The Eagles are an American rock band formed in Los Angeles in 1971. The founding members were Glenn Frey (lead guitar, lead vocals), Don Henley (drums, lead vocals), Bernie Leadon (guitars, vocals) and Randy Meisner (bass guitar, vocals). With five number-one singles, six Grammy Awards, five American Music Awards, and six number-one albums, the Eagles were one of the most successful musical acts of the 1970s. At the end of the 20th century, two of their albums, *Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)* and *Hotel California*, were ranked among the 20 best-selling albums in the United States according to the Recording Industry Association of America. *Hotel California* is ranked 37th in *Rolling Stone*'s list of "The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time" and the band was ranked number 75 on the magazine's 2004 list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time.[1]

The Eagles are one of the world's best-selling bands of all time having sold more than 150 million records[2]—100 million in the U.S. alone—including 42 million copies of *Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)* and 32 million copies of *Hotel California*. *Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)* was the best selling album of the 20th century in the U.S.[3] They are the fifth-highest-selling music act and the highest-selling American band in U.S. history.

The band released their debut album, *Eagles*, in 1972, which spawned three top 40 singles: "Take It Easy," "Witchy Woman," and "Peaceful Easy Feeling." Their next album, *Desperado* (1973), was less successful than the first, only reaching number 41 on the charts; neither of its singles reached the top 40. However, the album does contain what would go on to be two of the band's most popular tracks: "Desperado" and "Tequila Sunrise." The band released *On the Border* in 1974, adding guitarist Don Felder as the fifth member midway through the recording of the album. The album generated two top 40 singles: "Already Gone" and their first number one, "Best of My Love."

Their 1975 album *One of These Nights* included three top 10 singles: "One of These Nights," "Lyin' Eyes," and "Take It to the Limit," the first hitting the top of the charts. Guitarist and vocalist Joe Walsh also joined the band in 1975 replacing Leadon. The Eagles continued that success and hit their commercial peak in late 1976 with the release of *Hotel California*, which would go on to sell more than 16 million copies in the U.S. alone and more than 32 million copies worldwide. The album yielded two number-one singles, "New Kid in Town" and "Hotel California." Meisner left the band in 1977 and was replaced by Timothy B. Schmit. They released their last studio album for nearly 28 years in 1979 with *The Long Run*, which spawned three top 10 singles: "Heartache Tonight," "The Long Run," and "I Can't Tell You Why," the lead single being another chart-topping hit.
The Eagles disbanded in July 1980 but reunited in 1994 for the album *Hell Freezes Over*, a mix of live and new studio tracks. They toured consistently and were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998. In 2007, the Eagles released *Long Road Out of Eden*, their first full studio album in 28 years and their sixth number-one album. The next year they launched the Long Road Out of Eden Tour in support of the album. In 2013, they began the extended History of the Eagles Tour in conjunction with the band's documentary release, *History of the Eagles*.

Following the death of Frey in January 2016, Henley stated in several interviews that he did not think the band would perform again. However, in March 2017 it was announced that the Eagles would be headlining two concerts in 2017.

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### History

#### 1971–1973: Formation and early releases

The Eagles began in early 1971, when Linda Ronstadt and her then-manager John Boylan recruited local musicians Glenn Frey and Don Henley for her band.[4] Henley had moved to Los Angeles from Texas with his band Shiloh to record an album produced by Kenny Rogers,[5] and Frey had come from Michigan and formed Longbranch Pennywhistle they had met in 1970 at The Troubadour in Los Angeles and became acquainted through their mutual record label, Amos Records.[6][7] Randy Meisner, who had been working with Ricky Nelson's backing band, the Stone Canyon Band, and Bernie Leadon, a veteran of the Flying Burrito Brothers, also later joined Ronstadt's group of performers for her summer tour promoting the *Silk Purse* album.[4][8]

While on the tour, Frey and Henley decided to form a band together and informed Ronstadt of their intention. Frey later credited Ronstadt with suggesting Leadon for the band, and arranging for Leadon to play for her so Frey and Henley could approach him about forming a band together. They also pitched the idea to Meisner and brought him on board.[9] These four played live together...
behind Ronstadt only once for a July concert at Disneyland[^4] but all four appeared on her eponymous album.[^10] It was later proposed that J. D. Souther should join the band, but Meisner objected.[^11] The four were signed in September 1971 to Asylum Records, the new label started by David Geffen, who was introduced to Frey by Jackson Browne.[^12] Geffen bought out Frey's and Henley's contracts with Amos Records, and sent the four to Aspen, Colorado to develop as a band.[^13] Having not settled on a band name yet, they performed their first show in October 1971 under the name of Teen King and the Emergencies at a club called The Gallery in Aspen.[^14][^15] Don Felder credited Leadon with originating the name of Eagles for the band during a peyote and tequila-influenced group outing in the Mojave Desert, when he recalled reading about the Hopis' reverence for the eagle.[^16] Accounts however vary, and J.D. Souther suggested that the idea came when Frey shouted out, "Eagles!" when they saw eagles flying above.[^17] Steve Martin, a friend of the band from their early days at The Troubadour, recounts in his autobiography that it suggested that they should be referred to as "the Eagles," but Frey insists that the group's name is simply "Eagles."[^18] Geffen and partner Elliot Roberts initially managed the band; they were later replaced by Irving Azoff while the Eagles were recording their third album.[^19]

The group's eponymous debut album was recorded in England in February 1972 with producer Glyn Johns.[^20] Johns was impressed by the harmony singing of the band,[^20] and he has been credited with shaping the band into "the country-rock band with those high-flyin' harmonies.[^21] Released on June 1, 1972, Eagles was a breakthrough success, yielding three Top 40 singles. The first single and lead track, "Take It Easy," was a song written by Frey with his then-neighbor and fellow country-folk rocker Jackson Browne. Browne had written the first verse of the song, but got stalled on the second verse after the line "I'm standing on a corner in Winslow, Arizona." Frey completed the verse with "It's a girl, my Lord, in a flatbed Ford, slowin' down to take a look at me," and Browne carried on to finish the song.[^22] The song reached number 12 on the Billboard Hot 100 and propelled the Eagles to stardom. The single was followed by the bluesy "Witchy Woman" and the soft country rock ballad "Peaceful Easy Feeling" charting at number 9 and number 22 respectively. The group supported the album with a US tour as the opening act for Yes.

Their second album, Desperado, took Old West outlaws for its theme, drawing comparisons between their lifestyles and modern rock stars. This album was the first to showcase the group's penchant for conceptual songwriting. It was during these recording sessions Henley and Frey first began writing together. They co-wrote eight of the album's eleven songs, including "Tequila Sunrise" and "Desperado," two of the group's most popular songs. The bluegrass songs "Twenty-One," "Doolin–Dalton," and the ballad "Saturday Night" showcase guitarist Bernie Leadon's abilities on the banjo, guitar, and mandolin. The story of the notorious Wild West "Doolin–Dalton" gang is the main thematic focus of the album, as seen in the songs "Doolin–Dalton," "Desperado," "Certain Kind of Fool," "Outlaw Man," and "Bitter Creek." The album was less successful than the group's first, reaching only number 41 on the US Billboard 200 and yielding two singles, "Tequila Sunrise," which reached number 61 on the Billboard Hot 100 and "Outlaw Man," which peaked at number 59. With Henley and Frey co-writing the bulk of the album—a pattern that would continue for years to come—the album marked a significant change for the band. The pair also began to dominate in terms of leadership; the early assumption had been that Leadon and Meisner as veteran musicians would have a greater influence on the band.[^23]

### 1973–1975: On the Border and One of These Nights

For their next album, On the Border, Henley and Frey wanted the band to break away from the country rock style and move more towards hard rock. The Eagles initially started with Glyn Johns as the producer for this album, but he tended to emphasize the lush side of their double-edged music. After completing only two usable songs, the band turned to Bill Szymczyk to produce the rest of the album.[^24][^25] Szymczyk wanted a harder-edged guitarist for the song "Good Day in Hell" and the band remembered Bernie Leadon's childhood friend Don Felder, a guitarist who had jammed backstage with the band in 1972 when they opened for Yes in Boston.[^26] Felder had been nicknamed "Fingers" at the jam by Frey, a name that stuck due to his guitar proficiency.[^27] In January 1974, Frey called Felder to add slide guitar to the song "Good Day in Hell" and the band was so impressed that they invited him to join the group as the fifth Eagle the next day.[^28] He appeared on one other song on the album, the uptempo breakup song "Already Gone," on which he performed a guitar duet with Frey. "Already Gone" was released as the first single from the album and it reached...
number 32 on the charts. *On the Border* yielded a number 1 *Billboard* single ("Best of My Love"), which hit the top of the charts on March 1, 1975. The song was the Eagles' first of five chart toppers.[29] The album included a cover version of the Tom Waits song "Ol' '55" and the single "James Dean," which reached number 77 on the charts.

The band played at the California Jam festival in Ontario, California on April 6, 1974. Attracting more than 300,000 fans and billed as "the Woodstock of the West Coast," the festival featured Black Sabbath, Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Deep Purple, Earth, Wind & Fire, Seals & Crofts, Black Oak Arkansas, and Rare Earth.[30] Portions of the show were telecast on ABC television in the United States, exposing the Eagles to a wider audience. Felder missed the show when he was called away to attend the birth of his son; Jackson Browne filled in for him on piano and acoustic guitar.[31]

The Eagles released their fourth studio album, *One of These Nights*, on June 10, 1975. A breakthrough album for the Eagles, making them international superstars, it was the first in a string of four consecutive number 1 albums. The dominant songwriting partnership of Henley and Frey continued on this album. The first single was the title track, which became their second consecutive chart topper. Frey has said it is his all-time favorite Eagles tune.[32] The second single was "Lyn' Eyes," which reached number 2 on the charts and won the band their first Grammy for "Best Pop Performance by a duo or group with vocal." The final single, "Take It to the Limit," was written by Meisner, Henley, and Frey, and it is the only Eagles single to feature Meisner on lead vocals. The song reached number 4 on the charts. The band launched a huge worldwide tour in support of the album, and the album was nominated for a Grammy award for Album of the Year. The group was featured on the cover of the September 25, 1975 issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine and on September 28, the band joined Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne, and Toots and the Maytals for a show in front of 55,000 people at Anaheim Stadium.[33]

*One of These Nights* was their last album to feature founding member Bernie Leadon. Leadon wrote or co-wrote three songs for the album, including "I Wish You Peace," written with girlfriend Patti Davis (daughter of California governor Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan); and the instrumental "Journey of the Sorcerer," which would later be used as the theme music for the BBC's radio and television versions of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Leadon was disillusioned with the direction the band's music was taking and his loss of creative control as their sound was moving from his preferred country to rock and roll.[34] His dissatisfaction, principally with Frey, boiled over one night when Frey was talking animatedly about the direction they should take next, and Leadon poured a beer over Frey's head, and said: "You need to chill out, man!"[35][36] On December 20, 1975, after months of denials, it was announced that Leadon had left the band.[34]

### 1975–1977: Major success with *Hotel California*

Leadon's replacement, officially announced on December 20, 1975, was guitarist, singer, and keyboardist Joe Walsh, who had been a friend of the band for some years. He had previously performed with James Gang, Barnstorm, and as a solo artist; he was also managed by Azoff and used Szymczyk as his record producer.[37] There was some initial concern as to Walsh's ability to fit in with the band, as he was considered too "wild" for the Eagles, especially by Henley.[37] After the departure of Leadon, the Eagles' early country sound almost completely disappeared, with the band employing a harder sound with the addition of Felder and Walsh; however, Felder also had to play banjo, pedal steel and mandolin on future tours, something that had previously been Leadon's domain.[38]

In early 1976, the band released their first compilation album, *Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)*. The album became the highest-selling album of the 20th century in the United States,[39] and has since sold 29 million copies in the U.S. and 42 million copies worldwide.[40][41] It stayed the biggest seller of all time until it was taken over by Michael Jackson's *Thriller* following the artist's death in 2009.[41] The album cemented the group's status as the most successful American band of the decade.
The following album, *Hotel California*, released on December 8, 1976, was the band's fifth studio album and the first to feature Walsh. The album took a year and a half to complete, a process which, along with touring, drained the band. The album's first single, "New Kid in Town," became the Eagles' third number-one single.

