

## Standard

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A composition, usually a popular song, that becomes an established item in the repertory; by extension, therefore, a song that a professional musician may be expected to know. Standards in jazz include popular songs from the late 19th century (e.g., *When the saints go marching in*), songs from Broadway musicals and Hollywood films by composers such as George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, and Richard Rogers, and tunes newly composed by jazz musicians (e.g., Thelonious Monk's *Round Midnight*, Dizzy Gillespie's *A Night in Tunisia*, and John Coltrane's *Giant Steps*). Jazz musicians themselves, however, distinguish further between these categories, referring to the first as comprising dixieland standards, the second as unqualified or mainstream standards, and the last as jazz standards; it is the consensus that the essential repertory of standards is comprehended within the mainstream category. Many jazz performances are based on standards, taking not only the melody but also the harmonies of the entire piece, or more often the refrain only, as the theme (see *Forms* §1); part of the impact of a performance based on a standard derives from its being familiar to the listeners, who are better able to appreciate skillful arrangement and inventive improvisation because they know the original work.