

Name	Gender	Part Size	Vocal Part
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Ren McCormack

Male Lead Tenor

- impulsive, young, teenager, honest, dancer

Rev. Shaw Moore

Male Lead Baritone

- **Adult:** strict, religious, unbending, reverend, controlling

Ariel Moore

Female Lead Mezzo-Soprano

- rebellious, wild. teenager, loving, dancer

Vi Moore

Female Supporting Mezzo-Soprano

- **Adult:** strong, caring, resourceful, supportive, understanding, mother

Rusty

Female Supporting Soprano

- fast-talking, dancer, friendly, supportive, caring

Willard Hewitt

Male Supporting Tenor

- hick, friendly, loyal, fighter, hot-headed, dancer

Ethel McCormack

Female Supporting Mezzo-Soprano

- **Adult:** mother, understanding, supportive, alone, surviving

Chuck Cranston

Male Supporting Tenor

- wild, rebellious, abusive, teenager, sex-crazy

Wendy Jo*

Female Featured Mezzo-Soprano

- follower, friendly, flirty, boy-crazy, popular

Urleen*

Female Featured Soprano

- boy-crazy, friendly, flirty, popular, teenager

Lulu Warnicker

Female Featured Spoken

- **Adult:** aunt, settled, married, small-town, housewife

Wes Warnicker

Male Featured Spoken

- **Adult:** uncle, small-town, married, supportive, family-man

Roger Dunbar

Male Featured Spoken

- **Adult:** coach, athletic, ignorant, small-minded, follower, mean

Eleanor Dunbar

Female Featured Spoken

- town-representative, follower, religious, boring, traditional

Lyle

Male Featured Tenor

- teenager, liar, bully, follower, mean

Travis

Male Featured Tenor

- teenager, liar, bully, follower, mean

A Cop

Male Featured Spoken

- **Adult:** police, unfair, bully, nepotistic, stupid

Betty Blast

Female Featured Spoken

- **Mature adult:** courageous, independent, smart, individual, witty, ornery. Must be able to skate – very slowly.

Principal Harry Clark

Male Featured Spoken

- **Adult:** principal, stodgy, strict, authoritative, humorless

Bickle

Male Featured Tenor

- teenager, supportive, friendly, kind, informative

Jeter
Male

Featured

Tenor

- teenager, supportive, friendly, kind, informative

Garvin
Male

Featured

Baritone

- teenager, supportive, friendly, kind, informative

Irene and her Country Kickers

Female

Featured

Mezzo-Soprano

- **Adult:** singer, band, clubs, dancer, performer

Cowboy Bob

Male

Featured

Soloist

- **Adult:** dancer, womanizer, country, opportunistic, fun, cowboy

FOOTLOOSE CHARACTERS

The major characters in FOOTLOOSE have one trait in common: they are all survivors. Their circumstances – no matter how tragic – have not defeated them, and, as a consequence, we, the audience, find them likable, sympathetic...and human.

That having been said, each role is unique and presents an actor or actress with specific challenges; the following thumbnail sketches of the major characters may give you ideas about the qualities to look for and pitfalls to be avoided when casting your production.

REV. SHAW MOORE – The secret to the character of Rev. Moore is that he is charismatic. Charming, even. Shaw has a quick mind, a loving heart and a sense of humor, all of which endear him to his congregation. While trying to be strong for so many people, however, he continues to mourn the death of his son – the one person he could not save. Only Ariel and Vi (and eventually Ren) get a glimpse of this private anguish and the flashes of frustration and temper that arise from that.

And age-wise, remember that Shaw is the father of a teenage girl; then, do the math.

VI MOORE – Despite the loss of her son and the strained relationship with her husband, Vi fully understands what kind of unflagging good humor she must display in order to keep her household – and her husband's congregation – running smoothly. And with her plucky irreverence, she gives us a glimpse of what life with Shaw was like before the tragedy, when theirs was a marriage both passionate and playful.

