

# SMILES

(as heard on "SMOOTH TALKIN'")

written by:  
Richard J. Frank & Ronnie Kaufman

Latin Pop Jazz ♩ = 128

**Vamp** **CUE LETTER A**

(drum pu) *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

**A** **On Cue**

*mf* *cresc. poco a poco* *f* *decresc. poco a poco* *mf* *melody p/up*

**B**

*mf* *f* *mf* *mf*

1. *f* 2.

21

# SMILES

(as heard on "SMOOTH TALKIN'")

written by:  
Richard J. Frank & Ronnie Kaufman

Latin Pop Jazz ♩ = 128

**Vamp** **CUE LETTER A**

(drum pu) *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

**On Cue**

**A** *mp* *cresc. poco a poco* *2x only*

*f* *decresc. poco a poco* *melody p/up*

## Smiles - Present Tense - Teaching Guidelines

Genre: JAZZ

Style: GROOVE JAZZ

World Region: North America

Country: United States

**Overview:** "Smiles" is a wonderful tune for younger bands of any age to get started with "playing the groove," although advanced players can take it as far as they like (listen to the pros on the recording!). A medium tempo, syncopated 8th note rhythm lays the foundation for a clear melody and relatively less challenging chord changes. The challenge is keeping it in the pocket!

**Style:** Falling someplace in the middle of Latin, funk, fusion rock, and jazz, the goal is to get the rhythm section parts to relax into their specific grooves so the resulting sound is spacious enough to allow for self-expression and fills. The bass line and groove accents the offbeats throughout the tune while still emphasizing beat 1 every couple of bars. The chords are in the pocket rhythmically and are quite diatonic in voicings. Any number of percussion layers can be added and rearranging to emphasise skilled players and create variations for the players and audiences

**Unique Teaching Elements:** This song is particularly good to emphasize the following:

- Melodic phrasing emphasizing heavy syncopation
- Repeated use of a traditional i-iv-v progression
- 2-bar phrase structure
- Auxiliary percussion importance
- Layering of simple repeated parts to create a more complex structure
- Use of non-harmonic tones in both melody and bass line

**Structure:** Intro – Start the rhythm section grooving, when locked, cue A. A – m5 – m12 – "intro" melody

B – m13 – m22 – "main A" melody – A&B are repeated

C – m25 – m34 – "B" melody (letter "C") – 6 bars repeated

D – m35 – m38 – Solos (you can stay on this for trading 4's or beginning soloists) E – Transition to another solo or to take the DS.

F – open drum/percussion solo (cue rhythm section last 8 bars before G)

G – 4 bars repeated to fine.

**Melody:** Be sure to help students with their phrasing so that the long notes and phrases, which predominate, have "direction". If there are multiple players on the melody, work to match dynamics and phrasing. Bring out the ascending and descending arcs.

Feel free to experiment with different instrument combinations (guitar and trumpet, saxophone, keyboard and violin, etc.). If you do so, try to return to your chosen groupings at different times throughout the chart to provide continuity for the listener.

Lastly, note the bass and melody interchange at letter "C" and focus to bring that out.

**Harmony:** A simple i-iv-v chord progression in the key of A minor is the basis of this tune. There is a quick bVI maj 7 chord in the last bar of letter B which gives the band lift and direction. The bridge moves up a half step to Bb major and moves slowly in terms of harmonic motion (2 bars per chord). These easier diatonic chords make this an ideal tune to focus on improvisation and developing melodic and rhythmic ideas.

Theory sidebar – at A & B, point out the minor scale nature of the entire melody. Also, point out to the students how the melody note "A" changes function throughout the tune. At letter A and B, it works as the root of the first chord, the fifth of the second chord, and the 11th (or 4th) of the third chord). At letter C, it's the major 7th A minor chord. Encourage students to use this knowledge in their soloing.

**Rhythm:** This groove can fit like a glove once your students get the hang of it. The light emphasis of beat 1 every 2 bars (as compared to a heavy downbeat) in the bass & drums may require some attention. This anticipation of beat 1 is part of what gives the chart its distinctly Latin character, so focus on this with your students to help them encourage them to work it out. Two other elements to bring out the Latin quality are the guitar and piano parts, and the use of any Latin percussion.

Smiles is a fun tune for a developing drummer, as well. The secret is to control their dynamics. It's not a bashing rock tune, so have them keep the hi-hat tight (closed) and use a strong cross-stick sound. The bridge (letter C) allows for the drummer increase the volume and play a bit harder as they move to the ride and head of the snare drum.

Additionally, the use of traditional auxiliary percussion instruments adds a significant musical element to this tune, which allows students to focus on technique and sectional playing.

**Improvisation/Theory:** The main solo section sounds most effective when players use the A minor pentatonic scale (A-C-D-E-G-A). More experienced players can judiciously use both the B and the F from the scale for color (or the G# for harmonic minor sound). Soloists can use the melody as a starting point and change the rhythm to create ideas.

**Notes:** Smiles is a fun show ender, as it can really get pumping. Want a drum/percussion solo section? Just add it. The idea is to learn the basics of the tune and then move things around to best fit your band's level, instrumentation and set up.