

How to play Bolero

ALBERTO BETANCOURT
(albetan)

Bolero is a slow and romantic rhythm pattern, performed in all latin countries.

Good bolero singers or "bolerists" always sing in a very rubato and freely way, but following a steady rhythm. If you play bolero at piano, try to perform melodies very rubato and freely, but be careful with rhythm.

Must Bolero Combos are composed of singers, guitars, maracas, and/or bongos. So the basis of bolero, in General Midi configuration, is this:

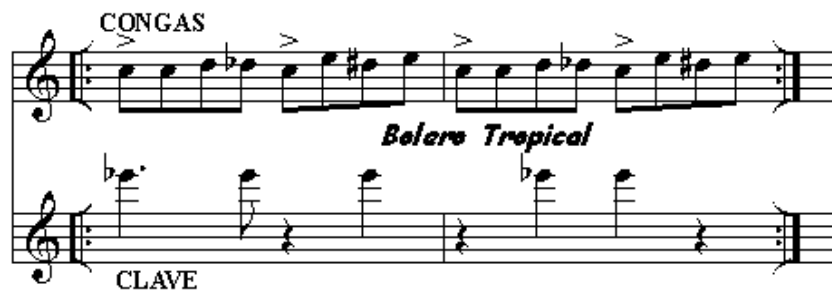


Tempo: may be between 84 (slow bolero) and 116 (bolero begin).

The most common tempo is: 104.

If you add congas and claves, you are playing **Tropical Bolero**:

In this pattern omit bongos, because you are using its sounds as congas.



As a Variation you may play CONGAS as salsa in a **Bolero salsa**:

Here you may play bongos pattern.

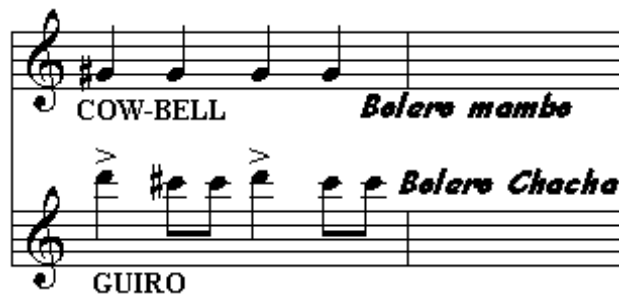


As other variation you may play only first bar of congas.

Bolero Chacha: Adding guiro you are playing bolero chacha.

Bolero Mambo: Adding cow-bell you will have Bolero Mambo.

You may add both instruments for a more rich bolero chacha:



From Cole Porter's *Begin the begin* was born a new style of bolero, called ***Bolero Begin***. That is a fast bolero in a *Tempo* : 116.
It is played in Drum-set so:



Play in this style Porter's standards *Begin the begin*, and *Night and Day*.

Piano and Bass play this pattern:



How to play Bolero in solo piano?

Perform Melody rubato and freely as possible. Enrich melody line with some chord notes or blocks. Also you may play melody alone and add some chords in up-beats.

If you are alone, always play bass with left hand, because it is basis of rhythm.

Piano performance in bolero is very free and you have opportunity to develop all your creativity and style.

Good luck and enjoy bolero.

