment in jazz.
11. Counter line: A second melody played behind the main melody.
12. Faking: Making up your part on the spot from a fakebook or head arrangement.
13. Fill: a short melody played when the main melody is either silent or holding its note.
14. Form: See roadmap
15. Gig: A gig is a paid performance by a musician or group of musicians. It can refer to any type of performance, from a small club show to a large concert.
16. Head: The head is the main melody of a song. It's often played at the beginning and end of a piece of music and is used as a framework for improvisation.

17. Head Arrangement: There are no written parts, everyone plays a repetitive part over a well known form. Early Count Basie and Duke Ellington pieces, like *C Jam Blues*, fall into this category.
18. Hip: An archaic term used by jazz musicians to indicate class solidarity.
19. Horn: This term is often used to refer to brass and woodwind instruments such as trumpets, trombones, and saxophones.
20. In two: The bass playing in half notes.
21. In four: The bass playing in quarter notes.
22. Jamming: This term refers to the act of improvising music with other musicians. It's often used to describe an informal gathering of musicians who come together to play music without a pre-planned setlist.
23. Lead in: A improvised passage that proceeds the main melody note of a section.
24. Moniker: A stage name as in Count Basie.
25. Professor: The pianist, as in Professor Longhair.
26. Riff: A repeated idea played behind a melody or solo. It is often blues based.
27. Roadmap: The structure of the music. AABA, ABAC, Blues, Pop Song form etc.
28. Song form: AABA. The structural basis of countless show tunes written in the 1930s and 40s. Most often each section is 8 measures long.
29. Swing: Swing is a style of jazz dance music that emerged in the 1930s and 1940s. It's characterized by its rhythmic feel, which features a powerful sense of swing and syncopation.
30. Tag: A tag is a short musical phrase that is added to the end of a song or section of a song. It's often used to signal the end of a piece of music.
31. Throne: What the drummer sits on. Royalty sits on thrones.
32. Trading fours: This term refers to the practice of taking turns playing four-bar solos. The band plays four measures, the drummer plays four measures. It's often used as a way for musicians to display their improvisational skills.

33. Turn around: These are the chords, usually in brackets, at the end of the lead sheet. These chords take the band back to the top of the tune to begin improvising. These chords are not played the last time.
34. Walking bass: The bassist walks in quarter notes.
35. Woodshedding: This term refers to the act of practicing an instrument in isolation, often for lengthy periods of time. It's a way for musicians to hone their skills and develop their technique.

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