

Billie Jean Listening Lesson Outline

by Jim Tinter

1. Intro (14 measures) — kick/snare (famous), synth bass (moving), syncopated synths (staccato). Kick/snare **continues throughout entire song** with addition of a clap during choruses.
2. Verse 1 — Tell the story. 12 measures long. Moves from F#m to Bm (I - IV chords). “I am the one.” Unusual phrase length.
3. Verse 2 — 8 measures long. Finger snaps. Similar to V1.
4. Bridge 1 — “People always told me...” 8 measures long. Bass rhythm slows. Long synth pad introduced. Short synth stabs. “Eeeee.” Synth/strings added at end w/crescendo. Increased rhythmic activity.
5. Chorus 1 — Cymbal crash. “Billie Jean, that’s my lover.” Hand clap (drum machine?) added to snare. Legato syncopated synth. Guitar strum. Lots of vocal embellishments. “Ooo.” 12 measures long (unusual).
6. V3 — Hand claps removed. New synth pad/counter melody. Voice dubbed in octaves. Triplets (“remember to only think twice”) — only occurrence of triplets. 12 measures long. “Don’t think twice, don’t think twice (panned left/right).
7. V4 — Synth pad/counter melody repeated. Vocal embellishments in octaves. 8 measures.
8. Bridge 2 — “People always told me,” strings, crescendo. 8 bars.
9. Chorus 2 — “Billie Jean, that’s my lover.” Hand claps. Legato syncopated synth. Descending violin lick. Guitar strum.
10. Chorus 3 — Foreshadowing of guitar solo. Legato syncopated synth. Analog synth w/filter sweep solo (R channel) & strings (L channel) interact. 12 bars.
11. Guitar solo — “Woo” sung twice then left out. 8 bars.
12. Chorus 4 (coda) — “I am the one”.... guitar strum and solo re-enters, repeated many times. Lots of vocal embellishments — Guitar solo reminder. Fade out