ARIEL MOORE – Ariel is smart; she understands the rules of the different worlds she moves between and, in each situation, she plays her part brilliantly. When she's in her father's presence, for instance, she is buttoned-up and demure; with Chuck, she burns off all her unexpressed, explosive energy with raucous, thrill-seeking behavior.

Ariel loves to laugh – with Chuck, with her girlfriends and, eventually, with Ren – but her high spirits are, quite often, her attempt to keep a lid on the grief she feels about her brother's death and the loss of her once loving relationship with her father.

REN – Any actor playing Ren has not only got to be able to sing and dance and act – he must also be *witty*.

After all, Ren is a cut-up, a joker who enjoys a good time (which is why his Pals are upset to find out he's leaving in the opening number). Lately, though, his fun-loving attitude has taken on a tone of desperation, as he tries *too* hard to convince the world – and himself – that his father's desertion hasn't wounded him as deeply as it has. Ariel is the first character to get Ren to talk about that sticky subject; sharing that intimacy early on becomes the basis for their relationship. Ren's emotional journey starts with his being feisty and flippant in Act I, continues through his thoughtful argument to the Town Council and ends with his emotional final confrontation with Rev. Moore. It's a journey from boyhood to maturity.

ETHEL McCORMACK – Where does Ren get his intelligence, his resilience and his sense of humor? From his mother, of course! It's hard for Ethel to be living in her sister's home and abiding by her brother-in-law's rules, but she never succumbs to the pathos of her situation; after all, she has to be strong for Ren. Their mutual loss has brought them closer together, and they share a teasing, good-natured relationship.

WILLARD HEWITT – Willard is not dumb; he is a gentle soul with quick fists, which are his defense against a world that he often has trouble comprehending. Willard just hasn't had anyone come along to puncture that macho belligerence – until Ren arrives. After that, the humor in the character of Willard derives from his gradual, innocent and giddy discovery of the new worlds that Ren opens up to him.

RUSTY – Rusty may come off as sassy and self-assured, but, in many ways, she is the most deeply romantic character in FOOTLOOSE. She truly believes that she and Willard were meant to be together, but they're both so inept about expressing themselves that it takes Ren – and a little time on the dance floor – to ultimately bring that about.

FOOTLOOSE BY THE NUMBERS

In staging your production of FOOTLOOSE, always remember:

FOOTLOOSE takes place in a town where nobody's allowed to dance.

This is not to say that characters in Bomont can't move, because they certainly can (they must!), but that movement should be inventive and clever; early on it should be restrained, otherwise the story of FOOTLOOSE stops in its tracks. The payoff will be all the greater if the explosion of dance energy at the end of Act II is not only a catharsis for the characters onstage but for your audience as well.

Here are a few additional suggestions that we hope might enhance your experience of doing our show.

Musical Overview:

1. Our score draws influences from the worlds of rock 'n' roll, R&B, pop, gospel and Broadway music. Despite that diversity, there is one constant: all these styles demand *rhythm*. FOOTLOOSE comes alive when singers feel a song's pulse, when they experience its beat in their bodies and when they dig deep to express its inherent musical muscle. Don't confuse *intensity* with *speed*; performing a song *fast* is never as effective as performing it with *energy* and *clarity of attack*.

2. Notice how the first few lines of each of the character songs in FOOTLOOSE flow from the spoken words that precede them. When these transitions are smooth, the characters can continue at a conversational clip as they slip easily into their numbers.

ACT I

In the opening number (**Footloose**) it's important to stress the distinction between *raucous, energetic Chicago* and the *laid-back, bucolic Bomont* that arrives onstage in **On Any Sunday**.

In **The Girl Gets Around**, the playful banter of the lyric (“*Well, she'd like you to think she was born yesterday....*” “*Yeah, he likes to pretend he's a man among men...*”) masks a subtext of genuine physical attraction.

I Can't Stand Still is *not* a number about Ren dancing; what it *is* about is the beginning of an unlikely friendship between him and Willard.

