

Chapter One

THE BOOGIE WOOGIE STYLE

What is Boogie Woogie

Boogie Woogie is a twelve-measure Jazz form with a unique rhythm in the bass. The bass features a repeating figure which for the most part takes the form of eight eighth notes to the measure.



It is from its almost characteristic use of an eight-to-the-bar bass figure that Boogie Woogie is sometimes referred to as “*Eight to the Bar*”.

Lift

Boogie Woogie, like all Jazz, is in 4/4 time. And all Jazz has a “lift” (resulting from the rhythm of Jazz syncopations against a steady beat.) The Boogie Woogie bass being “eight to the bar”, makes for a “lift” all its own. It can have the light lift of Pinetop’s *Boogie Woogie Blues*, the crashing drive of Meade Lux Lewis’s *Six Wheel Chaser*, or the “jump” of Pete Johnson’s *Death Ray Boogie*. One cannot limit Boogie Woogie to a specific lift or tempo. As long as the bass figure repeats itself rhythmically within the twelve-measure form, it’s Boogie Woogie.

Color and Effects

Boogie Woogie is an intimate personal expression, very rich in “effect” such as rhythm, color, power, etc. When less conventional notes are used against this bass, the varying shades