



# BOOGIE WOOGIE WRRC

## New Judging System Appendix – Music Theory Interpretation of the Music

April 2016



### In General

- ❑ To interpret the music in dancing boogie woogie the dancer have to know something about the music structure.
- ❑ Boogie Woogie music is mostly played in blues,swing or rock'n'roll schemes.
- ❑ It derived most directly from the rhythm and blues music of the 1940s, which itself developed from earlier blues, boogie woogie, jazz and swing music, and was also influenced by gospel, country and western, and traditional folk music.



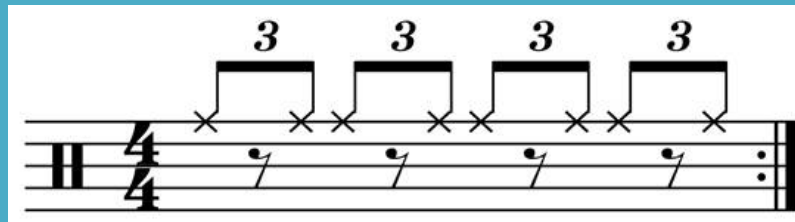
## Basics – Beats and bars

- ❑ Dancers talk about 8-counts and beats
- ❑ What we call a beat is a quarter-note in 4/4 music
- ❑ 4/4 means 4 “beats” per bar
- ❑ But the phrasing makes the bars go together in 8-counts

The diagram shows two staves of music in 4/4 time. The top staff contains two measures, each with four quarter notes. A blue arrow labeled "Quarter Note" points to the first note in the first measure. Two red ovals encircle the four notes in each measure, with a blue arrow labeled "One 8 count" pointing to the first oval. The bottom staff shows two empty measures with blue arrows pointing to the bar lines, labeled "Bars".

## Basic – Rhythm I

- ❑ Characteristically for all “Boogie Woogie” tunes is the shuffle rhythm. This characteristic rhythm and feel of the Boogie Woogie was originally played on the piano adapted later to guitar, double bass and other instruments.
- ❑ The shuffle rhythm sounds like your heartbeat (as long as it’s normal...)
- ❑ However, what makes this sound so definitive is the way in which you play the 1/8 notes. Instead of playing them as straight 1/8 notes (1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and) they must be played as triplets but the middle note of each triplet is left out, leaving you with the following pattern




## Basic – Rhythm II

- ❑ When you hear “Boogie Woogie” tunes you can listen to **simple** shuffle rhythm which is usually called (boogie woogie) swing and to **blues** shuffle rhythm which is called blues. (Examples will be played)

Standard Blues Shuffle Rhythm

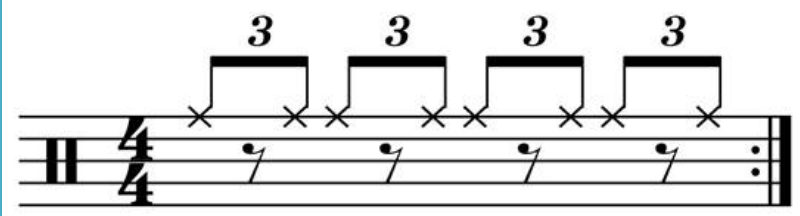
or



1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a 1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It contains two measures of music. The first measure has four pairs of eighth notes, each pair beamed together. The second measure has four pairs of eighth notes, each pair beamed together. Below the staff, the rhythm is written as '1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a 1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a', where '1' and '2' represent the first and second eighth notes of a pair, and 'a' represents the eighth rest.

Simple shuffle rhythm



The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a bass clef. It contains four measures of music. Each measure has a quarter note followed by a triplet of eighth notes. Above each triplet, the number '3' is written. The notes are marked with 'x' symbols, indicating they are to be played with a specific technique or effect.

- ❑ In shuffle rhythm, the first note in the pair is exactly twice the duration of the second note.

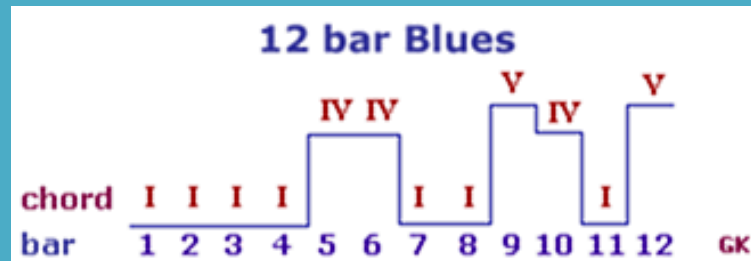


## Basic – Music Structure

Boogie Woogie music is usually a variation on one of these forms:

