



19th & 20th Century Folk Styles

19th cent. Folk

Spirituals

Parlor Songs

Minstrel Shows

Ragtime

Marches

Early-20th Century Folk

Popular Folk

	Start Date	Key Instruments	People	Contributing Technology	Key Concepts
	1800's	Fiddle, banjo, guitar, harmonica	Anonymous composers		Texts reflected life in America: on the railroads, open range or in the mines; as a soldier or cowboy; love dancing and courtin'. Songs also celebrated the legend of American heroes and villains. Melodies were patterned after borrowed from or adapted from English/Scottish/Irish or European folk tunes.
	Early 1800's	Singing, clapping & stomping	Anonymous composers among the African-American slaves		Spirituals were anonymous compositions, taught by oral tradition, involved free and improvised melodies and rhythms borrowed from European songs and African tunes. The texts, which dealt with the trials and tribulations of life, were often biblical in nature with double-meanings understood by slaves.
	1870's	Piano	Stephen Foster "The Father of American Popular Song"	Printing & marketing music and affordable pianos for the common American	Pre-Civil war Americans enjoyed the sentimentality and frivolity made available by the composers of parlor songs. The emphasis was on refined popular entertainment. Music publishers and popular composers found a new market in common, middle-class America.
	1860's	Banjo, Piano			Minstrel shows were originally variety shows made up of singing, dancing and humorous skits presented by African-Americans in the urban northern states following the civil war. Together with vaudeville and operettas, minstrel shows were the beginning of the American Musical.
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	1890's	Piano	Scott Joplin, "King of Ragtime"	"Pianola" or Player Piano	One of the early forms of jazz, ragtime was primarily a piano style of music which involved an even, steady left (bass & chord) hand with a syncopated (or "ragged") melody in the right hand. Other early ragtime composers were James Scott and Joseph Lamb. Ragtime developed from African, Creole, Caribbean and European influences.
	1880's	Brass, Woodwinds, Percussion	John Philip Sousa "The March King"	Recording music on cylinders	Although marches and bands existed prior to the 1880's, it was Sousa who wrote such marches as "Stars and Stripes Forever" which was the first song ever recognized as the "number one selling record" in America (1890). This new technology helped popularize Sousa and the march. Sousa was also the driving force behind the establishment of the first copyright law in America in 1909.
	1930-1950's	Guitar, Banjo, Harmonica	Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, John & Alan Lomax		Folk music of the 30's to 50's reflected the life of the lower class common man: the farmer, laborer, hobo, homeless, union-worker and miner. Lifted spirits of rural Americans and challenged conscience of urban America. Emphasis was both entertainment and political. Lomaxes documented and recorded American folk song.
	1955-1965	Acoustic: Guitar, Banjo Standup Bass	Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul & Mary The Kingston Trio		Continued dual emphasis: entertainment and political activism. Kingston Trio & PP&M with a "clean-cut" image, put more emphasis on entertainment, Baez & Dylan, following in Guthrie's footsteps, used music as a political platform. End of modern folk era was 1965 Newport Folk Festival, when Dylan "plugged in".