The second single was the title track, which topped the charts in May 1977 and became the Eagles' signature song. It features Henley on lead vocals, with a guitar duet performed by Felder and Walsh. The song was written by Felder, Henley, and Frey, with Felder writing all the music. The mysterious lyrics have been interpreted in many ways, some of them controversial. Rumors even started in certain quarters that the song was about Satanism. The rumor was dismissed by the band and later by Henley in the documentary film *History of the Eagles*. Henley told *60 Minutes* in 2007 that "it's basically a song about the dark underbelly of the American Dream and about excess in America, which was something we knew about."

With its hard rock sound, 'Life in the Fast Lane' was also a major success that established Walsh's position in the band. The third and final single from *Hotel California* it reached number 11 on the charts. The ballad "Wasted Time" closes the first side of the album, while an instrumental reprise of it opens the second side. The album concludes with "The Last Resort," a song that Frey once referred to as "Henley's opus," but which Henley described as "fairly pedestrian" and "never fully realized, musically speaking."

The run-out groove on side two has the words "V.O.L. Is Five-Piece Live" etched into the vinyl, which means that the instrumental track for the song "Victim of Love" was recorded live in the studio, with no overdubs. Henley confirms this in the liner notes of *The Very Best Of*. However, the song was a point of contention between Don Felder and the rest of the band. In the 2013 documentary, Felder claimed that he had been promised the lead vocal on "Victim of Love," which was written by Frey. After many unproductive attempts to record Felder's vocal, band manager Irving Azoff was delegated to take Felder out for a meal, removing him from the mix while Don Henley overdubbed his lead vocal. *Hotel California* appeared at number 37 on Rolling Stone's list of the best albums of all time, and is the band's best-selling studio album, with more than 17 million copies sold in the U.S. alone and more than 32 million copies worldwide.

Hotel California is the last album to feature founding member Randy Meisner, who abruptly left the band after the 1977 tour. The Eagles had been touring continuously for eleven months; the band was suffering from the strain of the tour, and Meisner's stomach ulcers had flared up by the time they arrived in Knoxville in June 1977. Meisner had been struggling to hit the crucial high notes in his signature song, "Take It To the Limit," and was unwilling to perform the song, Frey and Meisner then became engaged in arguments about Meisner's reluctance to perform. Meisner decided to not sing the song as an encore at the Knoxville concert because he had been up late and caught the flu. Frey and Meisner then got into an angry physical confrontation backstage, and Meisner left the venue. After the incident, Meisner was frozen out from the band, and he decided to leave the group at the end of the tour and return to Nebraska to be with his family. His last performance was in East Troy, Wisconsin on September 3, 1977. The band replaced Meisner with the same musician who had succeeded him in Poco, Timothy B. Schmit, after agreeing that Schmit was the only candidate.

In 1977, the group, minus Don Felder performed instrumental work and backing vocals for Randy Newman's album *Little Criminals*, including "Short People," which has backup vocals by Frey and Schmit.

The Eagles went into the recording studio in 1977 to begin work on their next album, *The Long Run*. The album took two years to complete. It was originally intended to be a double album, but the band members were unable to write enough songs. *The Long Run* was released on September 24, 1979. Considered a disappointment by some critics for failing to live up to *Hotel California*, it proved a huge commercial hit nonetheless; the album topped the charts and sold seven million copies. In addition, it included three Top 10 singles. "Heartache Tonight" became their last single to top the Hot 100, on November 10, 1979. The title track and "I Can't Tell You Why" both reached number 8. The band won their fourth Grammy for "Heartache Tonight." "In The City" by Walsh and "The Sad Cafe" became live staples. The band also recorded two Christmas songs during these sessions, "Funky New Year" and "Please Come Home for Christmas" which was released as a single in 1978 and reached number 18 on the charts.

Frey, Henley and Schmit contributed backup vocals for the single release of "Look What You've Done to Me" by Boz Scaggs. A different version with female backing vocals appears on the *Urban Cowboy* soundtrack, along with the Eagles' 1975 hit "Kim's Eyes."

On July 31, 1980, in Long Beach, California, tempers boiled over into what has been described as the "Long Night at Wrong Beach."[51] The animosity between Felder and Frey boiled over before the show began, when Felder said, "You're welcome – I guess" to California Senator Alan Cranston's wife as the politician was thanking the band backstage for performing a benefit for his reelection.[53] Frey and Felder spent the entire show telling each other about the beating each planned to administer backstage. "Only three more songs until I kick your ass, pal," Frey recalled Felder telling him near the end of the band's set.[54] Felder recalls Frey telling him during "Best of My Love," "I'm gonna kick your ass when we get off the stage."

It appeared to be the end of the Eagles, but the band still had a commitment with Elektra Records to make a live record from the tour. *Eagles Live* (released in November 1980) was mixed on opposite coasts. Frey had already left the band and would remain in Los Angeles, while the other band members each worked on their parts in Miami.[56] "We were fixing three-part harmonies courtesy of Federal Express," said producer Bill Szymczyk.[5] Frey refused to speak to the other Eagles, and he fired Irving Azoff as his manager.[56] With credits that listed five attorneys, the album's liner notes simply said, "Thank you and goodnight." A single released from the album – "Seven Bridges Road" – had been a live concert staple for the band. It was written by Steve Young in an arrangement created by Iain Matthews for his *Valley Hi* album in 1973. The song reached number 21 on the charts in 1980, becoming the Eagles' last Top 40 single until 1994.

### 1980–1994: Hiatus

After the Eagles broke up, the former members pursued solo careers. Elektra, the band's long-time record label, owned the rights to solo albums created by members of the Eagles (though several of them moved to different labels in ensuing years). Walsh had established himself as a solo artist in the 1970s, before and during his time with the Eagles, but it was uncharted waters for the others. Walsh released a successful album in 1981, *There Goes the Neighborhood*, but subsequent albums throughout the 1980s, such as *Got Any Gum?* were less well received. During this period Walsh performed as a session musician for Dan Fogelberg, Steve Winwood, John Entwistle, Richard Marx and Emerson, Lake & Palmer, among others, and produced and co-wrote Ringo Starr's *Old Wave* album.

Henley achieved arguably the greatest commercial solo success of any former Eagle. In 1981, he sang a duet with Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac fame, "Leather and Lace." In 1982, he released *I Can't Stand Still*, featuring the hit "Dirty Laundry." This album would pale in comparison to his next release, *Building the Perfect Beast* (1984), which features the classic rock radio staples "The Boys of Summer" (a *Billboard* number 5 hit), "All She Wants to Do Is Dance" (number 9), "Not Enough Love in the World" (number 34) and "Sunset Grill" (number 22). Henley's next album, *The End of the Innocence* (1989), was also a major success. It includes "The End of the Innocence," "The Last Worthless Evening" and "The Heart of the Matter." His solo career was cut short due to a contract dispute with his record company which was finally resolved when the Eagles reunited in 1994.

Frey also achieved solo success in the 1980s. In 1982, he released his first album, *No Fun Aloud*, which spawned the number 15 hit, "The One You Love." *The Allnighter* (1984) featured the number 20 hit "Sexy Girl." He reached number 2 on the charts with "The Heat Is On" from the *Beverly Hills Cop* soundtrack. He had another number 2 single in 1985 with "You Belong to the City" from the
Music writer turned filmmaker Cameron Crowe, an Eagles fan, had written articles about Poco and the Eagles during his journalism career. In 1982 his first screenplay was produced as the feature-length movie *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. The film was co-produced by Eagles manager Azoff, who also co-produced the soundtrack album, released by Elektra. Henley, Walsh, Schmit and Felder all contributed solo songs to the film's soundtrack. The band playing at the dance toward the end of the movie covers the Eagles song "Life in the Fast Lane".

Felder also released a solo album and contributed two songs to the soundtrack of the movie *Heavy Metal*: "Heavy Metal (Takin' a Ride)" (with Henley and Schmit providing backing vocals) and "All of You." He also had a minor hit called "Bad Girls" off his solo album *Airborne*.

Schmit had a prolific solo career after the band's initial breakup. He had a hit song on the *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* soundtrack with "So Much in Love." He contributed vocals to the Crosby, Stills & Nash album *Daylight Again* on the songs "Southern Cross" and "Wasted on the Way" when that band needed an extra vocalist due to David Crosby's drug overindulgence. Schmit sang backup vocals on Toto's *Toto IV* album, including the song "I Won't Hold You Back" and appeared with the group on their 1982 European tour. He spent three years (1983–1985) as a member of Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer band and coined the term "Parrotheads" for Buffett's die-hard fans. He had a Top 40 solo hit in 1987 with "Boys' Night Out" and a top-30 Adult Contemporary hit with "Don't Give Up," both from his album *Timothy B.*. Schmit appeared with Meisner and Walsh on Richard Marx's debut single "Don't Mean Nothing." In 1992, Schmit and Walsh toured as members of Ringo Starr's All-Starr Band and appeared on the live video from the Montreux Jazz Festival. Schmit released two solo albums, *Playin' It Cool* in 1984 and *Tell Me the Truth* in 1990. He was the only Eagle to appear on the 1993 Eagles tribute album *Common Thread: The Songs of the Eagles*, singing backing vocals on Vince Gill's cover of "I Can't Tell You Why."

Meisner hit the top 40 three times, including the number 19 "Hearts on Fire" in 1981.

### 1994–2001: Reunion, *Hell Freezes Over*

An Eagles country tribute album, titled *Common Thread: The Songs of the Eagles*, was released in 1993, 13 years after the breakup. Travis Tritt insisted on having the *Long Run*-era Eagles in his video for "Take It Easy" and they agreed. Following years of public speculation, the band formally reunited the following year. The lineup comprised the five *Long Run*-era members—Frey, Henley, Walsh, Felder, and Schmit—supplemented by Scott Crago (drums), John Corey (keyboards, guitar, backing vocals), Timothy Drury (keyboards, guitar backing vocals), and former Loggins and Messina sideman Al Garth (sax, violin) on stage.

"For the record, we never broke up, we just took a 14-year vacation," announced Henley at their first live performance in April 1994. The ensuing tour spawned a live album titled *Hell Freezes Over* (named for Henley's recurring statement that the group would get back together "when hell freezes over"), which debuted at number 1 on the *Billboard* album chart. It included four new studio songs, with "Get Over It" and "Love Will Keep Us Alive" both becoming Top 40 hits. The album proved as successful as the toutselling six million copies in the U.S. The tour was interrupted in September 1994 because of Frey's serious recurrence of diverticulitis, but it resumed in 1995 and continued into 1996.[57] In 1998, the Eagles were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. For the induction ceremony, all seven Eagles members (Frey, Henley, Felder, Walsh, Schmit, Leadon, and Meisner) played together for two songs, "Take It Easy" and "Hotel California." Several subsequent reunion tours followed (without Leadon or Meisner), notable for their record-setting ticket prices.[58][59]

The Eagles performed at the Mandalay Bay Events Center in Las Vegas on December 28 and 29, 1999, followed by a concert at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on December 31. These concerts marked the last time Felder played with the band and the shows (including a planned video release) would later form a part of a lawsuit filed by Felder against his former band mates. The concert recordings were released on CD as part of the four-disc Selected Works: 1972–1999 box set in November 2000. Along with the concert, this set included the band's hit singles, album tracks and outtakes from the *Long Run* sessions. Selected Works received platinum certification from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) in 2002.[60] The group resumed touring in 2001,
with a line-up consisting of Frey, Henley, Walsh, and Schmit, along with Steuart Smith (guitars, mandolin, keyboards, backing vocals; essentially taking over Felder's role), Michael Thompson (keyboards, trombone), Will Hollis (keyboards, backing vocals), Scott Crago (drums, percussion), Bill Armstrong (Horns), Al Garth (sax, violin), Christian Mostert (sax), and Greg Smith (sax, percussion).

