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## Intonation

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## Synonyms

[Prosody](#); [Tone of voice](#)

## Definition

Intonation refers to the melodic patterns of the voice which are not used to differentiate words. It can be used to indicate the function of a sentence (e.g., statement, question, sarcastic comment), the speaker's affect, or to emphasize important topics in a conversation. Individuals with autism spectrum disorder often have atypical intonation patterns, either using little intonation, resulting in a flat or robotic sound, or using exaggerated intonation, which can sound unusual as well. These characteristic intonation patterns can be diagnostic markers for autism spectrum disorder.

## See Also

- ▶ [Monotone](#)
- ▶ [Prosody](#)

## References and Readings

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