What happens here is that, in Willard, Ren finds the first person he can talk to in Bomont; and Willard finds himself collared by this tightly-wound “big city” fellow. By the end of the number, Willard has been drawn in by Ren’s charm, so much so that he defends his new friend to Principal Clark.

In **Somebody’s Eyes**, there’s a spirited energy and a mischievous wink in the way that Rusty, Wendy Jo and Urleen explain life in Bomont to Ren.

Learning To Be Silent is a song of survival. Vi, Ethel and Ariel are plucky and defiant, drolly cataloguing the many ways in which they preoccupy themselves as they choke back their thoughts: “*Counting little cracks in the tile...*,” “*Contemplating taking up smoking,*” etc.

In **Holding Out For A Hero**, Ariel, Rusty, Wendy Jo and Urleen sing: “*Late at night I toss and I turn/And I dream of what I need.*” The song gives them a chance to share that fantasy with us.

Rev. Moore is a smart man who depends on logic to provide him with a compass by which he can steer his life and the lives of his parishioners; but in **Heaven Help Me**, Rev. Moore loses his bearings. He veers between rationalizing arguments (“*I don’t enjoy being her jailer!*”; “*I strive to be a good preacher!*”) and outright pleas to his Lord (“*Heaven help me shoulder my load!*”).

This vigorous agitation propels the number, straight through to Shaw’s final snap: “*Who can?!*”

I’m Free is one of the potential pitfalls to which I alluded in the opening paragraphs above; just because Ren is talking about *having a dance* in Bomont doesn’t give these characters the license to *actually dance*. The scene is set in a gymnasium, where basketballs, jump ropes, trampolines, climbing ropes, gymnastic apparati, etc. and all sorts of sports and exercise moves can provide many opportunities for movement.

ACT II

Still Rockin’ is a good-time, rock ‘n’ roll, two-steppin’ bar-band number that introduces us to the world of the Bar-B-Que as well as to the simple pleasure of dance that has been so long denied the residents of Bomont (especially Rusty!).

In **Let’s Hear It For The Boy** two separate and distinct stories are being told:

1. Willard is trying to learn to dance from the Cowboys while...
2. Rusty is rationalizing her attraction to Willard by confiding to the Cowgirls.

Eventually these separate stories converge... with humorous results.

Can You Find It In Your Heart? is a good example of the point I made above (Musical Overview #2) about creating an uninterrupted transition from speaking dialogue to singing it.

The fun to be had with Ren’s terrible speech (**Dancing Is Not A Crime**) comes when Ren gradually discovers that “*Hey! I’m bustin’ a rhyme!*” and he gets swept up into his patter, to the dismay of his Pals.

Afraid of failure, Ren wants to quit his campaign for a dance, but Willard and his Buddies have to persuade him not to; **Mama Says** is their “recruitment,” song in which they must convince Ren that he “*can’t back down!*”

Almost Paradise is a tentative, steadily-building courtship in which private thoughts (“*I thought that dreams belonged to other men...*”; “*I feared my heart would beat in secrecy...*”) eventually become shared intimacies (“*I swear that I can see forever in your eyes.*”).

Shaw’s reprises of **Heaven Help Me** and **Can You Find It In Your Heart?** are the unadorned thoughts of a man who has survived a long and painful journey to redemption. The **Footloose Finale** has been carefully constructed to build, build, build; but be careful that the tempo doesn’t run away.

We have no doubt that with your imagination, talent and inspiration, you and your cast will create a unique and thrilling experience for your audience. And when it comes to opening night for

FOOTLOOSE, remember to....

...break a leg.