2001–2007: Don Felder sues, hiatus

On February 6, 2001, Don Felder was fired from the Eagles. He responded by filing two lawsuits against "Eagles, Ltd.," a California corporation; Don Henley, an individual; Glenn Frey, an individual; and "Does 1–50," alleging wrongful termination, breach of implied-in-fact contract and breach of fiduciary duty, reportedly seeking $50 million in damages. Felder alleged that from the 1994 *Hell Freezes Over* tour onward, Henley and Frey had "... insisted that they each receive a higher percentage of the band's profits ..." whereas the money had previously been split in five equal portions. Felder accused them of coercing him into signing an agreement under which Henley and Frey would receive three times as much of the selected works: 1972–1999 proceeds.

On behalf of Henley and Frey attorney Daniel M. Petrocelli responded by saying "[Henley and Frey] felt—creatively, chemistry-wise and performance-wise—that he should no longer be part of the band ... They removed him, and they had every legal right to do so. This has been happening with rock 'n' roll bands since day one." Henley and Frey then countersued Felder for breach of contract, alleging that Felder had written a "tell-all" book, *Heaven and Hell: My Life in the Eagles (1974–2001).* The initial U.S. release was canceled after publisher Hyperion Books backed out in September 2001, when an entire print run of the book had to be recalled for cuts and changes. The American edition was published by John Wiley & Sons on April 28, 2008, with Felder embarking on a full publicity campaign surrounding its release. The book was published in the United Kingdom on November 1, 2008.

On January 23, 2002, the Los Angeles County Court consolidated the two complaints, set a trial date for September 2006, and the single case was dismissed on May 8, 2007, after being settled out of court for an undisclosed amount.

In 2003, the Eagles released a greatest hits album, *The Very Best Of.* The two-disc compilation was the first that encompassed their entire career from *Eagles* to *Hell Freezes Over.* It debuted at number 3 on the Billboard charts and eventually gained triple platinum status. The album included a new single, the September 11 attacks-themed "Hole in the World." Also in 2003, Warren Zevon, a longtime Eagles friend, began work on his final album, *The Wind,* with the assistance of Henley, Walsh, and Schmit.


2007–2013: Long Road Out of Eden world tour

In 2007, the Eagles consisted of Frey, Henley, Walsh, and Schmit. On August 20, 2007, "How Long," written by J. D. Souther, was released as a single to radio with an accompanying online video at Yahoo! Music. It debuted on television on Country Music Television during the Top 20 Countdown on August 23, 2007. The band had performed the song as part of their live sets in the early to mid-1970s, but did not record it at the time because Souther wanted to reserve it for use on his first solo album. Souther had previously worked with the Eagles, co-writing some of their biggest hits, including "Best of My Love," "Victim of Love," "Heartache Tonight," and "New Kid in Town."

On October 30, 2007, the Eagles released *Long Road Out of Eden,* their first album of all-new material since 1979. For the first year after the album's release, it was available in the U.S. only via the band's website, at Walmart, and at Sam's Club stores. It was commercially available through traditional retail outlets in other countries. The album debuted at number 1 in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, and Norway. It became their third studio album and seventh release overall to be certified at least seven times platinum by the RIAA. Henley told CNN that "This is probably the last Eagles album that we'll ever make."
The Eagles made their awards show debut on November 7, 2007, when they performed "How Long" live at the Country Music Association Awards.

On January 28, 2008, the second single of Long Road Out of Eden was released. "Busy Being Fabulous" peaked at number 28 on the U.S. Billboard Hot Country Songs chart[73] and at number 12 on the U.S. Billboard Hot Adult Contemporary Tracks chart.[71] The Eagles won their fifth Grammy in 2008, in the category Grammy Award for Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for "How Long."

On March 20, 2008, the Eagles launched their world tour in support of Long Road Out of Eden at The O2 Arena in London. The Long Road Out of Eden Tour concluded the American portion of the tour at Rio Tinto Stadium in Sandy, Utah on May 9, 2009. It was the first concert ever held in the new soccer stadium. The tour travelled to Europe, with its final concert date on July 22, 2009, in Lisbon. The band spent the summer of 2010 touring North American stadiums with the Dixie Chicks and Keith Urban. The tour expanded to England as the headline act of the Hop Farm Festival on July 1, 2011.

Asked in November 2010 whether the Eagles were planning a follow-up to Long Road Out of Eden, Schmit replied, "My first reaction would be: no way. But I said that before the last one, so you never really know. Bands are a fragile entity and you never know what's going to happen. It took a long time to do that last album, over a span of years, really, and it took a lot out of us. We took a year off at one point. I'm not sure if we're able to do that again. I wouldn't close the door on it, but I don't know."

Walsh said in 2010 that there might be one more album before the band “wraps it up.”[73] Frey later stated in a 2012 interview that the band has had discussions about releasing an EP of potentially 4–6 songs that may contain both original and cover material.[74]

In February 2013, the Eagles released a career-spanning documentary called History of the Eagles and began the supporting tour with 11 US arena dates from July 6 to 25.[75] Henley said that the tour, which expanded internationally and continued until July 29, 2015,[76] "could very well be our last...we're gonna include at least one former band member in this tour and kinda go back to the roots, and how we created some of these songs. We're gonna break it down to the fundamentals and then take it up to where it is now."[77] Original Eagles guitarist Bernie Leadon also appeared on the tour. Walsh stated, "Bernie's brilliant, I never really got a chance to play with him, but we've been in contact. We see him from time to time, and I'm really glad he's coming because it's going to take the show up a notch, and I'm really looking forward to playing with him, finally."[78] Former members Randy Meisner and Don Felder did not appear.[76] Meisner had been invited but could not participate for health reasons, while Felder was never asked. Though his lawsuits against the Eagles were settled in 2007, Henley claimed that Felder continued to "engage in legal action, of one kind or another" against the band, but did not state what actions those are.[76]

Four of the Eagles (Frey, Henley, Walsh, and Schmit) were slated to receive Kennedy Center Honors in 2015, but this was deferred to 2016 due to Frey's medical problems.[79]

Death of Frey

On January 18, 2016, founding member Glenn Frey died in the Washington Heights section of New York City at the age of 67. According to the band's website, the causes of his death were rheumatoid arthritis, acute ulcerative colitis, and pneumonia while recovering from intestinal surgery.[80][81][82]
At the 58th Annual Grammy Awards in February, the Eagles, joined by Leadon, touring guitarist Steuart Smith, and co-writer Jackson Browne performed "Take It Easy" in honor of Frey. In subsequent interviews, Henley stated that he didn't think the band would perform again.

Reformation

In March 2017, it was announced that the band would be headlining the Classic West and Classic East concert events in July 2017, which were organized by their manager Irving Azoff. Don Henley confirmed on May 16, 2017 that Glenn Frey's son Deacon would be performing in Glenn's place, along with another "surprise musician." It was subsequently announced that country singer Vince Gill would perform with the Eagles at the July concerts. At the Classic West concert on July 15, the band was joined by Bob Seger who sang "Heartache Tonight", which he co-wrote. Deacon Frey was noted for his composure and precision.

Musical style

Influenced by 1960s rhythm and blues, soul, bluegrass, and rock bands such as the Byrds and Buffalo Springfield, the Eagles' overall sound has been described as "California rock." In the words of Sal Manna, author of the CD liner notes of the band's 1994 album Hell Freezes Over, "no one knew quite what 'California rock' meant – except perhaps that, because in California anything was possible, music that came from that promising land was more free-spirited and free-ranging." Rolling Stone described the Eagles' sound as "country-tinged vocal harmonies with hard rock guitars and lyrics."

The group's sound has also been described as country rock, soft rock, and folk rock, and in later years the band became associated with the album rock and arena rock labels.

On their early records, the group combined rock and roll, country, and folk music styles. For their third album On the Border, the band widened their style to include a prominent hard rock sound, a genre the band had only touched upon previously. The 1975 follow-up album One of These Nights saw the group explore a softer sound, notably exemplified on the hit singles "Take It to the Limit," and "Lyin' Eyes." Leadon, who was the principal country influence, left the band after the album was released, and the band moved away from country rock to a more rock and roll direction in Hotel California. The band's 2007 comeback album Long Road Out of Eden saw them explore country rock, blues rock, and funk.

Band members

Current members


Former members

- Randy Meisner – bass guitar, backing and lead vocals (1971–1977)

Touring musicians

- Timothy Drury – keyboards, vocals, additional guitars (1994–1999)
- John Corey – piano, backing vocals, percussion, additional guitars (2017–present)
- Deacon Frey – vocals, guitars (2017–present)
- Vince Gill – vocals, guitars (2017–present)

Timeline
Discography

- Eagles (1972)
- Desperado (1973)
- On the Border (1974)
- One of These Nights (1975)
- Hotel California (1976)
- The Long Run (1979)
- Long Road Out of Eden (2007)

Awards and honors

- The Eagles have won six Grammy Awards:
  - (1975) Best Pop Vocal Performance by a Duo Group or Chorus: "Lyin' Eyes"
  - (1977) Record of the Year: "Hotel California" (single)
  - (1977) Best Arrangement for Voices: "New Kid in Town"
  - (1979) Best Rock Vocal Performance by a Duo or Group: "Heartache Tonight"
  - (2008) Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals: "How Long"
  - (2009) Best Pop Instrumental Performance "I Dreamed There Was No War"

- The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1998.
- The Eagles were inducted into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame in 2001.
- The group ranked number 34 on Country Music Television's 40 Greatest Men of Country Music in 2003. They were one of four artists who were either a duo or a group on the list with the others being Alabama at number eleven, Flatt & Scruggs at number 24, and Brooks & Dunn at number 25.
- The group was chosen for the 2015 Kennedy Center Honors to be held on December 6 of that year but postponed the award for a year because of Glenn Frey's poor health. Frey died a month later.

See also

- List of best-selling music artists
- List of highest-certified music artists in the United States
- List of country rock musicians
- List of highest-grossing concert tours
- Standin' on the Corner Park – a public park in Winslow Arizona, featuring a large mural commemorating the song "Take It Easy"

References

1. "100 Greatest Artists – 75 > Eagles" (https://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/100greatest-artists-of-all-time-196912)
Eurythmics were a British music duo consisting of members Annie Lennox and David A. Stewart. Stewart and Lennox were both previously in the band The Tourists (originally known as The Catch), who split up in 1980; Eurythmics were formed that year in London. The duo released their first album, *In the Garden*, in 1981 to little fanfare, but went on to achieve global success with their second album *Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)*, released in 1983. The title track was a worldwide hit, topping the charts in various countries including the US. The duo went on to release a string of hit singles and albums before they split up in 1990. By this time Stewart was a sought-after record producer, while Lennox began a solo recording career in 1992 with her debut album *Diva*. After almost a decade apart, Eurythmics reunited to record their ninth album, *Peace*, released in late 1999. They reunited again in 2005 to release the single "I've Got a Life", as part of a new Eurythmics compilation album, *Ultimate Collection*.

