Metronome combines Greek words for measure and law. It has ***metronome*** existed for about two centuries.

Before the metronome

Around 1600, Galileo noticed that pendulums swing at a steady rate. In 1696, Étienne Loulié described a simple pendulum for setting tempo.

Winkel and Maelzel

Dietrich Nikolaus Winkel built a compact double-pendulum device around 1814. Maelzel patented the metronome in 1815, and became linked with it.

Composers adopt it

Beethoven published metronome markings for his symphonies in 1817. Markings like M.M. = 120 still appear in scores.

Today

Today online metronomes offer subdivisions, odd meters and tap tempo, with extremely precise timing.