

Genes may help explain why some people are naturally more interested in music than others

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Credit: Wikipedia.

Research suggests that genes that affect hearing and cognitive function may play roles in one's musical aptitude, or the ability to understand and perceive rhythm, pitch, timbre, tone durations, and formal structure in music.

The authors of a *BioEssays* article explain that extremes in [musical aptitude](#) (extreme capacity/no capacity) are rare within a population, with the majority of individuals having moderate aptitude.

"This is a typical feature of a complex trait attributable to several

underlying genes, and it is influenced to varying degrees by environmental factors, such as exposure to music or musical training," said co-author Dr. Irma Jarvela.

More information: Oikkonen, J. and Järvelä, I. (2014), Genomics approaches to study musical aptitude. *Bioessays*. [DOI: 10.1002/bies.201400081](https://doi.org/10.1002/bies.201400081)

Provided by Wiley

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