The duo have won an MTV Video Music Award for Best New Artist in 1984, the Grammy Award for Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal in 1987, the Brit Award for Outstanding Contribution to Music in 1999, and in 2005 were inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame. Eurythmics have sold an estimated 75 million records worldwide[2] In 2017, the group was nominated for induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame[3]

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History

1976–82: Formation and *In the Garden*

Lennox and Stewart met in 1975 in a restaurant in London, where Lennox worked at that time.[4] They first played together in 1976 in the punk rock band The Catch. After releasing one single as The Catch in 1977, the band evolved into The Tourists. Stewart and Lennox were also romantically involved. The Tourists achieved some commercial success, but the experience was reportedly an unhappy one. Personal and musical tensions existed within the group, whose main songwriter was Peet Coombes, and legal wranglings happened with the band's management, publishers and record labels. Lennox and Stewart felt the fixed band line-up was an inadequate vehicle to explore their experimental creative leanings and decided their next project should be much more flexible and free from artistic compromise. They were interested in creating pop music, but wanted freedom to experiment with electronics and the avant-garde.

It was in a hotel in Wagga Wagga, Australia, while playing around with a portable mini-synthesizer that Lennox and Stewart decided to become a duo.[5] Calling themselves Eurythmics (after the pedagogical exercise system that Lennox had encountered as a child), they decided to keep themselves as the only permanent members and songwriters, and involve others in the collaboration "on the basis of mutual compatibility and availability." The duo signed to RCA Records. At this time, Lennox and Stewart also split as a couple. During the period that Lennox and Stewart were in The Tourists, and later as Eurythmics, they were managed by Kenny Smith and Sandra Turnbull of Hyper Kinetics Ltd.

They recorded their first album in Cologne with Conny Plank (who had produced the later Tourists sessions). This resulted in the album *In the Garden*, released in October 1981. The album mixed psychedelic, krautrock and electropop influences, and featured contributions from Holger Czukay and Jaki Liebezeit (of Can), drummer Clem Burke (of Blondie), Robert Görl (of D.A.F.), and flautist Tim Wheater. A couple of the songs were co-written by guitarist Roger Pomphrey (later a TV director). The album was not a commercial success (though the debut single "Never Gonna Cry Again" made the UK charts at No. 63).[6] Lennox and Stewart then activated their new Eurythmics mode of operation by touring the record as a duo, accompanied by backing tracks and electronics, carted around the country themselves in a horse-box.

During 1982, the duo retreated to Chalk Farm in London and used a bank loan to establish a small 8-track studio above a picture framing factory, giving them freedom to record without having to pay expensive studio fees. They began to employ much more electronics in their music, collaborating with Raynard Faulkner and Adam Williams, recording many tracks in the studio and playing live using various line-up permutations. However, the three new singles they released that year ("This Is the House", "The Walk" and "Love Is a Stranger") all performed badly on initial release in the UK. Although their mode of operation had given them the creative freedom they desired, commercial success was still eluding them and the responsibility of running so many of their affairs personally (down to transporting their own stage equipment) took its toll on both of them. Lennox apparently suffered at least one nervous breakdown during this period, while Stewart was hospitalised with a collapsed lung.[4]

1983–84: *Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)* and *Touch*

Eurythmics' commercial breakthrough came with their second album, *Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)*, released in January 1983. The successful title track featured a dark and powerful sequenced synth bass line and a dramatic video that introduced the now orange crew-cut Lennox to audiences. The song reached no.2 on the UK Singles Chart[6] becoming one of the year's biggest sellers, and later topped the US charts. The band's fortunes changed immensely from this moment on, and Lennox quickly became a pop icon, gracing the covers of numerous magazines including *Rolling Stone*. Their previous single, "Love Is a Stranger", was also re-released and became another chart success. The video for the song saw Lennox in many different character guises, a concept she would employ in various subsequent videos. The album's working title was *Invisible Hands* (as was a track left off the album),
The duo quickly recorded a follow-up album, *Touch*, which was released in November 1983. It became the duo's first no.1 album in the UK, and also spawned three major hit singles. "Who's That Girl?" was a top 3 hit in the UK, the video depicting Lennox as both a blonde chanteuse and as a gender-bending Elvis Presley clone. It also featured cameo appearances by Hazel O'Connor, Bananarama (including Stewart’s future wife, Siobhan Fahey), Kate Garner of Haysi Fantayzee, Thereza Bazar of Dollar, Jay Aston and Cheryl Baker of Bucks Fizz, Kiki Dee, Jacqui O'Sullivan and the gender-bending pop singer Marilyn, who would go on to musical success of his own that same year. The upbeat, calypso-flavoured “Right by Your Side” showed a different side of Eurythmics altogether and also made the Top 10, and “Here Comes the Rain Again” (number eight in the UK, number four in the U.S.) was an orchestral/synth ballad (with orchestrations by Michael Kamen).

In 1984 RCA released *Touch Dance*, an EP of remixes of four of the tracks from *Touch*, aimed at the club market. The remixes were by prominent New York City producers Francois Kevorkian and John “Jellybean” Benitez. Also released in 1984 was Eurythmics' soundtrack album 1984 (*For the Love of Big Brother*). Virgin Films had contracted the band to provide a soundtrack for Michael Radford's modern film adaptation of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, Radford later said that the music had been "foisted" on his film against his wishes, and that Virgin had replaced most of Dominic Muldowney's original orchestral score with the Eurythmics soundtrack (including the song "Julia", which was heard during the end credits). Nevertheless, the record was presented as "music derived from the original score of Eurythmics for the Michael Radford film version of Orwell's 1984". Eurythmics charged that they had been misled by the film's producers as well, and the album was withdrawn from the market for a period while matters were litigated. The album's first single, Sexcrime (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*), was a top 5 hit in the UK, Australia and across Europe, and a major dance success in the United States.

### 1985–86: Be Yourself Tonight and new musical direction

The duo's next album, *Be Yourself Tonight*, was produced in a week in Paris. It showcased much more of a "band style" and a centred sound (with an R&B influence), with real drums, brass, and much more guitar from Stewart. Almost a dozen other musicians were enlisted, including members of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers, guest harmonica from Stevie Wonder, bass guitar from Dean Garcia, string arrangements by Michael Kamen, and Lennox singing duets with Aretha Franklin and Elvis Costello. It continued the duo's transatlantic chart domination in 1985, and contained four hit singles: "Would I Lie to You?" was a U.S. Billboard top five hit and Australian number one, while "There Must Be an Angel (Playing with My Heart)" (featuring Wonder's harmonica contribution) became their first and only UK number one single. The feminist anthem "Sisters Are Doin' It for Themselves" (a duet with Aretha Franklin, though originally intended for Tina Turner), and "It's Alright (Baby's Coming Back)" also rode high in the charts. In September 1985, Eurythmics performed "Would I Lie to You?" at the 1985 MTV Video Music Awards at the Radio City Music Hall in New York.

### 1986–89: Revenge, Savage and We Too Are One

Eurythmics released their next album, *Revenge*, in 1986. The album continued their move towards a band sound, verging on an AOR-pop/rock sound. Sales continued to be strong in the UK and internationally, but were somewhat slower in the U.S., though "Missionary Man" reached number 14 on the U.S. Hot 100 chart and went all the way to No. 1 on the US Album Oriented Rock chart (AOR). *Revenge* would eventually certify double Platinum in the UK and Gold in the U.S. The band went on a massive worldwide tour in support of the album, and a live concert video from the Australian leg of the tour was released.
In 1987, Lennox and Stewart released the album *Savage*. This saw a fairly radical change within the group's sound, being based mainly around programmed samples and drum loops (Lennox would later say that where *Revenge* was more of a Stewart album in sound, *Savage* was more of a Lennox one). Lyrically the songs showed an even darker, more obsessive side to Lennox's writing. A video album was also made, directed by Sophie Muller, with a video for each song. This was largely a concept piece, following characters portrayed by Lennox, specifically one of a frustrated housewife-turned-vamp (as exemplified in "Beethoven (I Love to Listen To)", a UK top 30 hit\(^6\)). The brazen, sexually charged rocker "I Need a Man" remains a Eurythmics staple, as does "You Have Placed a Chill in My Heart". Much less commercial than the two previous albums, *Savage* was mostly ignored in the U.S., although rock radio in more progressive markets supported "I Need a Man". In the duo's native UK however, the album was a top 10 success and was certified Platinum.

In 1989, Eurythmics released the album *We Too Are One*, which entered the UK album chart at no.1 (their second no.1 album after *Touch*\(^6\)) and gave the duo four UK Top 30 hit singles. The album was a return to the rock/pop sound of their mid-80s albums and was certified Double Platinum in the UK, but was less successful in the U.S. (although the single "Don't Ask Me Why" grazed the Billboard Top 40). Other singles from the album included "Revival", "The King and Queen of America" and "Angel". The duo also conducted a world tour for the album in late 1989.

### 1990–98: Hiatus and solo careers

After strenuous years of touring and recording (Eurythmics had released eight studio albums in eight years), a rift had developed between the duo and Eurythmics disbanded, although no formal notice was given. Stewart began writing film soundtracks and had a big international hit in 1990 with the instrumental track "Lily Was Here" (featuring saxophonist Candy Dulfer). The single reached no.6 in the UK\(^9\) and the Top 20 throughout much of Europe, as well as in Australia and the US. He also formed a band called The Spiritual Cowboys releasing two albums with this group in the early 1990s. Lennox took time off from her career to have a baby and to consider a life after Eurythmics. Accordingly, the duo had very little communication with each other from 1991 to 1998. In 1991, Eurythmics' *Greatest Hits* collection was released, entering the UK album chart at No. 1 and spending a total of 10 weeks at that position\(^6\) as well as becoming a massive worldwide seller. New remixes of "Sweet Dreams" and "Love Is a Stranger" were also released as singles at this time. During 1993, a live album entitled *Live 1983–1989* featuring recordings from various years throughout Eurythmics' career was also released.

In 1992, Lennox released her first solo album, *Diva*. The album was a critical and popular success, entering the UK album chart at no.1 and achieving quadruple platinum status (more than any Eurythmics studio album had done), as well as producing a string of five hit singles. She followed this up in 1995 with her second album, *Medusa*, an album of cover versions. It became her second number one album in the UK, reaching double platinum status both there and in the US.

Stewart, meanwhile, released the solo albums *Greetings from the Gutter* (1995), and *Sly-Fi* (1998), but neither was commercially successful.

### 1999–2005: Peace and Ultimate Collection

In the late 1990s, Eurythmics reunited and recorded a new album, *Peace*, which was released in 1999. The single "I Saved the World Today" reached number 11 in the UK singles charts\(^6\) and a remix of "17 Again" gave the duo their first chart-topper on the U.S. Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart. The band also embarked on a world tour, dubbed the "Peacetour", to support the album. The tour started on 18 September 1999 at Cologne's Kölnarena and ended on 6 December 1999 at the London Docklands Arena (which was filmed and released on video and DVD). All proceeds from the tour went to Greenpeace and Amnesty International. The year 2000
saw numerous European festival appearances by Eurythmics (at Germany's Rock am Ring, among others). In 2001, Stewart performed with U2 for the America: A Tribute to Heroes benefit concert. In 2002, he collaborated with Bryan Ferry on his album Frantic.

