

High Road to Linton

Reels are another form of dance music. They are normally written in Split Common time with a vertical line drawn through the letter “C”, or 2/2 time. There are two pulses to the bar.

It is likely that reels are written in this time to convey a more relaxed expression and execution with short notes mostly written as 16th notes rather than 32nd notes (as in 2/4 marches). Therefore, execution of shorter notes should be relatively more relaxed. Dotted notes of course would have their relative duration, yet not over-done. Some authorities prefer reels to be pointed almost as for a 2/4 march with fairly contrasted timing of the long and short notes, whereas some prefer a very relaxed approach. Generally, an in between the two would be preferable for most reels. **Avoid clipping** or hacking the short notes.

Generally reels have a reasonable degree of pointing, yet with smoother rhythmic flow than in the march, allowing very good clarity of execution. Some reels are played round (evenly without hardly any pointing). It all depends on the composition and one’s interpretation. Smaller tunes can often be rounder, especially when played faster. Remember the **basic beat/pulse of Down/Up (D U) as shown below**.

Tempos are relatively faster for the lighter two parted reels at about 96 to 116 B.P.M., give or take a little, often more relaxed and with less discernable accents. The heavier four or more parted reels of the Competition variety might be about 84 to 96 B.P.M. and are generally a bit more pointed, yet should still have relaxed clear execution (seldom happens in bands even at the highest level).

High Road to Linton. Extracts.

These are to prepare you for the two parted tune. Study carefully the sequence with very clear and relaxed execution at a very steady tempo at first, as demonstrated on the CD track. In this tune the short notes are very relaxed and the dotted “E’s” not held relatively too long, especially when played at a faster tempo. Early on, play at the slower tempo of * 80 B.P.M., or less; about 96 B.P.M., when ready.