

Tutorial 2H: Tunes and Forms



Welcome! In this tutorial you'll learn how to:

1. Recognize common tune forms
2. Use the AABA form
3. Use other tune forms

Enjoy the learning!

Other Level 2 Tutorials

- 2A: More Scales
- 2B: Melodic Shapes
- 2C: Swing Rhythms
- 2D: Three and Four
- 2E: Embellishments
- 2F: Melodic Development
- 2K: Preparing Concert Material

- ▶ It's certainly a lot more enjoyable to solo on tunes when you can follow the form of the tune and not get lost! Recognizing and learning tune forms helps you prepare to memorize chord progressions & practice them anywhere.

Part 1 ~ Recognizing Common Forms

A) Why is it important to learn tune forms?

*It helps you learn jazz standards faster and better.

*It helps you keep your place in a solo, following the chords accurately without getting lost in the tune.

*To improvise successfully, you must always know *where* you are in the form of the tune at any moment. This helps you play the correct chord changes and prepares you for new sections in the tune.

B) What are the basic elements of tune form?

- Introduction (not part of the main progression)
- Main melody (A section)
- Contrasting melody or bridge (B section)
- Solos that repeat the A and B sections with improvisation instead of the original melody
- Ending (return of main melody, sometimes a coda).

C) How do I start seeing the tune form?



A *lead sheet* contains the melody and chords for the tune you're playing. As you examine a lead sheet, you can usually find the form of the tune by looking for common "road signs" (such as double barlines, repeats, D.C., and D.S. al Coda) that define the sections.

*If the sheet has no road signs, look for eight-bar sections in the tune.

*While another player is soloing, hum the original melody of the tune to arrive at each new tune section at the correct bar (especially helpful in drum solos).

*In "Autumn Leaflets" below, the form is A A B C. Each new section follows a double bar; the A section repeats.

Cm7	F7	BbMa7 EbMa7	<input type="text"/>
Am7b5	D7	Gm7 ••	: "a" section
Am7b5	D7	Gm7 ••	<input type="text"/>
Cm7	F7	BbMa7 ••	"b" section
Am7b5	D7	Gm7 Gb7 Fm7 E7	<input type="text"/>
Eb7	D7b9	Gm ••	"c" section

(Part 2 – Recognizing Common Forms)

- **TRY IT** – In *300 Standard Tunes*, select a short tune and identify where the different sections begin and end.

Part 2 – Using the AABA Form

A) What is the AABA form?

*An AABA tune has four sections: the A section is played twice, then a contrasting B section, then the A section. This means once you learn just the A and B section chords, you’ve learned the chords for the tune.

B) How do I recognize it?

*An AABA tune has four sections: the A section is played twice, then a contrasting B section, then the A section. This means once you learn just the A and B section chords, you’ve learned the chords for the tune.

Below is a simplified version of “Satin Dollar,” an AABA tune. Lines 1 and 2 are the “A” section; lines 3 and 4 are the “B” section; and the *DC al Fin* creates the final A.

```
Dm G7 | Dm G7 | Em A7 | Em A7 |
Am D7 | Abm Db7 | CMa7 | •• :||Fin
Gm | C7 | FMa | •• |
Am | D7 | G7 | •• || DC al Fin
```

*In the real chord progression for this tune, first and second endings are used. This is called an A A’ B A’ form; the “prime” mark (A’) indicates that the A section has changed slightly.

*In the example below, the A section is the first two lines of the tune, while the A’ section is the first two lines including the second ending.

```
Dm G7 | Dm G7 | Em A7 | Em A7 |
| 1 -----
Am D7 | Abm Db7 | C7 B7 | Bb7 A7 :||
| 2 -----
| CMa | •• || Fin
Gm | C7 | FMa | •• |
Am | D7 | G7 | •• || DC al 2nd end.
al Fin
```

(Part 2 – Using the AABA Form)

*Although AABA and its variations are fairly simple, there's a problem that can trip you up: when you play the last A and repeat back to the first two A's, you've played *three* A's in a row, which can throw you off unless you're concentrating. This is typical in modal tunes like "Impressions" and "Milestones." In those tunes, each section is eight bars of a single chord (8 bars of D Minor, 8 bars of D Minor, 8 bars of Eb Minor, 8 bars of D Minor). Because the chords don't change *within* each section, it's easy to lose track of where you are in the overall form.

- ▶ **TRY IT** – In *300 Standard Tunes*, compare and contrast several AABA tunes in section lengths and types of progressions.

C) What about "I Got Rhythm"?

*Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm" tune is one of the most popular jazz chord progressions (also known as "Rhythm changes"). It's also a variation of an AABA, with these chords:

BbMa | Cm F7 | BbMa | Cm F7 |

|1 -----

BbMa Bb7 | EbMa E° | BbMa Gm | Cm F7 :|| *Fin*

|2 -----

| BbMa | •• ||

D7 | •• | G7 | •• |

C7 | •• | F7 | •• || *D.C. al Fin*

*The A section revolves around the key of Bb. While you're getting used to the chords, you can play over a Bb Major scale all the way through the A section.

*The B section starts up a third from Bb (with D7) then moves around the circle of fourths until returning to Bb.

*Some tunes based on "I Got Rhythm" use different chords in the bridge:

Fm7 | Bb7 | EbMa7 | •• |

Gm7 | C7 | Cm7 | F7 ||

- ▶ **TRY IT** – Write out the chords to I Got Rhythm in a key other than concert Bb. Then choose a different key and use an altered bridge section.

Part 3 - Other Tune Forms

A) What are some other tunes forms I should know?

- AB
- ABC
- ABAC

A B (or A A') - "Summer Dime"

Am6	E7	••	••	Am E7 Am	
Dm	FMa6	Dm FMa7	E7 B7	E7	
Am6	E7	••	••	Am D7	
CMa	Am	DMa E7	Am	••	

ABC - "Sole R"

Cm	••	Gm	C7	
FMa	••	Fm	Bb7	
EbMa	Ebm Ab7	DbMa	Dm7b5 G7+9	

ABAC - "Some Day My Prints Will Come"

BbMa	D7+5	EbMa7	G7+5	
Cm7	G7+5	Cm7	F7	
		1-----		
Dm7	Db°	Cm	F7	
Dm7	Db°	Cm	F7	:
		2-----		
Fm9	Bb7	Eb	A7	
Dm7 G7	Cm7 F7	BbMa7	Cm7 F7	

► **TRY IT** – In *300 Standard Tunes*, study selected tunes that are AB, ABC, or ABAC.

That's all for Tutorial 2H!

There is no Quiz for this tutorial.