

The instruments and performers

- Miles Davis - Trumpet
- Cannonball Adderley – Alto Sax
- John Coltrane – Tenor Sax
- Bill Evans – Piano
- Paul Chambers – Double Bass
- Jimmy Cobb – Drums

The piece features two types of saxophone – **alto sax** is smaller and higher than a **tenor sax**

The bass player is using a **double bass** (sometimes called string bass or upright bass) and, as is common in jazz, **he plucks the strings (plays ‘pizzicato’)** throughout

Miles Davis uses a **mute** whilst playing the Head section – it makes his trumpet sound quieter and ‘further away’ – he takes it off and plays normally in his solo

In jazz, the drums, piano, bass (and guitar, if there is one) are referred to as the **rhythm section**. The other instruments (usually brass, woodwind, saxes) are called **the frontline**. The piano plays a **tremelo** in the intro and then **comps** (plays the chords in different ways) in the solo sections

Style – Blues

Uses a 12-bar blues chord sequence (although not the usual, basic one)
 Typical Jazz/Blues line up – rhythm section plus frontline saxes/trumpet
 Uses ‘jazz harmony’ – all the chords have added notes e.g. 7ths and 9ths.
 It was recorded in one take which meant the performers would need to know

- ✓ Basic structure
- ✓ Chord sequence
- ✓ Number of solos
- ✓ How long to improvise for
- ✓ Which modes to play

Three musical points about this piece that I like:

Justify your points and use musical vocabulary.



ALL BLUES

Miles Davis

Structure and Tonality

- **Head Arrangement** (based on a main theme or ‘head’, with an improvised solo section in the middle: HEAD...SOLOS...HEAD)
- Includes intro and outro

Section	Details
Intro 8 bars	Intro – 8 bars Two four bar sections (called Intro 1 and Intro 2). Intro 1 – piano tremolo Intro 2 – saxes join in with the main riff (interval is a third)
Head 32 bars	Muted trumpet plays 12-bar theme or ‘head’ whilst saxes play main riff in the background Link (based on Intro 2) 12- bar head again on muted trumpet Link (based on Intro 2)
Solos Improvvised 12-bar pattern repeated 14 times	1. Trumpet (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2) 2. Alto sax (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2) 3. Tenor sax (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2) 4. Piano (24 bars) Saxes play main riff after
Head 32 bars	Same as first Head section
Outro 12 bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fades out • Saxes play main riff again • Trumpet plays a new riff

Tonality: In the key of G throughout, but uses modal tonality.

Chord Pattern:

G7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /
C7 / / / / /	C7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /
D7#9 / / / / /	Eflat7#9 / / D7#9 / /	G7 / / / / /	G7 / / / / /

How are the elements used?

Structure

- Head arrangement with intro & outro
- Intro-Head-Solos-Head - Outro

Tonality and Harmony

- Modal
- The standard 12 bar blues chord progression is altered by extended chords (addings 7ths and 9ths), link is inserted between repeats, ‘turnaround’ chords vary in the head and solos.
- Chords like D7#9 are known as altered, extended or substitution chords.
- The term ‘changes’ is the chord sequence in a jazz piece

Timbre and texture

- Melody and Accompaniment
- Drums/Piano/Bass = Rhythm Section (accompaniment)
- Trumpet plays the main theme ‘Head’
- Saxophones play the riff in the Head sections
- Alto sax, Tenor sax, Trumpet and Piano all take solos
- At the end of each solo, there is a link (like the intro) where the frontline instruments drop out

Dynamics

- The intro is quite soft
- The trumpet uses a mute in the Head section, which makes it sound quieter and ‘far away’
- First trumpet solo has lots dynamic variety as he plays with expression.
- Generally the trumpet solo is quite loud

Melody

- The Head is the main melody of the piece
- Trumpet plays the head
- Two saxophones play the riff in the Head in an interval of a third apart.
- Chromatic notes are used in the melody (notes that are not in the key of the piece)
- The melody is modal

Rhythmic devices

- Swung rhythms
- Syncopation
- Time signature is 6/4
- Tempo of 156 BPM
- Feel laid back as the bar is split into two slow beats