—Dean Pitchford

Footloose Scene Break Down

ACT I

- P 1-8 Scene 1: The City of Chicago/The Town of Bomont, in church
Footloose/On Any Sunday
Chicago- Ren, Ethel, Dancers, Soloists, Ensemble Dancer/Singers
Bomont- Rev. Shaw Moore, Choir, Adult and Teen Parishoners, Ren,
Ethel, Vi, and Ariel.
- P 8-12 Scene 2: The Church Yard
Shaw, Ethel, Lulu, Wes, Vi, Ren Eleanor, Coach, Ariel Teens, Vi, and
Ariel
- P12-16 Scene 3: Behind a Gas Station
Chuck, Lyle, Travis, Ariel, and Shaw
- P 16-30 Scene 4: A High School Hallway
Ren, Ariel, Rusty, Wendy Jo, Urleen, Willard, and all Teens
I Can't Stand Still- Ren
Principal, Ren, Willard, Rusty, Ariel, Wendy Jo, and Urlee
Somebody's Eyes- Rusty, Wendy Jo, Urlee, and Townspeople
Ren, Cop, Chuck, Coach, Lyle, Travis, Principal, Wes, Lulu, Ethel,
Ariel, and Chuck
- P 30-35 Scene 5: The Moore Home/ LuLu and Wes's front Lawn
Ariel, Vi, Rev. Shaw
Learning to Be Silent- Vi and Ethel
- P 35-45 Scene 6: The Burger Blast
Rusty, Urleen, Ariel, Wendy Jo, Willard, Ren and Teens
Holding Out for a Hero- Ariel, Wendy Jo, Urleen and Rusty
Chuck, Ariel, Ren, Willard, Betty and Teens
- P 45-47 Scene 7: The Great Plains
Ariel, Ren, and Chuck
Somebody's Eyes Reprise- Rusty, Wendy Jo, and Urleen
- P 47-52 Scene 8: The Moore Home
Vi, Eleanor, Coach Dunbar, Principal Clark, Shaw, Ariel, and Ren
Somebody's Eyes Reprise- Rusty, Wendy Jo, and Urleen/Chuck, Travis, and Lyle
Vi, Shaw, Ariel, and Ren
Heaven Help Me- Shaw

P 52-58 Scene 9: The High School Gym/ The Church
Coach, Lyle, Travis, Ariel, Willard, Teens, Garvin, Bickle, and Jeter
I'm Free/Heaven Help Me- Ren, Teens, Adult Choir

Footloose Scene Break Down

ACT II

P 59-67 Scene 1: The BBQ, a Western Dance Hall
Let's Make Believe We're In Love- Irene and her country kickers
Chorus, Ren, Ariel, Willard, Rusty, Cowboy Bob, Cowboy #1, Cowboy #2,
Band Member
Let's Here it for the Boys- Rusty and the girls

P 67-71 Scene 2: The Moore Home
Chuck, Vi, Shaw, and Ariel
Can You Find it in Your Heart- Vi

P 72-78 Scene 3: The Junk Yard
Willard, Ren, Bickle, Jeter, and Garvin
Mama Says (You Can't Back Down) -Willard, Bickle, Jeter, and Garvin
Urleen, Wendy Jo, Rusty, Ariel, Ren, and Bickle

P 78-82 Scene 4: Under the Bridge
Ariel and Ren
Almost Paradise- Ariel and Ren

P 82-92 Scene 5: The Town Hall
Entire Company, Shaw, Wes, Principal, Eleanor, Lule, Cop, Jeter, and Ren
Dancing in Not a Crime- Ren, Willard, Garvin, Jeter, and Bickle
Betty, Vi, Ethel, and Ren

P 92-99 Scene 6: The Church/ The Churchyard
Ren and Shaw
I Confess- Shaw and Choir
Ariel, Ren, Willard, Rusty, Urleen, W Jo, Jeter, Garvin, Bickle, Vi, and Shaw
Can You Find It in Your Heart Reprise- Shaw and Vi
Footloose Finale- Ren, Garvin, Bickle, Jeter, Willard, Ariel, Rusty, Urleen, and teens

P 99-101 Scene 7: The Gym
Footloose- All teens, Rusty, Wendy Jo, Urleen, Vi, Shaw, and Adults