In June 2003, Lennox released her third solo album, entitled Bare, which was a top 5 hit in the UK and the US, with three tracks reaching the top of the US Billboard Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart. She also recorded the song "Into the West" for Peter Jackson's film The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King, where it appeared as the closing theme and earned Lennox the Academy Award for Best Song. In November 2003, Eurythmics played three songs at the 46664 in Cape Town, South Africa, for which Stewart was one of the primary organisers. They played an unplugged version of "Here Comes the Rain Again", "7 Seconds" with Youssou N'Dour and "Sweet Dreams". Stewart collaborated with The Rolling Stones vocalist Mick Jagger on the soundtrack to the movie Alfie, released in 2004, including the critically acclaimed Old Habits Die Hard, which won a Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song from a Motion Picture.

On 7 November 2005, Eurythmics released Ultimate Collection, a remastered greatest hits package with two new songs. One of them, "I've Got a Life", was released as a single and reached no.14 on the UK singles chart[6] as well as spending three consecutive weeks at number 1 on Billboard's Hot Dance Music/Club Play in the US. Lennox and Stewart appeared on a number of TV shows to promote their new compilation album, which was a Top 5 hit and certified Platinum in the UK. On 14 November 2005, the duo's label, RCA, re-released their eight studio albums in remastered and expanded editions featuring rare B-sides, remixes and unreleased songs. The remasters were made available separately with expanded artwork, and also together in a collector's box set, entitled Boxed. However, the 1984 soundtrack album 1984 (For the Love of Big Brother) was not included in this re-release campaign as Virgin Records holds the rights to that album. Also in 2005, Eurythmics were inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame.[10] In 2007, Lennox resumed her solo career with her fourth album, Songs of Mass Destruction, which was a top 10 success in the UK and the US. In 2009, she released her first solo "greatest hits" package, The Annie Lennox Collection. The same year, Lennox stated that although she and Stewart remain friends, she does not foresee any further Eurythmics projects in the future.[11]

In an interview with Reuters in September 2012, Stewart was quizzed on whether a new Eurythmics album is in the works, to which he replied: "We're not talking about one right now, but never say never", but he was considering a musical centred on the music of Eurythmics.[12]

2014: Reuniting for Beatles tribute concert

Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart performed as a duo for "The Night That Changed America: A Grammy Salute to The Beatles". The event was recorded at the Los Angeles Convention Center on January 27, 2014, the day after the Grammy Awards. They performed The Beatles song "The Fool on the Hill".

Discography

Studio albums
- In the Garden (1981)
- Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This) (1983)
- Touch (1983)
- 1984 (For the Love of Big Brother) (1984)
- Be Yourself Tonight (1985)
- Revenge (1986)
- Savage (1987)
- We Too Are One (1989)

Compilations and other albums
- Touch Dance (1984)
- Greatest Hits (1991)
- Ultimate Collection (2005)
- Boxed (2005)
Neil Diamond

Neil Leslie Diamond (born January 24, 1941) is an American singer-songwriter, musician and actor. One of the world's best-selling artists of all time, he has sold over 135 million records worldwide since the start of his career in the 1960s.[1] With 38 songs in the Top 10, he is the second most successful artist in the history of the Billboard Adult Contemporary Top 10 charts.[2] His songs have been covered internationally by performers from a variety of musical genres.

Diamond was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1984 and into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2011. Additionally, he received the Sammy Cahn Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000 and in 2011 was an honoree at Kennedy Center. On the Hot 100 and Adult Contemporary charts, he has had eleven No. 1 singles: "Cracklin' Rosie", "Song Sung Blue", "Longfellow Serenade", "I've Been This Way Before", "If You Know What I Mean", "Desiree", "You Don't Bring Me Flowers", "America", "Yesterday's Songs", "Heartlight".

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Early life and education

Diamond was born in Brooklyn, New York, to a Jewish family descended from Russian and Polish immigrants. His parents were Rose (née Rapaport) and Akeeba "Kieve" Diamond, a dry-goods merchant.[3][4] He grew up in several homes in Brooklyn, having also spent four years in Cheyenne, Wyoming, where his father was stationed in the army.[5] In Brooklyn he attended Erasmus Hall High School[6] and was a member of the Freshman Chorus and Choral Club along with classmate Barbra Streisand.[4][155] They were not close friends at the time, Diamond recalls: "We were two poor kids in Brooklyn. We hung out in the front of Erasmus High and smoked cigarettes.[7] After his family moved he then attended Abraham Lincoln High School[8][9] and was a member of the fencing team.[5] For his 16th birthday he received his first guitar[10]
When he was 16, and still in high school, Diamond spent a number of weeks at Surprise Lake Camp, a camp for Jewish children in upstate New York, when folk singer Pete Seeger performed a small concert. Seeing the widely recognized singer perform, and watching other children singing songs for Seeger that they wrote themselves, had an immediate effect on Diamond, who then became aware of the possibility of writing his own songs. "And the next thing, I got a guitar when we got back to Brooklyn, started to take lessons and almost immediately began to write songs," he said. He adds that his attraction to songwriting was the "first real interest" he had growing up, besides helping him release his youthful "frustration.

Diamond also used his newly-developing skill at writing lyrics to write poetry. By writing poems for girls he was attracted to in school, he soon learned it often won their hearts. His male classmates took note and began asking him to write poems for them which they would sing and use with equal success. He spent the summer following his graduation as a waiter in the Catskills resort area. There he first met Jaye Posner who would, years later become his wife.

Diamond next attended New York University as a pre-med major on a fencing scholarship. His skill at fencing made him a member of the 1960 NCAA men's championship team. However, he was often bored in classes, and found writing song lyrics more to his liking. He began cutting classes and taking the train up to Tin Pan Alley where he tried to get some of his songs heard by local music publishers. By his senior year, and just 10 units short of graduation, Sunbeam Music Publishing offered him a 16-week job writing songs for $50 a week (US$396 in 2016 dollars), and he dropped out of college to accept it.

After his 16 weeks at Sunbeam Music were up, he was not rehired and then began writing and singing his own songs for demo purposes. "I never really chose songwriting," he says. "It just absorbed me and became more and more important in my life." Diamond's first recording contract was billed as "Neil and Jack", an Everly Brothers-type duo comprising Diamond and high school friend Jack Parker. They recorded two unsuccessful singles: "You Are My Love at Last" b/w "What Will I Do" and "I'm Afraid" b/w "Till You've Tried Love", both released in 1962. Later in 1962, Diamond signed with the Columbia Records label as a solo performer. Columbia released the single "At Night" b/w "Clown Town" in July 1963, which Billboard gave an excellent review, but it still failed to chart. Columbia dropped him from their label and he was back to writing songs, in and out of publishing houses for the next seven years.

He did songwriting wherever he could, including on buses, and used an upright piano above the Birdland Club in New York City. One of the causes of this early nomadic life as a songwriter was due to his songs having too many words: "I'd spent a lot of time on lyrics, and they were looking for hooks, and I didn't really understand the nature of that," he says. During those lean years, he was only able to sell about one song a week, barely enough to survive on. He found himself only earning enough to spend 35 cents a day on food (US$3 in 2016 dollars). However, the privacy he had above the Birdland Club allowed him to focus on writing without distractions; as he explained, "Something new began to happen. I wasn't under the gun, and suddenly interesting songs began to happen, songs that had things none of the others did." Among them were "Cherry, Cherry" and "Solitary Man". "Solitary Man" was the first record that Diamond recorded in his own name that made the charts. It remains one of his personal all-time favorites, as it was autobiographical about his early years as a songwriter, even though he failed to realize it at the time:

"It wasn't until years later, when I went into Freudian analysis, that I understood that it was me. It was an outgrowth of my despair."

Diamond spent his early career as a songwriter in the Brill Building. His first success as a songwriter came in November 1965, with "Sunday and Me", a Top 20 hit for Jay and the Americans. Greater success as a writer followed with "I'm a Believer", "A Little Bit Me, a Little Bit You", "Look Out (Here Comes Tomorrow)", and "Love to Love", all performed by the Monkees. Diamond wrote and
recorded the songs for himself, but the cover versions were released before his own. The unintended, but happy, consequence was that Diamond began to gain fame not only as a singer and performer, but also as a songwriter. "I'm a Believer" became a Gold Record within two days of its release, and stayed at the top of the charts for seven weeks, making it the Popular Music Song of the Year in 1966."

"And the Grass Won't Pay No Mind" brought covers from Elvis Presley (who also interpreted "Sweet Caroline") and Mark Lindsay, former lead singer for Paul Revere & the Raiders. Other notable artists who recorded his early songs were the English hard-rock band Deep Purple, Lulu, and Cliff Richard.[c]

In 1966, Diamond signed a deal with Bert Berns's Bang Records, then a subsidiary of Atlantic. His first release on that label, "Solitary Man", became his first true hit as a solo artist.[d] Diamond later followed with "Cherry, Cherry" and "Kentucky Woman".[4][37]

His early concerts saw him as a "special guest" of, or opening for, everyone from Herman's Hermits to, on one occasion, the Who.[4][45] As a guest performer with The Who, he was shocked to see Pete Townshend swinging his guitar like a club and then throwing it against walls and off the stage until the instrument's neck broke. It was the first time he had seen a band beating up their instruments and amplifiers until they were smashed to pieces.[4][46]

Diamond began to feel restricted by Bang Records, because he wanted to record more ambitious, introspective music, like his autobiographical "Brooklyn Roads" from 1968. Berns wanted to release "Kentucky Woman" as a single, but Diamond was no longer satisfied writing simple pop songs, so he proposed that Shilo", which was not about the Civil War, but rather an imaginary childhood friend while Bang believed that the song wasn't commercial enough, so it was relegated to being an LP track on "Just for You". In addition to being dissatisfied with his royalties, Diamond tried to sign with another record label after discovering a loophole in his contract that did not bind him exclusively to either WEB IV or Tallyrand, but the result was a series of lawsuits that coincided with a slump in his record sales and professional success. A magistrate refused WEB IV's request for a temporary injunction to prevent Diamond from joining another record company while his contract dispute continued in court, but the lawsuits persisted until February 18, 1977 when he triumphed in court and purchased the rights to his Bang-era master tapes.[4][51][18]

**Move to Uni Records, revived success and the 1970s**

On March 18, 1968, Diamond signed a deal with Uni Records, this label was named after Universal Pictures's owner, MCA Inc., later consolidated its labels into MCA Records. (The label is now called Universal Records.) His debut album for Uni was Velvet Gloves and Spit produced by Tom Catalano, which did not chart at all, and he recorded the follow-up Brother Love's Traveling Salvation Show at American Sound Studios in Memphis with Tommy Cogbill and Chips Moman producing.[18]

In late 1969, he moved to Los Angeles. After "Brother Love's Travelling Salvation Show" in February 1969, his sound mellowed, with such songs as "Sweet Caroline" (1969), "Holly Holy" (1969), "Cracklin' Rosie" (1970) and "Song Sung Blue" (1972), the last two reaching No. 1 on the Hot 100. "Sweet Caroline" was Diamond's first major hit after his slump. Diamond stated in 2007 that he had written "Sweet Caroline" for Caroline Kennedy after seeing her on the cover of Life in an equestrian riding outfit.[19] However, in 2014, he said in an interview on the Today Show that it was written for his then wife, Marcia. He could not find a good rhyme with the name "Marcia", and therefore used the name Caroline.[20][21] It took him just one hour, in a Memphis hotel, to write and compose it. The 1971 release "I Am...I Said" was a Top 5 hit in both the US and UK and was his most intensely personal effort to date, taking upwards of four months to complete.[22]

In 1971, Diamond played 7 sold-out concerts at the Greek Theater in Los Angeles. The outdoor theater, which was noted for showcasing the best of current entertainers, added a stereo sound system for the first time. Diamond was also backed by a 35-piece string orchestra and six backing singers.[4][86] After the first night, one leading newspaper called it "the finest concert in Greek Theater history"[4][87]

The following August 1972, he played again at the Greek, this time doing 10 shows. When the show was first announced, all tickets at the 5000-seat theater sold out

