

## Performance - Latin

Latin music is a form of popular music from Latin America. It is the term used when referring to music from the Spanish or Portuguese speaking countries of Mexico, most of Central and South America, and the Caribbean islands. Much Latin music is accompanied by song in Spanish.

Latin American music can often be recognised by the percussion instruments used. Many ensembles use: bongo drums, congas – tall drums played with the hand, claves – two rounded sticks hit together, shakers, scrapers, cowbells, and a variety of small drums played with sticks.

Latin music covers a lot of different styles. It is usually defined as music with a Portuguese or Spanish twist, with a catchy beat, often sung in these languages. Latin music can originate from just about anywhere, although it is most prevalent in Spain, the Caribbean, and the Americas. The lyrics and tone of Latin music tends to be relatively robust and passionate, hitting on emotional topics and getting the crowd involved.

Latin music has a few common characteristics, which define the genre and make you understand that what you listening to is a decidedly Latin song. These are: percussion instruments, primarily Spanish and Portuguese language, and unique rhythm.



### Key Vocabulary

rhythm	a strong, regular repeated pattern of sound
percussion instruments	musical instruments played by shaking or striking with the hand or with a stick or beater
tempo	the speed at which a passage of music is played
dynamics	the variation in loudness between notes and phrases
staff notation	a set of five horizontal lines on which note symbols are placed to indicate pitch and rhythm
pitch	how high or low sounds are
tresillo	rhythmic pattern used in Latin American music

Famous examples:

Carmen – Bizet

Faith – George Michael

Shape of you – Ed Sheeran

Despacito – Luis Fonsi

Anybody – Burna Boy

Staff notation is a way of writing music down. Performers use this to learn about the pitch and length to sing musical notes.

Performers must be able to read staff notation to ensure consistency between them and the instrumental accompaniments.

Drums

**Sing Sing Sing**

Moderately Fast

For Jazz Big Band

Written by Benny Goodman  
Arranged by David B.

The tresillo (tray-see-yo) rhythm is what underpins Latin music. It is the pattern that we hear as 1 2 3 - 1 2 3. Tresillo is the most fundamental duple-pulse rhythmic cell in Cuban and other Latin American music. It was introduced in the New World through the Atlantic slave trade during the Colonial period.



To sing a long phrase, singers need to breathe at different times so that the sound keeps going. You need to breathe deeply so you have enough air to finish the phrase. Two things that can help you to improve your breathing when singing are standing tall and singing from your diaphragm.