

57 Stand by me

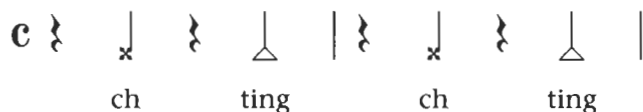
RESOURCES ▶ CD 2 track 27 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 15a, c, 17

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.

57 Stand by me

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 tum-ble and fall

5 and the moon_ is the on - ly_ light we'll see.

9 or the moun - tains should crum-ble to the sea.

13 No I won't be a - fraid,_ I_ won't be a -

I won't cry,_ I won't cry,_ I_ won't shed a

17 - fraid just as long_ as you stand,_ stand by_ me. So

tear just as long_ as you stand,_ stand by_ me.

21 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

F Dm

Doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo

Bb C F

doot doot doo doo doot doot doo doo doot doot.

28 Water come a me eye

RESOURCES ▶ CD1 track 31 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 14, 15*d*, 16*a*

Information

This song is one of many attractive melodies from Jamaica, popular with younger singers in particular. It features the characteristic syncopated swinging rhythm also seen in songs 9, 10, and 11 from Section I. It can be sung gently to reflect the mood of regret and loss, or more lively to capture the rhythms.

Starting

- The warm-up session should tackle some arpeggios or broken chords to prepare for this feature in the melody.
- Riff 1 makes a good link into the syncopated rhythm. Try it with everyone, then separate into small groups (about four people), each group taking it in turns to sing once through the riff. Aim for a smooth and flowing sound with no hesitation between each group.
- Riff 2 is useful for encouraging smooth and sustained singing, which will be required for the last note of each phrase.

Teaching and rehearsing

- An alternative approach to learning the song is to establish all the backing parts first to provide a solid base for the melody to be built on. As these riffs are varied enough, try and learn all three and put them together. Their repetitive nature makes this easy.
- Get the group secure with the backing, then the leader can sing the melody over the top, or a small group of people who already know it.
- Next concentrate on the tune to get it accurate, particularly the jumps in bars 2 and 6 of the verse. Start with call and response—the leader sings the first half of each line and the group answers with ‘Water come a me eye’ each time.
- Divide the group in two and let them do the same; eventually put it all together.

Ideas

- Use dynamics (volume levels) to give musical shape and direction to the phrases. A crescendo towards the second bar of each phrase (the syllables ‘mem’, ‘eye’, ‘my’, ‘eye’) will produce the desired effect.
- To prevent the backing lines becoming too monotonous, experiment with crescendos and diminuendos across each four-bar phrase. This can be challenging; turning the volume down gradually requires much more control than a crescendo.

Listen out

- Singers should be made aware that the highest note in the verse (top C) and then the leap down should sound natural and comfortable and not be obtrusive. Make them think towards the last note (the G on ‘Li-sa’); psychologically they become less aware of the ups and downs! Use the analogy of a mountainous journey in which you keep your sights on the final destination rather than worry about every steep path on the way.
- The sound should always be confident but relaxed, and the backing riffs should always balance with the main tune and not dominate. If this is a problem, try fewer singers on these parts.
- The CD performance is quite lively with variations in the piano accompaniment. This may be to your taste, or you may want a more wistful version. Try it slower.

Performing

- An instrumental backing is almost indispensable, but keep it subtle—guitar works well. Try assorted percussion playing the rhythm of riff 1 and the accompaniment bass.
- The performance can be extended by varying the combinations of lines, including the melody sung to ‘la’ to match riff 1.

28 Water come a me eye

Trad. Jamaican
arr. Trevor Davies

Melody

Verse

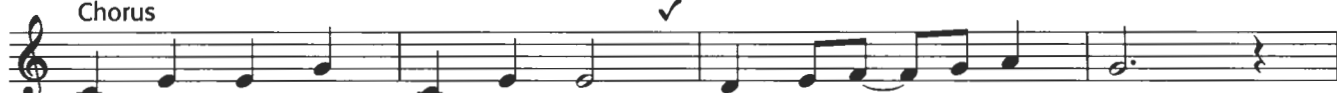


1. Ev - 'ry time I re - mem - ber Li - sa, Wa - ter come a me eye.



When I think a - bout my gal Li - sa, Wa - ter come a me eye.

Chorus



Come back Li - sa, come back girl, Wa - ter come a me eye,



Come back Li - sa, come back girl, Wa - ter come a me eye.

2. I'm so sad since you went away, girl, Water come a me eye.

When you coming back home to stay, girl? Water come a me eye.

Riffs



La la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la.



Come back, come back, come back girl. girl.



Come back girl, come back girl, come back girl, come back girl. come.

Accompaniment

♩ = 140

