

REORGANIZE

# AS LISTENING & ANALYSING



# REGGAE

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## ORIGINS & INFLUENCES

The term 'Reggae' is really only supposed to cover the period in Jamaican music from 1969 to about 1979. There are several other very important genres of Jamaican music (or at least, genres that originated from Jamaica) that appeared prior to the style we call 'Reggae' today.

Once again, blues and R&B are very important influences, not just musically but also socially: both reggae and blues originated as musical expressions of hardship. It only took until the 1940s for Jamaicans to become familiar with the sound of dance hall R&B, both in terms of the jazzy rhythms and the instrumentation. Exposure to this style came through radio and home made 'sound systems'. The traditional calypso Jamaican folk music – mento – 'cross pollinated' with these R&B forms giving birth to Ska, the precursor to Rocksteady and Reggae.

Reggae is often associated with the Rastafari movement, which influenced many prominent reggae musicians in the 1970s and 1980s. Very generally, the subject matter of reggae songs deals with many subjects other than Rastafari, with love songs, sexual themes and broad social commentary being common.

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# SKA



## ORIGINS & INFLUENCES

Ska is the first major local Jamaican genre, flourishing from 1961 or 62 to around 1966. The genre gave birth to Rocksteady and then Reggae in around 1968.

Ska can be divided into three waves. Ska's popularity has gone up and down since its original creation, and has had revivals of note in England in the 1980s and another wave of popularity in the 1990s.

### First Wave

When New Orleans-style R&B fell out of favor by 1960, Jamaican artists began recording their own version of it, and this became Ska. One of the earliest Ska bands, The Skatalites, featured prominent Jamaican instrumentalists, many of them fine jazz players, as can be heard in the improvisatory style of their performances over the standard ska rhythms.

### Second Wave

The Two Tone (or 2 Tone) era was named after the similarly titled record label, formed by Jerry Dammers, keyboardist of The Specials. The band was formulated from the greatly diverse West Midlands region of England in the late 1970s, with bands such as The Beat and The Selecter in support of the scene.

Supplementing the lilting Jamaican rhythms of ska with punk rock's upfront lyrics and brutal guitar chords resulted in a style that satisfied a thirst for a moshing groove. The Two Tone movement pushed towards racial unity, and was symbolized by a black and white checkerboard pattern. The British ska bands were very respectful to the original Jamaica artists and in many cases did them a service by remaking their songs and turning them into hits again.

Two Tone recordings are characterized by faster tempos, fuller instrumentation and a harder edge than original 50's and 60's ska. A number of bands like The Police, The Clash, and Elvis Costello mention ska music as being incredibly important in their musical background.

## **Third Wave**

Beginning in the late 1980s and gaining popularity in the early 1990s, the third wave of ska became hugely popular in the United States. Combining elements of ska with rock, punk, hardcore, and jazz, musicians of the third wave created a new style of ska.

Some of the most popular and long lasting third wave ska bands include Sublime, No Doubt, Fishbone, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Reel Big Fish, The Aquabats, Catch 22, Less Than Jake, Rx Bandits, Mustard Plug, Buck-O-Nine, Operation Ivy, Mad Caddies, and Goldfinger .

## **MUSICAL & TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Originally, Ska combined elements of traditional calypso with New Orleans R&B and blues styles. It is characterised by a fast, syncopated rhythm guitar stroke, driving horns and boogie-style stand-up bass.

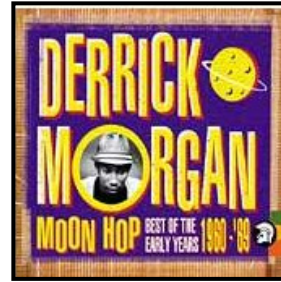
*See the different 'waves' of Ska above for more detailed musical characteristics.*

## **REPRESENTATIVE ARTISTS**

- Laurel Aitken (The Godfather Of Ska) ("Little Sheila"/"Boogie in my Bones")
- The Skatalites (First Wave Ska) ("The Guns of Navarone")
- The Specials (Second Wave Ska) ("A Message to you Rudy")
- The Beat (Second Wave Ska) ("Hands off she's Mine")
- Fishbone (Third Wave Ska) ("Party at Ground Zero")
- The Mighty Mighty Bosstones (Third Wave Ska) ("Police Beat")

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# **ROCKSTEADY**



## **ORIGINS & INFLUENCES**

Rocksteady is the name given to a style of music popular in Jamaica between 1966 and 1968, and was the crucial stylistic stepping stone that led to Reggae. The term allegedly comes from a dance style which Alton Ellis named in his recording "Rock Steady". The Rocksteady dance was a more relaxed affair than the earlier, more frantic ska moves.

Rocksteady bridges the gap between Ska and Reggae. Rocksteady appealed particularly to the "Rude Boy" movement. The rude boy phenomenon had existed in the ska period but was expressed more obviously during the rocksteady era in songs. 'Rude boys' had proliferated since Jamaica became independent in 1962.

