Modern **lyric poetry** is a formal type of poetry which expresses personal emotions or feelings, typically spoken in the first person.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyric_poetry#cite_note-1) It is not equivalent to song lyrics, though song lyrics are often in the lyric mode, and it is also *not* equivalent to [Ancient Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_literature) [lyric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_lyric) poetry, which *was* principally limited song lyrics, or chanted verse, hence the confusion. The term for both modern lyric poetry and modern [song lyrics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song_lyrics) both derive from a form of [Ancient Greek literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_literature), the [Greek lyric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_lyric), which was defined by its musical accompaniment, usually on a stringed instrument known as a [kithara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kithara)[[a]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyric_poetry#cite_note-2).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyric_poetry#cite_note-3) The term owes its importance in [literary theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_theory) to the division developed by [Aristotle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle) between three broad categories of poetry: Lyrical, [dramatic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_poetry), and [epic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_poetry).

Much lyric poetry depends on regular [meter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meter_%28poetry%29) based either on number of syllables or on stress – with two short syllables typically being exchangeable for one long syllable – which is required for [song lyrics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song_lyrics) in order to match lyrics with interchangeable tunes that followed a standard pattern of rhythm. Although much modern lyric poetry is no longer song lyrics, the rhythmic forms have persisted without the music.

The most common meters are as follows:

* [Iambic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iamb_%28foot%29) – two [syllables](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syllables), with the short or unstressed [syllable](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syllable) followed by the long or stressed syllable.
* [Trochaic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trochaic) – two syllables, with the long or stressed syllable followed by the short or unstressed syllable. In English, this metre is found almost entirely in lyric poetry.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyric_poetry#cite_note-4)
* [Pyrrhic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrrhic) – Two unstressed syllables
* [Anapestic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anapestic) – three syllables, with the first two short or unstressed and the last long or stressed.
* [Dactylic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dactyl_%28poetry%29) – three syllables, with the first one long or stressed and the other two short or unstressed.
* [Spondaic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spondaic) – two syllables, with two successive long or stressed syllables.