



# Funk and Disco

History and  
Development

## Origins

- Both evolved from Soul music
- Funk started emerging in the mid 60s
- Disco became popular in the mid 70s-80s
- Has some influence from early Electronic music and Rock music



- Disco music also takes some of its roots from Funk music
- One of the key pioneers of Funk music was James Brown (Get Up Offa That Thing) (Parliament – Flash Light)
- Early Disco artists include Donna Summer and Gloria Gaynor (Never Can Say Goodbye – one of the earliest disco hits in 1977)
  - Similarly to Soul singers, a lot of singers in these genres would have sung in gospel choirs and at church when growing up
  - A lot of disco musicians transitioned from funk and began to develop their sound

## Stylistic Musical Features

- Prominent bass lines and drum grooves
- Intricate and percussive guitar riffs
- Four-on-the-floor drum grooves (Disco)
- Syncopation
- Faster tempos



- The melodic and harmonic content in these genres was a lot less important as a lot of the music was produced for dancing rather than listening
- Slap bass was a prominent feature in both styles of music
  - The bassist hits the string with the side of their thumb producing a more percussive tone
  - Also incorporated pops on higher strings

## Stylistic Production Features

- Filter effects such as auto-wah and overdriven fuzz effects applied to the Bass guitar
- Drum machines used in the 70s to create drum grooves
- Clean rhythm guitar
- Bass synths such as the MiniMoog would sometimes replace the Bass guitar



- Auto – wah creates the quacky sound
- Other effects such as flanger and chorus would be used on the bass as well
- Drum grooves were created through tape loops and later drum machines in the late 70s
- Rhythm guitarists would generally avoid distortion effects to produce a crisp clean sound
  - Usually with a frequency content focus in the treble range (guitarists would commonly cut the mids to differentiate from the horn section)