I have a love-hate relationship with songwriting. I love it because it's so satisfying...when it works. I hate it because it forces you to dig inside yourself. It is without question the
The August 24 performance was recorded and released as the live double album *Hot August Night*. *Hot August Night* demonstrates Diamond's skills as a performer and showman, as he reinvigorated his back catalogue of hits with new energy. Many consider it his best work; critic Stephen Thomas Erlewine called *Hot August Night* "the ultimate Neil Diamond record... [which] shows Diamond the icon in full glory."[24] The album became a classic, and was remastered in 2000 with additional selections. In Australia, which at the time had the most Neil Diamond fans per capita of any country,[4][44] the album ranked No. 1 for 29 weeks and stayed in their top 20 bestsellers for two years.[4][44][25]

In the fall of 1972, Diamond performed for 20 consecutive nights at the Winter Garden Theater in New York City.[4][95] The last occasion when that historical theater had staged any one-man shows had been when Al Jolson had performed there in the 1920s and the 1930s.[4][95] The small (approximately 1,600-seat) Broadway venue provided an intimate concert setting not common at the time, with every performance reportedly sold out.[4][95] It also made Diamond the first rock-era star to headline on Broadway.[4][95] The review in the *New York Times* stated:

> Neil Diamond's one-man show seemed, on the face of it, to be a brash idea. One-man shows have traditionally been associated with talents like Judy Garland and Danny Kaye. But Mr. Diamond is clearly a brash young man and one with both the musical track record and the performance macho to bring it off...He needn't worry about comparisons with the likes of Garland and Kaye.[4][95]

After the Winter Garden shows, however, Diamond announced that he needed a break, and he engaged in no more live performances till 1976. He used those four years to work on the score for Hall Bartlett's film version of Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* and to record two albums, *Serenade* and *Beautiful Noise*. He said years later, "I knew I'd come back, but I wasn't sure when. I spent one year on each of those albums...I'd been on the road six years. I had a son 2½ and I felt he needed me more than the audience did. So for four years I devoted myself to my son Jesse." He also said he needed to get back to having a private life, one where he could be anonymous.[23]

In 1973, Diamond switched labels again, returning to Columbia Records for a million-dollar-advance-per-album contract (US$5,395,052 in 2016 dollars)[18]. His first project, released as a solo album, was the soundtrack to Hall Bartlett's film version of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. The film received hostile reviews and did poorly at the box office, and the album grossed more than the film did. Richard D. Bach, author of the best-selling source story, disowned the film, and both he and Diamond sued director Bartlett, though for differing reasons; in Bach's case, it was because he felt the film omitted too much from the original novella, whereas in Diamond's case, it was because he felt the film had butchered his score. "After Jonathan," Diamond declared, "I vowed never to get involved in a movie again unless I had complete control." Bartlett angrily responded to Diamond's lawsuit by criticizing his music as having become "too slick...and it's not as much from his heart as it used to be." However, Bartlett also added, "Neil is extraordinarily talented. Often his arrogance is just a cover for the lonely and insecure person underneath."[26]

Despite the controversy surrounding the film, the soundtrack was a success, peaking at No. 2 on the Billboard albums chart. Diamond would also garner a Golden Globe Award for Best Original Score and a Grammy Award for Best Score Soundtrack Album for a Motion Picture.[18] From there, Diamond would often include a *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* suite in his live performances, as he did in his 1976 "Love at the Greek" concert and for his show in Las Vegas that same year.[27]

Diamond returned to live shows in 1976 with an Australian tour, "The Thank You Australia' Concert", which was broadcast to 36 television outlets nationwide. He also again appeared at the Greek Theater in a 1976 concert, *Love at the Greek*. An album and accompanying video/DVD of the show includes a version of "Song Sung Blue" with duets with Helen Reddy and Henry Winkler, a.k.a. Arthur "The Fonz" Fonzarelli of *Happy Days*.[28]
He began wearing colorful beaded shirts in concert, originally out of necessity so everyone in the audience could see him without the aid of binoculars. Bill Whitten designed and made the shirts for Diamond from the 1970s till approximately 2007.[29]

In 1974, Diamond released the album Serenade, from which "Longfellow Serenade" and "I've Been This Way Before" were issued as singles. The latter had been intended for the Jonathan Livingston Seagull score, but Diamond had completed it too late for inclusion in the same. That same year he also appeared on a TV special with Shirley Bassey where they sang a duet.[31]

In 1976, he released Beautiful Noise, produced by Robbie Robertson of The Band. On Thanksgiving night, 1976, Diamond made an appearance at The Band's farewell concert, The Last Waltz, performing "Dry Your Eyes", which he had written and composed jointly with Robertson, and which had appeared on Beautiful Noise. He also joined the rest of the performers onstage at the end in a rendition of Bob Dylan's "I Shall Be Released".

Diamond was paid $650,000 (US$2,735,702 in 2016 dollars[14]) from the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, to open its new $10 million Theater For the Performing Arts on July 2, 1976. The show played through July 5, 1976, and drew sold out crowds for the 7,500 seat theater. A "who's who" of Hollywood attended opening night, ranging from Elizabeth Taylor to Chevy Chase, with Diamond walking out on stage to a standing ovation. He opened the show without music, but rather a story about an ex-girlfriend who dumped him before he became successful. His lead-in line to the first song of the evening was, "You may have dumped me a bit too soon baby, because look who's standing here tonight."

He performed at Woburn Abbey on July 2, 1977, to an audience of 55,000 British fans. The concert and interviews were taped by film director William Friedkin, who used six cameras to capture the performance.[32]

In 1977, Diamond released I'm Glad You're Here With Me Tonight, including "You Don't Bring Me Flowers", for which he composed the music and on the writing of whose lyrics he collaborated with Alan Bergman and Marilyn Bergman. Barbra Streisand covered the song on her Songbird album, and later, a Diamond-Streisand duet, spurred by the success of radio mash-ups, was recorded. That version hit No. 1 in 1978, his third song to top the Hot 100. They appeared unannounced for the Grammy awards ceremony in 1980, where they performed a duet of the song to a surprised and rapturous audience.[33]

His last 1970s album was September Morn, which included a new version of "I'm a Believer". It and "Red Red Wine" are his best-known original songs made more famous by other artists. In February 1979, the uptempo "Forever in Blue Jeans", co-written and jointly composed with his guitarist, Richard Bennett, was released as a single from You Don't Bring Me Flowers, Diamond's album from the previous year.[34]

In 1979, Diamond had collapsed on stage in San Francisco and was taken to the hospital where he endured a twelve-hour operation to remove what turned out to be a tumor on his spine. He said he had been losing feeling in his right leg "for a number of years but ignored it." When he collapsed, he had no strength in either leg.[35] He underwent a long rehabilitation process just prior to beginning principal photography for his film The Jazz Singer (1980).[36] He was so convinced he was going to die that he even wrote farewell letters to his friends.[35]

The 1980s

A planned film version of "You Don't Bring Me Flowers" to star Diamond and Streisand fell through when Diamond instead starred in a 1980 remake of the Al Jolson classic The Jazz Singer alongside Laurence Olivier and Lucie Arnaz. Though the movie received poor reviews, the soundtrack spawned three Top 10 singles, "Love on the Rocks", "Hello Again", and "America", the last of which
had emotional significance for Diamond. "'America' was the story of my grandparents," he told an interviewer. "It's my gift to them, and it's very real for me ... In a way, it speaks to the immigrant in all of us."

The song was performed in full by Diamond during the finale of the film. The song was also the one he was most proud of, partly because of when it was later used: National news shows played it when the hostages were shown returning home after the Iran hostage crisis ended; it was played on the air during the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty; and at the tribute to Martin Luther King and the Vietnam Vets Welcome Home concert, he was asked to perform it live. At the time, a national poll found the song to be the number-one most recognized song about America, more than "God Bless America".

It also became the anthem of his world tour two weeks after the attacks on America on September 11, 2001, when he changed the lyric at the end from; "They're coming to America", to "Stand up for America!" Earlier that year he performed it after a request from former heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali.

The failure of the film was due in part to Diamond never having acted professionally until this, his first attempt. "I didn't think I could handle it," he said later, seeing himself as "a fish out of water." For his role in the film, Diamond became the first-ever winner of a Worst Actor Razzie Award, even though he was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for the same role. Critic David Wild, nevertheless, noted that the film showed that Diamond was open about his religion: "Who else but this Jewish Elvis could go multi-platinum with an album that featured a version of the Kol Nidre?"

Diamond later told the Los Angeles Times, "For me, this was the ultimate bar mitzvah."

Another Top 10 selection, "Heartlight", was inspired by the blockbuster 1982 movie E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial. Though the film's title character is never mentioned in the lyrics, Universal Pictures, which had released E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial and was the parent company of the Uni Records label, by then referred to as the MCA Records label, for which Diamond had recorded for years, briefly threatened legal action against both Diamond and Columbia Records.

Diamond's record sales slumped somewhat in the 1980s and 1990s, his last single to make the Billboard's Pop Singles chart coming in 1986. However, his concert tours continued to be big draws. Billboard magazine ranked Diamond as the most profitable solo performer of 1986. He released his 17th studio album in 1986, Headed for the Future, which reached number 20 on the Billboard 200 rank. Three weeks later he starred in Hello Again, his first television special in nine years, where he performed comedy sketches and sang a duo medley with Carol Burnett.

In January 1987, Diamond sang the national anthem at the Super Bowl. His "America" became the theme song for the Michael Dukakis 1988 presidential campaign. That same year, UB40's reggae interpretation of Diamond's ballad "Red Red Wine" would top the Billboard's Pop Singles chart and, like the Monkees's version of "I'm a Believer", it become better known than Diamond's original version.

The 1990s

During the 1990s, Diamond produced six studio albums. He covered many classics from the movies and from famous Brill Building-era songwriters. He also released two Christmas albums, the first of which peaked at No. 8 on the Billboard's Album chart. Keeping his songwriting skills honed, Diamond also recorded two albums of mostly new material during this period. In 1992, he performed for President George H.W. Bush's final Christmas in Washington NBC special. In 1993, Diamond opened the Mark of the Quad Cities (now the iWireless Center) with two shows on May 27 and 28 to a crowd of 27,000-plus.

The 1990s also saw a resurgence in Diamond's popularity. "Sweet Caroline" became a popular sing-along at sporting events, where it came to be played to entertain and energize the fans and the teams. It saw usage for Boston College football and basketball games. College sporting events in other states would also play it, and it was even played at sports events in other countries, such for a Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament or soccer match in Northern Ireland. Most notably, it became the theme song for Red Sox Nation, the fans of the Boston Red Sox. The song also came to be played during the 8th inning of every New York Mets home game.
The New York Rangers also adapted it as their own, and would play it whenever winning at the end of the 3rd period of their games. The Pitt Panthers football team would also play it after the third quarter of all home games, with the crowd cheering, "Let's go Pitt". The Carolina Panthers would play it at the end of each home game whenever they would win. The Davidson College pep band would likewise play it at every Davidson Wildcats men's basketball home game, in the second half.

The 2000s

In 2000, Johnny Cash recorded the album *American III: Solitary Man*, and won a Grammy Award for his cover of "Solitary Man".

