

MUSICALITY

- Add musicality to your dancing to achieve a new heightened level of enjoyment.
- The music we dance to isn't background music, but integral to the dancing. Think of the music as a third partner in the dance. Requires both leader and follower listen to the music they are dancing to.
- Leader choreographs the action based on the music. The idea isn't to impress with your fanciest moves. You can do a beautiful satisfying dance filled with musicality with no moves at all. But the most fun is when you carefully place your moves **when the music calls for it**.
- Most of the onus is on the leader. BUT – the follower must follow! Be flexible and ready for surprises. Pay attention so you can appreciate what the leader is doing. Be patient. Resist any urge to throw in your own choreography.
- For a dance to be strong in musicality, listen to the music. Talking will distract.
- Don't be afraid to experiment.

Rhythm

- Dance to the BEAT of the music. Extra care when doing fancy moves.
- Waltz or two-step? If intro is vague, wait, or prepare to change: [Then](#), [Here Tonight](#)
- Changes in tempo within a song: [Once Upon A December 2:39](#)

Energy

- Adjusting style to the energy level of the music
- [Neon](#) vs. [Down At The Twist And Shout](#) – same bpm, different energy

Structure of a song

- Introduce A-B etc. Most music follows established patterns.
- Different sections may have different energy levels to play with.
- Two-step examples: [Mama's Broken Heart](#), [Norma Jean Riley](#)
- Other examples:
 - A/B similar (treat A and B differently anyway): [Forever And Ever Amen](#), [Just To See You Smile](#)
 - Repetitive A section (vary arbitrarily): [Gentle On My Mind \(Band Perry\)](#), [Amazing Grace](#)

Elements within a song

- Structure analyzes music at the macro level. We can also appreciate music at the micro level.
- Breaks, pauses: [In Between Dances 2:48, 2:56](#), [I'm A Woman](#), [Norma Jean Riley](#), [Never Comin' Down](#)
- Motifs or special musical fragments
 - descending pattern: [I'm A Woman 2:58](#)
 - long smooth phrasing: [Neon 0:46](#)
 - the wind-up: [Telescope 2:22](#); [Sunday Finest 2:08](#)
 - when music and lyrics coincide: [Sunday Finest 2:05](#) [do it again], [Mama's Broken Heart 0:25](#) [stop]
- Use your full expressive range. Save something for the climax.
- How to handle music you've never heard before.

Good practice examples

- Expressive waltzes: [Unlove You](#), [A Thousand Years](#), [From The Ground Up](#), [Beautiful Crazy](#)
- Two-steps w/ variety: [I Should Have Married You](#), [Mud On The Tires](#), [Father Sun](#), [Pedernales Stroll](#)