

Modern Dance Music

Modern Dance music, simply described, is any kind of music designed to get people dancing! It is characterised, these days, by a 'four to the floor' beat; that is, the bass drum (or guitar) is played on every beat in 4/4 time. Modern dance music also usually consists of electronic sounds and altered voices. It is common for many dance songs to be remixes of popular songs from the past. There are several types of dance music. The type of music you're likely to dance to in night clubs is Techno, House, Garage, Trance and Disco.

The History of Modern Dance Music

It seems that the use of electronic instruments (or even non-instruments!) to produce different sounds was certainly a factor in the creation of today's dance music. From the early 80s, people began to experiment with new sounds. Coupled with the 'four to the floor' beat, which was used as far back as the 60s, music took on a new sound. Its popularity spread, especially in the 90s when remixes of songs from 70s bands like the BeeGees got everyone on the dance floor. Dance music has progressed further since then, resulting in more hardcore dance music such as the Ministry of Sound albums. Its popularity has remained pretty constant and it is probably the most popular type of music on the market today, worldwide!

Traditional World Dance Music

Dance music, from a more traditional viewpoint, has been written and played for many more years. Traditional dance music can't really be characterised or defined in words, as it is different depending on where in the world you go, but it generally has either a jumpy feel or a gently swaying beat.

In Spain, traditional dance music, called Flamenco, consists of elaborate strums of the guitar, accompanied by claps, castanets and stamping heels. The theme for most Flamenco music is based around a woman's estranged or abusive lover and so often starts very quiet and subdued, signifying the woman's sadness, then drawing to a crescendo of feminine empowerment.

Scotland and Ireland's traditional form of dance is country dancing, characterised by couples swinging each other around by the arm to the sound of cheery accordions, fiddles, bagpipes, pipes and guitars. Highland dancing is also a part of Scotland's dance music, where the dancers can be seen performing over crossed swords with their fingers held high over their head in the shape of a deer's antlers, usually accompanied by the bagpipes.

There are many other different types of dance music from around the world, too many to mention all of them here! A few more are the Waltz, Salsa, Merengue, Mambo, Tango, Samba, Cha-Cha, Rumba and Foxtrot.

Most traditional dance music is composed to inspire couples; therefore most themes of these kinds of music are based on relationships of lovers. Music with a jumpy beat encourages happy, social interaction, whereas the slower, swaying rhythm is intended for intimacy and a personal celebration of love.

Health benefits too!

Dancing is a very good form of exercise, especially those with a faster beat. Dancing regularly improves muscle tone, burns calories and makes you smile, which releases your body's 'happy-hormones', endorphins, into your blood. Endorphins are believed to have a beneficial effect on general health and well-being and also the immune system! Many aerobics videos of the past few years have been based around these types of dance music for a fun but effective (and sometimes exhausting!) workout.

Learn more about dance aerobics videos [here](#)