## **MUSICAL & TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Key musical differences between Ska and Rocksteady were a more relaxed tempo, a diminished use of horns, and a change of the role of the bass. The 'feel' also changed from bouncy 12/8 swung time to a much steadier, straighter 4/4/ time. With Ska the bass had tended to play quarter notes in an even "walking" style, but in Rocksteady the bass part became more broken-up and syncopated, using aggressive, repetitive lines. The bass also sometimes takes on the position of lead instrument with intricate melodies and a high position in the mix.

## **REPRESENTATIVE ARTISTS**

- Alton Ellis ("Girl I've got a date")
- Derrick Morgan ("Tougher Than Tough")
- The Rulers ("Don't Be Rude")

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# REGGAE



## ORIGINS & INFLUENCES

Reggae was most probably put on the World map around 1973 (with the film *The Harder They Come*). By this stage Rastafarianism had also become well established as an important influence on Rocksteady, and now Reggae. Bob Marley was arguably the first Reggae artists to achieve worldwide fame – helped by Eric Clapton’s cover version of ‘I Shot The Sheriff’.

Roots reggae is the name given to Rastafarian reggae music from Jamaica which evolved from Ska and Rocksteady and was made famous outside the Caribbean by the legendary singer/songwriter Bob Marley. Roots reggae is an inherently 'spiritual' type of reggae music, the lyrics of which are predominantly in praise of Jah Ras Tafari Makonnen — Haile Selassie (1892–1975) the Emperor of Ethiopia (1930–1974).

Roots reggae is an important part of Jamaican culture, and whilst other forms of reggae have replaced it in terms of popularity in Jamaica (dancehall for instance), roots reggae has found a small, but growing, niche globally.

Recurrent lyrical themes include poverty and resistance to the oppression of government. The creative pinnacle of roots reggae is arguably in the late 1970s, with singers such as Johnny Clarke, Horace Andy, Barrington Levy, and Lincoln Thompson, teaming up with studio producers including Lee 'Scratch' Perry, King Tubby, and Coxsone Dodd. The experimental pioneering of such producers within often restricted technological parameters gave birth to dub, and is seen by some music historians as one of the earliest contributions to modern dance music production techniques.

‘Lover’s Rock’ was the other type of Reggae that achieved popularity. Similar in style, but very different in content, ‘Lover’s Rock’ was not concerned so much with politics and ‘keeping the faith’ of Rastafarianism, but with more romantic ideas.

## **MUSICAL & TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Reggae has rhythm style often characterized by regular chops on the back beat known as the "bang", played by a rhythm guitarist, and a bass drum hitting on the third beat of each measure, known as "one drop." The bass guitar has a very prominent role, and may play a repeated pattern or riff for much of the song. Characteristically, the reggae beat is slower than in its precursors, ska and rocksteady.

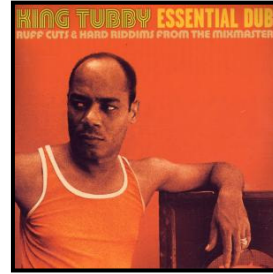
**(See above for general 'Reggae' musical/technical characteristics)**

## **REPRESENTATIVE ARTISTS**

- Bob Marley & the Wailers ("I shot the Sheriff")
- Johnny Clarke ("Let Go Violence")
- Lincoln Thompson ("Ride with the Rasses")

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# DUB



## ORIGINS & INFLUENCES

Dub came to the fore in 1970s Jamaica. Elements of the Dub style had been around since the 1850s in Jamaica, since the early days of 'sound systems' and early DJs talking or 'toasting' over the rhythms of American R&B. Today, dub is an instrumental genre built around the application of electronic equipment on existing recorded tracks. Essentially, the dub style involves remixing original Reggae tracks without the vocals, or with the vocals 'dropping in' and 'out'. Its sound has proven very influential on modern dance music. These 'new' versions are mostly instrumental, sometimes including snippets of the original vocal version. Often these tracks are used for "Toasters" rapping heavily-rhymed and alliterative lyrics.

## MUSICAL & TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The dub reggae sound includes adding extensive echo and reverb effects to an existing song, sometimes accompanied by snatches of the lyrics from the original version. Dub typically emphasizes the drums and bass for a sound popular in Sound Systems (these were events set up on the streets of Kingston to play dance music for the people)

The instrumental tracks are typically drenched in sound processing effects such as delay, echo, reverb, and filters. Often the lead instruments and vocals drop in and out of the mix. The music sometimes features processed sound effects and other noises, such as animal sounds, babies crying, and producers shouting instructions at the musicians. It can be further augmented by live DJs.

## REPRESENTATIVE ARTISTS

- King Tubby
- Scientist.
- Augustus Pablo ("King Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown")
- Jah Shaka

**I shot the Sheriff  
Let go violence**

***Bob Marley & the Wailers  
Johnny Clarke***

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1. Compare the different instrumentation of each song

<b><i>Bob Marley</i></b>	<b><i>Johnny Clarke</i></b>

2. Comment on the effects used on the vocals in each song
3. What's similar about the 'bang' in both songs?
4. What word best describes the way the instruments play together at 47'' in *I shot the Sheriff*?

