

57 Stand by me

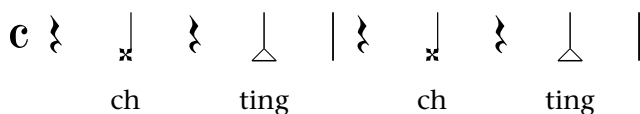
RESOURCES ▶ CD 2 track 27 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 15a, c, 17

Introduction

This popular song by Ben E. King first hit the charts in June 1961. In contrast to the previous two songs, this has a simple repetitive backing chord sequence, but the melody is not nearly as straightforward and is best taken by a solo voice, not least as the rhythm is so flexible. The tune printed here is as accurate as the notation will allow—the best way to get it stylish is to listen to the original recording and copy it aurally! The original song also has an instrumental break (strings) after verse 2. Confident singers could try some improvisation over the chord sequence (see songs in No. 50 for tips and ideas).

Starting

- After some physical warm ups, try sustained exercises building up chords.
- Try a descending scale to the ‘Scoo-bi-doo bap bap’ rhythm.
- Establish some rhythm with this backing:



Make sure the ‘ch’ sound is short and percussive, and not too splashy.

- Speak the rhythm of the bass-line, making the ‘doot’ sound very tight. Use the tongue hard against the palate to make the initial ‘d’ almost a ‘t’ sound.

Teaching and rehearsing

- Teach the bass-line first, keeping it staccato and quiet.
- Add the rhythm harmony lines next, starting with the middle part (beginning on F). Choose any suitable scat words.
- Next add the upper harmony part, and then the bottom line if the singers can handle all three.
- When this is together and ‘tight’, add the solo melody. It is good if the leader can do it, unless someone else knows it or has prepared it. A group could try it, but they must be sure to be together. Note that the melody starts at the end of the bar before the backing comes in.

Ideas

- The sustained harmonies are useful for the full arrangement in performance, so try these. The bass part can also be sustained: just hold on the first note of each bar.
- Try alternative scat words for the rhythm harmonies, e.g. ‘Da-ba-doo wop wop’ or ‘Shang-a-lang ding dong’.
- Any backing improvisation can be as bold as you are prepared to be! Improvise around the chords; perhaps start by taking a small journey away from the note you are on.
- In the original recording the bass-line is doubled at several octaves on occasions with no other harmony, so if there are enough voices, try it.

Listen out

- The backing should always be quiet and rhythmic and sound effortlessly cool!
- If there is any improvisation, plan the structure so that the basic backing is still intact, otherwise it could sound messy.

Performing

- A possible performance plan is as follows:
 - ~ eight-bar introduction—backing chords to ‘ooh’
 - ~ repeat, with addition of bass-line
 - ~ add solo verse 1
 - ~ chorus—backing vocals change to ‘scoobidoo bap bap’
 - ~ solo verse 2—backing ‘ooh’
 - ~ chorus as before, repeated.
- The rhythmic backing can be used anywhere.
- A suggested ending is the bass-line on its own, leaving out the last quaver.

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Ben E. King, Jerry Leiber, and Mike Stoller
arr. David Lawrence and Peter Hunt

Melody

$\text{♩} = 132$

1. When the night has come, and the land is dark
2. If the sky that we look up on should tumble and fall

and the moon is the only light we'll see.
or the mountains should crumble to the sea.

No I won't be a - afraid, I won't be a - shed
I won't cry, I won't cry, I won't shed a

- afraid just as long as you stand, stand by me. So
tear just as long as you stand, stand by me.

dar - lin', dar - lin' stand by me, oh stand by

me, oh stand, stand by me, stand by me.

Sustained harmonies

Ooh

Rhythm harmonies

Scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap,
scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap, scoo-bi-doo bap bap.

Bass

Doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo
doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo doot.