



My Life

Billy Joel

🎵 Level 49/100 (Ambitious)

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MY LIFE

Words and Music by Billy Joel

One of Billy Joel's biggest hits, the upbeat pop song "My Life" is a manifesto to independence, delivered succinctly with the chorus line "I don't care what you say anymore, this is my life. Go ahead with your own life. Leave me alone." This is a gentle kiss-off to parents, or perhaps a controlling lover, and Joel gets his point across without anger or negativity. Much of the song is written in the first person, as Joel speaks directly to his oppressor, using terms like "I don't want you to tell me..." or "I don't care what you say..." as he leads to the uncompromising "you can speak your mind, but not on my time." Surely many people were inspired by this song to stand for what they believe in, and discount the sometimes ill-stated opinions of others.

Figure 36—Intro, Interlude, and Verse

"My Life" begins with a grooving introduction consisting of simple chords over a D pedal point. But before long, Joel reaches outside the key for some added color, particularly during the interlude, where nearly all the chords are borrowed—D9, C9, E♭maj7/F, F7, and B♭.

Joel uses a chromatic, disco-style (no one was really immune to disco fever in '78) walk-up in measure 16 to set up the verse, which is firmly rooted back in D major.

Fig. 36

53 Full Band
54 Slow Demo: meas. 13-16

Intro
Moderately ♩ = 126
N.C.
mf

1 G/D D G/D Em7/D D

5 G/D D G/D Em7/D D G/D D G/D Em7/D D

Interlude
9 D9 C9 E♭maj7/F F7 B♭

8vb