

AN (INCOMPLETE) LIST OF TROPES

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Here is a list of ideas on tropes for your romance.

It's just a jumping off point!

- Not all are straight-up 'tropes' - some are angles or moments that readers often adore or seek out.
- Some are repeats, reframes, or shade into each other (ex: class warfare, wrong side of the tracks, and forbidden love can overlap) but each also offers a slightly different slant.
- Rename, rephrase, rework as you see fit.

(INCOMPLETE) LIST OF TROPES

- * Accidental Pregnancy
- * Adventure romance
- * All Grown Up Now
- * Alpha Hero
- * Antihero
- * Amateur sleuth
- * Amnesia
- * Arranged Marriage

- * Beauty and the Beast
- * Beta Hero
- * Best friend's (little) sister (Very twistable—little brother, etc)
- * Blackmail
- * Bodyguard/ Protector /Guardian

- * Cabin romance/ Snowbound / Stranded / Castaways / Trapped (romantic leads are forced together by external circumstance, often involving surviving together in the outdoors)
- * Captive/Captor
- * Class warfare (poor/rich; noble/common; law-abiding/criminal; etc)
- * Compromised
- * Conquering Hero
- * Courtesan / Mistress
- * Cowboys
- * Cyrano riffs (h/h helps the other get noticed by love interest, but (one of them) realizes they are falling in love/are already in love w/other)

- * Dark romance
- * (in) Danger (often heroine in danger, whether she knows it or not, and hero is saving, but this is a very twist-able trope that offers lots of fun options!)

- * Death (Or paperwork) Brings Us Together (a will or other document requires actions that force h/h together)
- * (in) Disguise
- * Employer-Employee /Worker (Nanny, caretaker, secretary, etc)
- * Enemies-to-Lovers
- * Era-based (ancient Rome/Greece; medieval, Renaissance, Tudor/Elizabethan, Georgian, Colonial, American West, etc etc)
- * Fairytale retelling
- * Fake (or Forced) Marriage / Betrothal / Engagement / Date
- * Fated mates / Star-crossed lovers
- * Fiery heroine / Strong-willed heroine
- * Fish out of water
- * Forbidden Love
- * Friends-To-Lovers
- * Gambling Debt / Wager
- * Guardian / Protector / Bodyguard / Mentor
- * Groveling Required (one romantic lead has acted so wrongly there's a requisite grovel scene between they can be redeemed. Not a trope so much as something readers love, so can be used as you plot to ensure your romantic leads are behaving awfully enough to require a grovel.)
- * Hearth & Home
- * Hero(ine) in Charge (hero/ine is the one with all/most of the apparent power, which affects power dynamics)
- * Hero falls in love first
- * Heroine falls in love first
- * Heroine disguises self as a man
- * Hidden Identity
- * Injured, healed by other
- * Into The Wild (like the snowbound, etc, &/or fish out of water, forced into extreme circumstances)
- * Instant Attraction
- * Interracial romance
- * Kickass Heroine / Fiery Heroine / Strong-willed Heroine
- * Kidnapped / Captured
- * Less than perfect / Physically flawed
- * Let's Make a Deal (h/h agree to some bargain that forces them together to get what they want)
- * Love triangle
- * Lighthearted/comedic
- * Long Grudge (h/h &/or their families have a conflicted, powerful history)
- * Love triangle

- * Makeover/Ugly Duckling
- * Marriage of Convenience
- * Marriage in trouble
- * May/December romance
- * Mentor (one romantic lead (is forced to) train other lead in some special skill or ability; one is a master at it, the other is fumbling)
- * Mistaken Identity (intentionally by one h/h, or accidental, they allow to go on)

- * ‘Nerd’ romantic lead (scientist, mathematician, etc. Great to have other romantic lead (seem to be) at opposite end of some continuum—organizational inclinations, sociability, etc)

- * On The Run
- * Opposites Attract (romantic leads are opposites in some important way—social standing; law-abiding/obedience; temperament; belief system; etc)

- * Payment for a Debt (gambling or other; payment for; collecting of)
- * Plus-sized heroine
- * Pretend Marriage / betrothal
- * Police / Soldier / Those Who Rescue or Protect
- * Power Differential (one character appears to have all the power)
- * Prodigal Son (or Daughter)
- * Pursuing Hero (hero pursues heroine)

- * Really A Rogue / Bad Boy (a truly bad or has-been-bad hero)
- * Role/identity (Shapes one or both romantic leads’ actions & motivations. Ex: Viking, knight, duke, pirate, cowboy, Scots, spy, nerdy, heir, CEO, etc)

- * Scandal
- * Secret baby
- * Secret heir
- * Secret identity
- * Secretly pining for the other
- * Sensual heat level
- * Slow burn
- * Star-crossed lovers
- * Spies
- * Spinster-Rake
- * Scarred hero/heroine
- * Seasonal / Holiday theme

- * Teamwork (romantic leads must/choose to work together for some larger purpose/goal)
- * Time Travel
- * Thief
- * Thriller (high levels danger & suspense)
- * Tortured hero
- * Trapped Together

- * Treasure hunt (doesn't have to be actual treasure, but leads are on the hunt for something together)
- * Trickery / Hidden Motives (bait-and-switch; one character is lying/working an angle that the other is unaware of)
- * Turn a trope on its head (Tweak a tried-and-true trope. Ex: heroine comes to rescue hero; hero is the wallflower; etc.)

- * Underrated/Underestimated Romantic Lead

- * Wager
- * Working Class hero/heroine
- * Woman in jeopardy
- * Wrong side of the tracks (h/h come from opposite sides of class/ses/culture)

- * Race Against The Clock
- * Redemption (h/h has to make things up to larger familial or cultural world, or make it up to other h/h who they did wrong in past)
- * Reincarnation
- * Rescue (h is sent/take on mission to rescue/bring in h, perhaps against her will. Does not need to be thriller/suspense-ish plot. Can be 'pretty woman' type, ex: financial rescue, etc)
- * Reunion / Second Chance
- * Revenge
- * Road Romance / Travel / On the road
- * Rogue / Playboy
- * Royalty / Prince
- * Runaway bride/groom

- * Ugly duckling
- * Unrequited love / Secret love
- * Unconventional hero/heroine

- * Wager (could be like gambling debt, or h/h make a wager with consequences)
- * Wallflower / Bluestocking / Plain heroine
- * Warrior
- * Widowed
- * Wounded