- Blues scheme
- „Swing“ scheme  
you have to distinguish between
  - Big Band Swing (Dance: Lindy Hop)
  - „Boogie Woogie“ swing
- Rock‘n‘Roll

## Blues scheme (12 bar)



- ❑ 12 bar Blues means that the song is divided into 12 “bars” with a given chord sequence. When playing, you repeat this form over and over for every verse until the song ends.
- ❑ For a basic 12 bar Blues, you need at least three different chords. You’ll also find the expression I, IV and V or tonic, subdominant and dominant for this chords.
- ❑ There are also 8 bar, 16 bar and even 24 bar Blues (all forms can be divided by four!), but the most frequent form is still the 12 bar Blues.
  - The first 4 bars just use the I chord – I, I, I, I.
  - The middle 4 bars go IV, IV, I, I.
  - And the last 4 bars go V, IV, I, V or in an easier way V, V, I, I or V, IV, I, I
  - Then you repeat the whole thing again

So, the basic 12-bar sequence looks like this

The Blues Form

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- To transfer the blues rhythm to the dance it is important to know this

12 bars = 6 eight-counts (  $12 \times 4 = 6 \times 8$  )

888888 888888 888888 888888  
A A B A

Example C.C. Rider



## 8 –bar blues scheme

- ❑ In music, an eight–bar blues is a typical blues chord progression, the second most common blues form, common to folk, rock, and jazz forms of the blues, taking eight 4/4 or 12/8 bars to the verse.
- ❑ Eight bar blues progressions have more variations than the more rigidly defined twelve bar format.
- ❑ The move to the IV chord usually happens at bar 3 (as opposed to 5 in twelve bar).

I	I	IV	IV (I)	V	IV	I	I (V)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

8 bars = four eight counts



# “Swing” scheme

When you say swing then you have to consider that this word means different things:

## SWING I

- ❑ Swing can be the music of the classical swing or big band era. People mostly dance Lindy Hop on this music.
- ❑ Many of the so-called jazz standards (and thousands of more tunes) are written in the AABA form.
- ❑ The AABA form usually consists of 32 bars.

- These 32 bars are divided in four 8 bar sections:  
Two A sections or verses, a B section or “Bridge” (also: middle eight) and another A section or verse:
  - A – 8 bars (A1) A – 8 bars (A2) B– 8 bars A – 8 bars (A3)
  - The first two A sections (A1 and A2) are verses with similar chords and a similar melody, while the lyrics may change.
  - The following bridge builds a contrast to the A sections using different chords, a different melody and different lyrics, before it is transitioning to another A
  - This last A section (A3) repeats the first two A’s with similar chords and a similar melody. The lyrics may be different or one verse may be repeated

8888 8888 8888 8888  
A1 A2 B A3

- ❑ To transfer the swing to the dance it is important to know this

32 bars = 4x4 eight-counts (  $8 \times 4 = 4 \times 8$  )

8888    8888    8888    8888  
A1        A2        B        A3



## 32 –bar swing scheme Example: “Take The ‘A’ Train”

- ❑ Artist: Duke Ellington & His Orchestra, 1941 Composer: Billy Strayhorn.
- ❑ 0:00–0:06 Intro (4 bars)
- ❑ 0:06–0:52 A A B A
- ❑ 0:52–1:38 A A B A
- ❑ 1:38–1:43 Transition (4 bars) with key change
- ❑ 1:43–2:29 A A B A
- ❑ 2:29–2:52 last A repeated another two times and fading out.

### SWING II

- ❑ Swing can be the way playing music in a swinging style (Puppini Sisters – I will survive) or the transmission of the rhythmic or the music structure to a “pop” song (Roger Miller – King of the road; Eva Cassidy – Wade in the water).
- ❑ Swing music saw a sort of revival in the late 1950s and 1960s .
- ❑ In the Boogie Dancers Community we say “Swing” to these kind of tunes
- ❑ So these tunes are written in the AABA form.
- ❑ The AABA form usually consists of 32 bars.

32 bars = 4x4 eight-counts ( 8 x 4 = 4 x 8)

8888 8888 8888 8888

## Rock'n'Roll

- ❑ Often used in Rock'n'roll music. The verse chorus form is like AABA shortened to AB.
- ❑ Verse and chorus usually each 4x 8 (8 bars).
- ❑ Verse often acts as a lead in to the chorus. The chorus is often repetitive.
- ❑ Sometimes a bridge section is inserted for variety. Then you have AB C

8888 8888  
A B

A variety to this is the four – six verse chorus.

8888 888888  
A B