A more severely stripped-down-to-basics album, *12 Songs*, produced by Rick Rubin, was released on November 8, 2005, in two editions: a standard 12-song release, and a special edition with two bonus tracks, including one featuring backing vocals by Brian Wilson. The album debuted at No. 4 on the Billboard chart, and received generally positive reviews; Earliwine describes the album as "inaugurably Neil Diamond's best set of songs in a long, long time." But *12 Songs* also became noteworthy as one of the last albums to be pressed and released by Sony BMG with the Extended Copy Protection software embedded in the disc. (See the 2005 Sony BMG CD copy protection scandal)

In 2007, Diamond was inducted into the Long Island Music Hall of Fame.[51]

On March 19, 2008, it was announced on the television show *American Idol* that Diamond would be a guest mentor to the remaining Idol contestants, who would be singing Diamond songs for the broadcasts of April 29 and 30, 2008. On the April 30th broadcast, Diamond premiered a new song, which he called "Pretty Amazing Grace", and which came from his then recently released album *Home Before Dark*. On May 2, 2008, Sirius Satellite Radio started Neil Diamond Radio. On April 8, 2008, Diamond made a surprise announcement in a big-screen broadcast at Fenway Park, that he would be appearing there "live in concert" on August 23, 2008, as part of his world tour. The announcement, which marked the first official confirmation of any 2008 concert dates in the US, came during the traditional eighth-inning sing-along of his "Sweet Caroline", which, as stated above, had by that time become an anthem for Boston fans.

On April 28, 2008, Diamond appeared on the roof of the Jimmy Kimmel building to sing "Sweet Caroline" after Kimmel was jokingly arrested trying to sing the song dressed up as a Diamond impersonator

*Home Before Dark* was released May 6, 2008, and topped the album charts in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.[53]

On June 29, 2008, Diamond played to an estimated 108,000 fans at the Glastonbury Festival in Somerset, England on the Concert of a Lifetime Tour; technical problems marred the concert.[54][55] In August, Diamond allowed cameras to record his entire four-night run at New York's Madison Square Garden; he released the resulting DVD in the U.S. in 2009, one year to the day of the first concert.[56] *Hot August Night/NYC* debuted at No. 2 on the charts. On the same day the DVD was released, CBS aired an edited version of the DVD, which won the ratings hour with 13 million viewers. The next day the sales of the DVD surged, prompting Sony to order more copies to meet the high demand.

On August 25, 2008, Diamond performed at Ohio State University while suffering from laryngitis. The result disappointed him as well as his fans, and on August 26, he offered refunds to anyone who applied by September 3.[57]

Diamond was honored as the MusiCares Person of the Year on February 6, 2009, two nights prior to the 51st Annual Grammy Awards.

Long loved in Boston, Diamond was invited to sing at the July 4, 2009 holiday celebration.

On October 13, 2009, he released *A Cherry Cherry Christmas*, his third album of holiday music.
The 2010s

On November 2, 2010, Diamond released the album *Dreams*, a collection of 14 interpretations of his favorite songs by artists from the rock era. The album also included a new slow-tempo arrangement on his own song, "I'm a Believer". In December, he performed a track from the album, "Ain't No Sunshine", on NBC's *The Sing-Off* with Committed and Street Corner Symphony, two a cappella groups featured on the show. *The Very Best of Neil Diamond*, a compilation CD of Diamond's 23 studio recordings from the Bang, UNI/MCA, & Columbia catalogs, was released on December 6, 2011, on the Sony Legacy label.

The years 2011 and 2012 were marked by several milestones in Diamond's career. On March 14, 2011, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at a ceremony at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. In December, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Kennedy Center at the 2011 Kennedy Center Honors.[58][59] On August 10, 2012, Diamond received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.[60] In November 2012, Diamond topped the bill in the centenary edition of the Royal Variety Performance in the UK, which was transmitted on December 3. He also appeared in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.[61]

On April 20, 2013, Diamond made an unannounced appearance at Fenway Park to sing "Sweet Caroline" during the 8th inning. It was the first game at Fenway since the bombings at the Boston Marathon.[62] On July 2, he released the single "Freedom Song (They'll Never Take Us Down)", with 100% of the purchase price benefiting One Fund Boston and the Wounded Warrior Project.[63] Sporting a beard, Diamond performed live on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol as part of *A Capitol Fourth*, which was broadcast nationally by PBS on July 4, 2013.[64]

In January 2014, it was confirmed that Diamond had signed with the Capitol Music Group unit of Universal Music Group, which also owned Diamond's Uni/MCA catalog. UMG also took over Diamond's Columbia and Bang catalogues, which meant that all of his recorded output would be consolidated for the first time.[65][66]

On July 8, 2014, Capitol Records announced, via a flyer included with Diamond's latest greatest hits compilations, *All-Time Greatest Hits*, which charted at 15 in the *Billboard* 200, that his next album, *Melody Road*, which was to be produced by Don Was and Jacknife Lee, would be released on September 30, 2014. In August, the release date was moved to October 21.[67]

In September 2014, Diamond performed a surprise concert at his alma mater, Erasmus High School in Brooklyn. The show was announced via Twitter that afternoon. On the same day, he announced a 2015 "Melody Road" World Tour.[68] The North American leg of the World Tour 2015 launched with a concert in Allentown, PA at the PPL Center on February 27 and ended at the Pepsi Center in Denver, Colorado on May 31, 2015.[69] Diamond used new media platforms and social media extensively throughout the tour, streaming several shows live on Periscope and showing tweets from fans who used the hashtag #tweetcaroline on two large screens. *The San Diego Union Tribune* wrote: "This, my friends, wasn’t your grandfather’s Neil Diamond concert. It was a multimedia extravaganza. Twitter. Periscope...It was a social media blitzkrieg that, by all accounts, proved to be an innovative way to widen his fan base.[70]

In October 2016, Diamond released *Acoustic Christmas*, a folk-inspired Christmas album of original songs as well as acoustic versions of holiday classics. Produced by Was and Lee, who had produced *Melody Road*, the idea for the album began to take shape as the *Melody Road* sessions ended. To "channel the intimate atmosphere of ’60s folk, Diamond recorded *Acoustic Christmas* with a handful of musicians, sitting around a circle of microphones, wires and, of course, Christmas lights.[71]
In November 2016, Diamond's "50 Year Anniversary World Tour" was announced, to begin April 2017.\cite{72}

### In pop culture

In the 2001 comedy film *Saving Silverman*, the main characters play in a Diamond cover band, and Diamond made an extended cameo appearance as himself. Diamond even wrote and composed a new song, "I Believe in Happy Endings", especially for the film. During this period, comedian/comedy actor Will Ferrell did a recurring Diamond impersonation on *Saturday Night Live*, with Diamond himself appearing alongside Ferrell on Ferrell's final show as a "Not Ready For Prime Time Player" in May 2002.

In 2008, Diamond gave filmmaker Greg Kohs permission to use his songs in a documentary. Kohs, a director from Philadelphia, had met a popular Milwaukee, Wisconsin, duo, Lightning & Thunder, composed of Mike Sardina, who did a Diamond impersonation, and his wife Claire. Kohs followed them for eight years and produced the film *Song Sung Blue*, but he needed permission to use Diamond's songs. The movie was sent to the singer in January 2008, at the recommendation of Eddie Vedder, a supporter of the film and of the duo. Though Sardina had died in 2006, Diamond invited his widow and her family to be his front-row guests at his show in Milwaukee, where he told them he was moved by the film.\cite{73}

### Personal life

#### Marriages

Diamond has been married three times.

In 1963, Diamond married his high school sweetheart, school teacher Jaye Posner. They had two daughters, Marjorie and Elyn. They separated in 1967\cite{74} and divorced in 1969.\cite{75}

In 1969, Diamond married production assistant Marcia Murphey.\cite{76} They had sons Jesse and Micah. This marriage lasted 25 years, and ended in 1994\cite{75} or 1995\cite{74} (sources differ).

In 2012, Diamond married his manager, Katie McNeil, in front of family and close friends in Los Angeles.\cite{77} Seven months earlier, on September 7, 2011, in a message on Twitter, the 70-year-old Diamond announced his engagement to the 41-year-old McNeil. Diamond said that his 2014 album *Melody Road* was fueled by his relationship with McNeil, explaining: "There's no better inspiration or motivation for work than being in love. It's what you dream of as a creative person. I was able to complete this album – start it, write it and complete it – under the spell of love, and I think it shows somehow."\cite{78} In addition to serving as Diamond's manager, McNeil produced the documentary *Neil Diamond: Hot August Nights NYC*.\cite{79}

#### Relationship

In 1996, Diamond began a lengthy, live-in, relationship with Australian Rae Farley, after the two met in Brisbane, Australia. The selections on the album *Home Before Dark* were written and composed during her struggle with chronic back pain.\cite{36}

### Discography

### Notes

a. His first life ambition was medicine, as he once told talk show host Larry King. "I actually wanted to be a laboratory biologist. I wanted to study and I really wanted to find a cure for cancer. My grandmother had died of cancer. And I was always very good at the sciences. And I thought I would go and try and discover the cure for cancer."
Simon & Garfunkel were an American folk rock duo consisting of singer-songwriter Paul Simon and singer Art Garfunkel. They were one of the best-selling music groups of the 1960s and became counterculture icons of the decade's social revolution, alongside artists such as the Beatles, the Beach Boys, and Bob Dylan. Their biggest hits—including "The Sound of Silence" (1964), "Mrs. Robinson" (1968), "The Boxer" (1969), and "Bridge over Troubled Water" (1970)—reached number one on singles charts worldwide.

Their often rocky relationship led to artistic disagreements, which resulted in their breakup in 1970. Their final studio record, Bridge over Troubled Water (released in January of that year), was their most successful, becoming one of the world's best-selling albums. Since their split in 1970 they have reunited several times, most famously in 1981 for "The Concert in Central Park", which attracted more than 500,000 people, the seventh-largest concert attendance in history[2]

The duo met as teenagers in Queens, New York, in 1953, where they learned to harmonize together and began writing original material. By 1957, under the name Tom & Jerry, the teenagers had their first minor success with "Hey Schoolgirl", a song imitating their idols The Everly Brothers. Afterwards, the duo went their separate ways, with Simon making unsuccessful solo records. In 1963, aware of a growing public interest in folk music, they regrouped and were signed to Columbia Records as Simon & Garfunkel. Their début, Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M., sold poorly, and they once again disbanded; Simon returned to a solo career, this time in England. In June 1965, their song "The Sound of Silence" was overdubbed, adding electric guitar and a drumkit to the original 1964 recording. This later version became a major U.S. AM radio hit in 1965, reaching number one on the Billboard Hot 100.

They reunited, releasing their second studio album Sounds of Silence and touring colleges nationwide. On their third release, Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme(1966), the duo assumed more creative control. Their music was featured in the 1967 film The Graduate, giving them further exposure. Bookends (1968), their next album, topped the Billboard 200 chart[3] and included the number-one single "Mrs. Robinson" from the film.

After their 1970 breakup following the release of Bridge over Troubled Water, they both continued recording, Simon releasing a number of highly acclaimed albums, including 1986's Graceland[4] Garfunkel also briefly pursued an acting career, with leading roles in two Mike Nichols films, Catch-22 and Carnal Knowledge and in Nicolas Roeg's 1980 Bad Timing, as well as releasing some solo hits such as "All I Know".

