There's nothing like a pair of cowboy boots for sliding smoothly across a wooden dance floor.

Historic dancehalls are sprinkled all over the Lone Star State. Many are still in use throughout the year.

Photo by Krista Whitson

Texas music is dance music. In some important ways, it sets Texas musical traditions apart from their counterparts elsewhere. Over time, dance music forged interesting connections between different Texas styles. In late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, couple dancing was far more common in the Lone Star State than in the American South. And, today, whether the style is country, Tejano, European polka, or even the blues, dancing and dancehalls complete the equation. Even in small communities throughout Texas, dance venues commonly serve different clienteles or genres of music. In any given town on a Saturday night, you might find a zydeco dance at the church hall, a country and western band playing for dancers at a local club, a Czech or German polka dance at a fraternal lodge, or a popular conjunto cranking out cumbias and redowas for a swirling crowd of couples in a ballroom or cantina.

Waltz Across Texas