

## Tempo in Irish Music

The bodhran supports Irish dance music. So, when thinking about the proper tempo of a piece, dancers call the shots. In a session or in an established ensemble, tempos often exceed what dancers expect. Flashy players will sometimes push the tempo beyond good taste. Fast and furious does not always make for the best musicality.

Here are the commonly used tempos that many Irish dance music competitions use for judging purposes.

### Common Tempos for Irish Dance Music

Light Jig	112-121
Single Jig	118
Reel	112-116
Slip Jig	112-118
Treble Jig	72-76
Hornpipe	112-116

Many session players aim for tempos between 110 and 120 bpm.

“Hot” players often set a pace of 140 bpm.

At 170 bpm, the tempo is dizzying and impressive. But, the music is a blur and dancing is essentially impossible at that pace. Just because you can play that fast doesn't mean you should.

Aim for a tempo of 120 bpm during practice sessions. You'll build confidence into your playing and be prepared to deliver a rock-solid rhythm for most Irish music.