



Simple Songs to Keep in Your Back Pocket

“I’ve Been Working on the Railroad”

Are people sitting around looking bored? Launch into this song and soon they will be singing with you and tapping their toes. This song has a strong, steady beat, and the lyrics are so well known that almost anyone can sing along. Use it when you want to create energy, motivate or encourage movement. Don’t hesitate to sing it more than once.

- Encourage movement! Invite people to follow your lead as you pat your knees, tap your toes, etc. But don’t get pushy - pat on your own knees, not theirs. Ensure their success by being mindful of what they’re physically able to do. Accept their response or lack of response. Some may show only slight movements. Others may become leaders. If they are disinterested, they will let you know. Don’t give up. Just try it another time.
- This song is a march. Use its rhythm to motivate someone to walk with you from one place to another. But just hum the melody when using it this way. Otherwise, you are asking people to do two things at once, which may be hard for them.
- Sing this to “distract” and ease tension around an unpleasant task, such as showering.
- Need to encourage a sleepy person to eat? Use this and other rousing songs a half hour before mealtime.