**A capella**

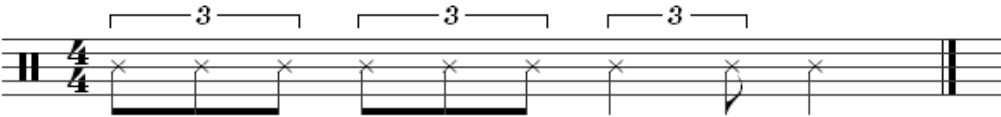
**Unison**

**Out of tune**

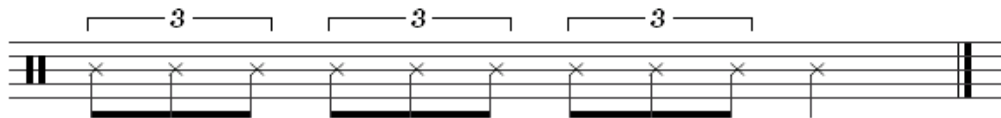
**Improvised**

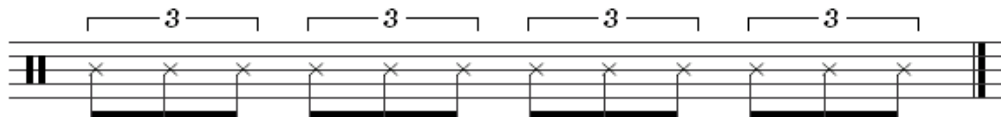
5. Name the instrument that enters at 1'13'' in *I shot the Sheriff*

6. Which of the following phrases is the accurate rhythm of the drum fill at 1'19" in *Let go violence*?

A 

B 

C 

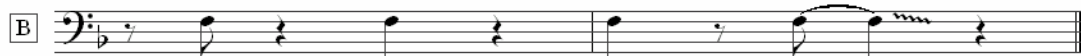
D 

## Boogie in my bones

*Laurel Aitken*

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1. Name a problem with the lead vocal track at 0' 17"  
Describe 2 ways of preventing this problem when recording
2. Describe the style of trumpet playing at 1' 11"
3. Which of the following is the accurate melody played by the saxophones at 0' 54"?



4. Describe 3 features of this song that make it typical of Ska?

**Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown  
Snare Drum Dub**

***Augustus Pablo  
Jah Shaka***

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1. What do you notice about the way the bass track has been mixed in both of these songs?
2. Both songs make extensive use of delay. What's notable about the delay effect used on the piano in *Tubby meets rockers uptown*? Are these piano chords major or minor?
3. Describe the mixing technique used at 1' 52" in *Snare Drum Dub*?
4. Extensive delay and reverb effects are frequently used in Dub. Why do you think this is?



## **ON THE CD**

### *Ska*

- |           |                           |                       |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Guns Of Navarone</b>   | <i>The Skatalites</i> |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Boogie In My Bones</b> | <i>Laurel Aitken</i>  |

### *Rocksteady*

- |           |                              |                          |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Rock Steady</b>           | <i>Alton Ellis</i>       |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Feel Like Jumping</b>     | <i>Marcia Griffiths</i>  |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Rudy A Message To You</b> | <i>Dandy Livingstone</i> |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Tougher Than Tough</b>    | <i>Derrick Morgan</i>    |

### *Reggae*

- |            |  |                                   |
|------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Do The Reggay</b>                     | <i>Toots And The Maytals</i>      |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Israelites</b>                        | <i>Desmond Dekker</i>             |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Wonderful World, Beautiful People</b> | <i>Jimmy Cliff</i>                |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>I Shot The Sheriff</b>                | <i>Bob Marley And The Wailers</i> |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Trench Town Rock</b>                  | <i>Bob Marley And The Wailers</i> |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Let Go Violence</b>                   | <i>Johnny Clarke</i>              |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>Africa</b>                            | <i>The Mighty Diamonds</i>        |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Freedom Fighters</b>                  | <i>Delroy Washington</i>          |

### *'Lover's Rock'*

- |            |                                   |                      |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>15.</b> | <b>There's No Getting Over Me</b> | <i>Delroy Wilson</i> |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|

### *Dub*

- |            |                                     |                             |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>16.</b> | <b>King Tubby Meets The Rockers</b> | <i>Augustus Pablo</i>       |
| <b>17.</b> | <b>Snare Drum Dub</b>               | <i>Jah Shaka</i>            |
| <b>18.</b> | <b>Sonny's Lettah</b>               | <i>Linton Kwesi Johnson</i> |

### *Ska Revival*

- |            |                              |                     |
|------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>19.</b> | <b>A Message To You Rudy</b> | <i>The Specials</i> |
| <b>20.</b> | <b>Too Much Too Young</b>    | <i>The Specials</i> |
| <b>21.</b> | <b>Baggy Trousers</b>        | <i>Madness</i>      |