



Jazz Ballad Essentials

tonebase Trumpet



What are ballads?

A **ballad** is a form of verse, often a narrative set to music. Ballads derive from the medieval French *chanson balladée* or *ballade*, which were originally "dance songs". Ballads were particularly characteristic of the popular poetry and song of Great Britain and Ireland from the **Late Middle Ages** until the 19th century. They were widely used across Europe, and later in Australia, North Africa, North America and South America.

- **Predates “jazz”**
- **Verse/words are the essential component**
- **International tradition**
- **Dance songs!**

Historical Touchpoints

- **Do your early listening:** Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, Original Dixieland Jass Band, Kid Ory's Original Creole Jazz Band, Bessie Smith, King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Earl Hines, Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton, Lester Young, Cootie Williams, *everybody!*
- Refer to the **earliest recording** to get the lyrics and melody
- Find the most common key by surveying all recordings you can find (jazzstandards.com provides a thorough analysis of every standard you can think of)
- Check out modern recordings to hear how others have arranged it, or what conventions might have developed over time
- Example: [Body and Soul with Coleman Hawkins](#) and [Body and Soul with Tom Harrell/Ambrose Akinmusire](#)

Tips for Playing Ballads

- **Personalize the melody:** if you don't, your listeners go to sleep!
- **Sound is everything:** one beautiful note > a million thoughtless notes
- **Know the lyrics:** the tune is NOT in the real book
- **The harmony is critical:** three things to know intimately:
 - Chord Scales, Common Tones, and Guide Tones
- **Don't take long solos:** 16 bars at a very slow tempo is often enough
- **Manage endurance:** don't solo immediately if it's very taxing
- **Contrast:** play the melody differently each time

Misty

Written and first recorded in 1954 by Erroll Garner

32 bars / AABA

Definitive versions for trumpeters:

- Freddie Hubbard from *Sweet Return*
- Clark Terry from *One on One* and *Clark After Dark*

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f18hYIVEHHM>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4lj6j-y39U

MISTY
- JAZZ STANDARD

TRILLARD

Chords: F#7, C-7, F7, Bb7, Bb-7, Eb7, F#7, D-7, G-7, C7, A-7, D7, G-7, C7, F6, C-7, F7b9, Bb7, B-7, E7, A-7b5, D7, G-7, C7, F#7, C-7, F7, Bb7, Bb-7, Eb7, F#7, D-7, G-7, C7, F6, (G-7 C7)

Encoding the changes:

A section:

F major

ii-V to IV (Bb major)

“Backdoor ii-V”: IV- to bVII7 (Bb-7 Eb7)

1-6-2-5

First ending: 3-6-2-5

Second ending: 1

B section:

ii-V to IV (Bb major)

ii-V to iii

Then 3-6-2-5

Misty

Look at me, I'm as helpless as a kitten
up a tree

And I feel like I'm clinging to a cloud, I
can't understand

I get misty, just holding your hand

Walk my way, and a thousand violins
begin to play

Or it might be the sound of your hello,
that music I hear

I get misty, the moment you're near

You can say that you're leading me on

But it's just what I want you to do

Don't you notice how hopelessly I'm
lost

That's why I'm following you

On my own, would I wander through
this wonderland alone

Never knowing my right foot from my
left, my hat from my glove

I'm too misty, and too much in love

Misty

- Sound
 - a. Sound concept and vibrato
 - b. Flugelhorn vs. trumpet
 - c. Da/ta vs. dit/tit: gradations in tongue intensity and note length
 - d. Half-valves, bends, and smears
- Time
 - a. Rarely straight in a ballad
 - b. Play between the cracks
 - c. Gradually forward and backward
- Up-front intros
 - i. Imagining a chord underneath him: usually the dominant sound
 - 1. C7alt. / diminished / b9 / #5 / etc.
 - 2. Fermata practice: Try all these different sounds and to create melodies
 - ii. Imagine an entire progression of chords
 - 1. The back half of the tune
 - 2. Then stretch the harmony and form a bit

Improvising on Misty

- Using fragments of the melody to build new ideas
 - Just play the melody with more ornamentation! (Stick around till Body and Soul)
 - Solo Starters: One note, motif from melody, new motif, groove, float
 - In ballads, ideas don't have to be in strict time, but phrases should still be clear
 - Sing your solos first over a backing track

Improvising on Misty

- Connecting the changes / what scales to use =
 - Melodic voice leading rules: mostly diatonic, move linearly, avoid wide intervals, change direction often, land on chord tones, bring out highlight notes/pitches that change in the harmony, use non-chord tones
 - 3 PDF annotations: diatonic chord scales, altered chord scales, guide tones
 - Create guide tone exercises for yourself
 - Always a balance of theory and artistry

Misty

Practice with PDF!

Body and Soul

- Ornamenting and breaking up the melody
 - Know the lyrics first: these are your constraints. The melody is not just a musical shape but it's a representation of words.
 - True freedom with melody requires that you understand the harmony deeply
- Voice leading over the changes / creating sequences
 - Remember melodic voice leading rules: mostly diatonic, move linearly, avoid wide intervals, change direction often, land on chord tones, bring out highlight notes/pitches that change in the harmony, use non-chord tones

Handwritten musical score with guitar chords and a 2nd ending bracket. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The chords are written above the notes. A bracket labeled '2' indicates a 2nd ending starting at the second measure of the fifth line.

Chords: F-7, C7b9, F-7, E7, Ebmaj7, Ab7, G-7, F#o7, F-7, D-7b5, G7, C-7, F7, F-7, Bb7, Eb6, C7, Eb, B7, Emaj7, F#7, G7, E/G#, A-7, D7, F#7, C#-7, F#7, B7, Emaj7, E-7, A7, Dmaj7, F°, E-7, A7, D7, D#7, C7, F-7, C7b9, F-7, E7, Ebmaj7, B7, G-7, Gb7, F-7, D-7b5, G7, C-7, F7, F-7, Bb7, Eb6, C7.

Encoding the changes:

A section: (Eb major)

ii V, ii bii
 I IV7, iii biii°
 ii, ii/V to vi,
 vi II7, ii V, I, V of ii
 2nd ending: ii V to E major

B section: (E major)

I ii-, I/III, Backdoor ii-V (iv7 bVII7),
 iii VI ii V, I

(D major): ii V, I biii°, ii V,

(Transition) I7, bI7, VII7

Body and Soul

My heart is sad and lonely

For you I pine, for you dear only

Why haven't you seen it?

I'm all for you, body and soul

I spend my days in longing

And wondering why it's me you're
wronging

I tell you I mean it

I'm all for you, body and soul

I can't believe it, it's hard to conceive it

That you'd turn away romance.

Are you pretending? It looks like the
ending

Unless I can have

Just one more chance, dear

My life a wreck you're making

My heart is yours for just the taking

I'll gladly surrender

Myself to you, body and soul

Body and Soul

Practice melodic elaborations with PDF!