



POP BALLADS OF THE 1970S, 80S & 90S

FEATURES

1	Lyrics	Tell stories often with a sentimental romantic theme telling some kind of love story, often with a romantic “twist” right at the end to keep people listening.
2	Tempo & Metre	Slow to Moderate Tempo (Andante to Moderato) 4/4 Time Signature. Ritenuto and Rubato used.
3	Harmony & Tonality	Chord Progressions (guitar and/or piano) such as I, V, VI, IV. Slow Harmonic Rhythm. Often use Chord Inversions, Repeating Block Chords, Broken Chords or Arpeggios. Modulation in final chorus. Chords II, III and IV used more.
4	Melody	Mainly Diatonic melody sung by the lead singer. Duos/Trios also common and often sing in Close Harmony.
5	Rhythm	Accompanying drum patterns on the Snare Drum often feature Syncopated Rhythms accenting the 2nd and 4th beats of the bar.
6	Structure	Verse-Chorus Form. Verses in Strophic Form. Bridge/Middle 8 (8, 16, 24 or 32 bars) often features new material before a Modulation in the final Chorus. Parts of the Verse or Chorus can be repeated for emphasis or effect..

B INSTRUMENTATION & TECHNOLOGY

1	Vocal Performance	Expressive and Emotional Vocal Performance is key to a Pop Ballad: A Cappella, Vibrato, Falsetto, Melisma, Portamento, Riffing, Ritardandos, Tempo Rubato, Large Vocal Ranges, Long Held Notes.
2	Instrumentation	No “set list” of instruments which accompany Pop Ballads but often featured are: Guitars (Acoustic, Electric and Bass), Drum Kit, Vocals (Lead and Backing Singers), Piano, Electric Piano, Saxophone and Strings – either live orchestral or synthesised “Lush String Pads” using Music Technology.
3	Technology	Heavy Reverb on the vocals often used to create a warm sound. Synthesisers

C ARTISTS & VENUES

1	Artists	Female – Mariah Carey Male – Elton John Male Group – Take That Female Group – En Vogue
2	Venues	Pop Concert, Radio, TV, CD, MP3 Download Internet Sites, YouTube.