Simon & Garfunkel won 10 Grammy Awards and were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, and their Bridge over Troubled Water album was nominated at the 1977 Brit Awards for Best International Album.[5] It is ranked at number 51 on Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Albums of All Time.[6] Richie Unterberger described them as "the most successful folk-rock duo of the 1960s" and one of the most popular artists from the decade in general.[1]
1 History

1.1 Early years (1953–56)

1.2 From Tom & Jerry to Simon & Garfunkel and First Album (1957–64)

1.3 Simon in England (1964–65)

1.4 Mainstream breakthrough and success (1965–66)

1.5 Studio time and low profile (1967–68)

1.6 Growing apart and final years (1969–70)

1.7 Breakup, rifts, and reunions (1971–2005)

1.8 Recent years (2007–present)

2 Musical style and legacy

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4.1 Studio albums

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5 References

6 Sources

7 External links

History

Early years (1953–56)

Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel grew up in the 1940s and 1950s in the predominantly Jewish neighborhood of Forest Hills in Queens, New York, just three blocks away from one another, and attended the same schools, Public School 164 in Flushing, Parsons Junior High School, and Forest Hills High School. Individually, when still young, they developed a fascination with music; both listened to the radio and were taken with rock and roll as it emerged, particularly the Everly Brothers. When Simon first noticed Garfunkel, he was singing in a fourth grade talent show, and Simon thought that was a good way to attract girls; he hoped for a friendship which eventually started in 1953 when they were in the sixth grade and appeared on stage together in a school play adaptation of Alice in Wonderland. That first stage appearance was followed by the duo forming a street-corner doo-wop group, the Peptones, with three other friends, and learning to harmonize together. They began performing for the first time as a duo at school dances.

They moved to Forest Hills High School in 1955, where, in 1956, they wrote their first song, "The Girl for Me"; Simon's father sent a handwritten copy to the Library of Congress to register a copyright. While trying to remember the lyrics to the Everly's song "Hey Doll Baby", they created their own song, "Hey Schoolgirl", which they recorded themselves for $25 at Sanders Recording Studio in Manhattan. While recording they were overheard by a promoter, Sid Prosen, who – after speaking to their parents – signed them to his independent label Big Records.

From Tom & Jerry to Simon & Garfunkel and First Album (1957–64)

While still aged 15, Simon & Garfunkel now had a recording contract with Sid Prosen's independent label Big Records. Using the name Tom & Jerry (Garfunkel naming himself Tom Graph, a reference to his interest in mathematics, and Simon naming himself Jerry Landis after the surname of Sue Landis, a girl he had dated), the single "Hey Schoolgirl" was released, with the B-side "Dancin' Wild", in 1957. Prosen, using the payola system, bribed Alan Freed $200 to get the single played on his radio show, where it became a nightly staple. "Hey Schoolgirl" attracted regular rotation on nationwide AM pop stations, leading it to sell over 100,000 copies and to land on Billboard's charts at number 49. Prosen promoted the group heavily, getting them a spot on Dick Clark's American Bandstand (headlining alongside Jerry Lee Lewis). The duo shared approximately $4,000 from the song –
earning two percent each from royalties, the rest staying with Prosen.\[20] They released three more singles on Big Records: "Our Song", "That's My Story", and "Don't Say Goodbye", none of them successful[15][24][22]

After graduating from Forest Hills High School in 1958,\[23\] they were still exploring the possibilities of a music career, though continued their education as a back up; Simon studying English at Queens College, City University of New York, Garfunkel studying first architecture, then switching to art history at Columbia College, Columbia University.[17][24][25] While still with Big Records as a duo, Simon released a solo single, "True or False", under the name "True Taylor".\[20\] This recording upset Garfunkel, who regarded it as a betrayal; the emotional tension from that incident occasionally surfacing throughout their relationship.[26] Their last recording with Big Records was a cover of a Jan and Dean single, "Baby Talk", but the company became bankrupt soon after release; the track was reissued on Bell Records, but failed to sell, so Tom & Jerry was dissolved.[21][27] Both, however, continued recording, albeit as solo artists: Garfunkel composing and recording "Private World" for Octavia Records, and - under the name Artie Garr - "Beat Love" for Warwick; Simon recorded with The Mystics, and Tico & The Triumphs, and wrote and recorded under the names Jerry Landis and Paul Kane.[21][26][28] Simon also wrote and performed demos for other artists, working for a while with Carole King and Gerry Goffin.[21][29]

After graduating in 1963, Simon joined Garfunkel, who was still at Columbia, to perform together again as a duo, this time with a shared interest in folk music[27][28] Simon enrolled part-time in Brooklyn Law School[30] By late 1963, billing themselves as "Kane & Garr", they performed at Gerde's Folk City, a Greenwich club that hosted Monday night open mic performances.[31] The duo performed three new songs — "Sparrow", "He Was My Brother", and "The Sound of Silence" — and got the attention of Columbia producer Tom Wilson, who worked with Bob Dylan[32] As a "star producer" for the label, he wanted to record "He Was My Brother" with a new British act named the Pilgrims.[33] Simon convinced Wilson to let him and his partner have a studio audition, and they performed "The Sound of Silence". House engineer Roy Halee recorded the audition, and at Wilson's urging, Columbia signed the duo.[33]

Their debut studio album, Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M., was recorded over three daytime sessions in March 1964 and released in October.[34] The album contains four original Simon compositions, with the remainder consisting of three traditional folk songs and five folk-influenced singersongwriter numbers.[34] Simon was adamant that they would no longer use stage names, and they adopted the name Simon & Garfunkel.[35] Columbia set up a promotional showcase at Folk City on March 31, 1964, the duo's first public concert as Simon & Garfunkel[35] The showcase, as well as other scheduled performances, did not go well[36]

Simon in England (1964–65)

Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M. sold only 3,000 copies upon its October release, and its poor sales led Simon to move to England where he had previously visited and played some gigs.[37] He toured the small folk clubs, appearing on the same bill and befriending British folk artists such as Bert Jansch, Martin Carthy, Al Stewart, and Sandy Denny.[38][39][40] He met Kathy Chitty, who became the object of his affection and is the Kathy in "Kathy's Song" and "America".[41]

A small music publishing company, Lorna Music, licensed "Carlos Dominguez", a single Simon had cut two years prior as "Paul Kane", for a cover by Val Doonican that sold very well.[42] Simon visited Lorna to thank them, and the meeting resulted in a publishing and recording contract. He signed to the Oriole label and released "He Was My Brother" as a single.[42] Simon invited Garfunkel to stay for the summer of 1964[42] Near the end of the season, Garfunkel returned to Columbia for class, and Simon surprised his friends by saying that he would be returning to the States as well.[43] He would resume his studies at Brooklyn Law School for one semester, partially at his parents' insistence. He returned to England in January 1965, now certain that music was his calling.[44] In the meantime, his landlord, Judith Piepe, had compiled a tape from his work at Lorna and sent it to the BBC in hopes they would play it.[44] The demos aired on the Five to Ten morning show, and were instantly successful. Oriole had folded into CBS by that point, and hoped to record a new Paul Simon album.[45] The Paul Simon Songbook was recorded in June 1965 and featured
multiple future Simon & Garfunkel staples, among them "I Am a Rock" and "April Come She Will". CBS flew Wilson over to produce the record, and he stayed at Simon's flat.[45] The album saw release in August, and although sales were poor, Simon felt content with his future in England.[46]

Meanwhile, in the United States, a late-night disc jockey at WBZ-FM in Boston played "The Sound of Silence", where it was popular with a college audience.[47] It was picked up the next day along the East Coast of the United States, down to Cocoa Beach, Florida. Wilson, inspired by the folk rock sound of the Byrds' cover of "Turn! Turn! Turn!" and Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone", created a rock remix of the song using studio musicians. The remix of "The Sound of Silence" was issued in September 1965, where it reached the Billboard Hot 100.[48] Wilson had not informed the duo of his intention to remix the track; as such, Simon was "horrified" when he first heard it.[48] Garfunkel graduated in 1965, returning to Columbia University to do a master's degree in mathematics.[25][49]

Mainstream breakthrough and success (1965–66)

By January 1966, "The Sound of Silence" topped the Hot 100, selling over one million copies.[50] Simon reunited with Garfunkel that winter in New York, leaving Chitty and his friends in England behind. CBS demanded a new album from the duo, to be called Sounds of Silence to ride the wave of the hit.[51] Recorded in three weeks, and mainly consisting of re-recorded songs from The Paul Simon Songbook, plus four new tracks, Sounds of Silence was rush-released onto the market in mid-January 1966, peaking at number 21 Billboard Top LPs chart.[52] A week later, "Homeward Bound" was released as a single, entering the USA top ten, followed by "I Am a Rock" peaking at number three.[52] The duo supported the recordings with a nationwide tour of America, while CBS continued their promotion by re-releasing Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M., which promptly charted at number 30.[53] Despite the commercial and popular success, the duo received critical derision, as many considered them a manufactured imitation of folk.[45]

As they considered their previous effort a "rush job" to capitalize on their sudden success, the duo spent more time crafting the follow-up. It was the first time Simon insisted on total control in aspects of recording.[54] Work began in 1966 and took nine months.[55] Garfunkel considered the recording of "Scarborough Fair" to be the point at which they stepped into the role of producer, as they were constantly beside engineer Roy Halee mixing the track.[55] Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme was issued in October 1966, following the release of several singles and receiving sold-out college campus shows.[56] The duo resumed their trek on the college circuit, waiting the release, composing an image that was described as "alienated", "weird", and "poetic".[57] Manager Mort Lewis also was responsible for this public perception, as he withheld them from television appearances (unless they were allowed to play an uninterrupted set or choose the setlist).[58] Simon, then 26, felt he had finally "made it" into an upper echelon of rock and roll, while most importantly retaining artistic integrity ("making him spiritually closer to Bob Dylan than to, say, Bobby Darin"), wrote biographer Marc Eliot.[58] The duo chose William Morris as their booking agency after a recommendation from Wally Amos, a mutual friend through their producer Tim Wilson.[58]

During the sessions for Parsley, the duo cut "A Hazy Shade of Winter"; it was released as a single, peaking at number 13 on the national chart.[55] Similarly, they recorded "At the Zoo" for single release in early 1967 (it charted lower, at number 16).[59] Simon began work for their next album around this time, noting to a writer at High Fidelity that "I'm not interested in singles anymore".[60] He had hit a dry spell in his writing, which led to no Simon & Garfunkel album on the horizon for 1967.[61] Artists at the time were expected to release two, perhaps three albums each year and the lack of productivity from the duo worried executives at Columbia Records.[60] Amid concerns for Simon’s idleness, Columbia Records chairman Clive Davis arranged for up-and-coming record producer John Simon to kick-start the recording.[62] Simon was distrustful of "suits" at the label; on one occasion, he and Garfunkel brought a tape recorder into a meeting with Davis, who was giving a "fatherly talk" on speeding up production, in order to laugh at it later.[63] The rare television appearances at this time saw the duo performing on such diverse network broadcasts as the Ed Sullivan, Mike Douglas and Andy Williams shows in 1966 and twice on The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour in 1967.
Meanwhile, director Mike Nichols, then filming *The Graduate*, had become fascinated with the duo’s past two efforts, listening to them nonstop before and after filming. After two weeks of this obsession, he met with Clive Davis to ask for permission to license Simon & Garfunkel music for his film. Davis viewed it as a perfect fit and envisioned a best-selling soundtrack album. Simon was not as immediately receptive, viewing movies akin to ‘selling out’, creating a damper on his artistic integrity. However, after meeting Nichols and becoming impressed by his wit and the script, he agreed to write at least one or two new songs for the film. Leonard Hirshan, a powerful agent at William Morris, negotiated a deal that paid Simon $25,000 to submit three songs to Nichols and producer Lawrence Turman. Several weeks later, Simon re-emerged with two new tracks, “Punky’s Dilemma” and “Overs”, neither of which Nichols was particularly taken with. The duo offered another new song, which later became “Mrs. Robinson”, that was not as developed. Nichols loved it.

**Studio time and low profile (1967–68)**

The duo’s fourth studio album, *Bookends*, was recorded in fits and starts over various periods from late 1966 to early 1968. The duo were signed under an older contract that specified the label pay for sessions, and Simon & Garfunkel took advantage of this indulgence, hiring viola and brass players, as well as percussionists. The record’s brevity reflects its concise and perfectionist production. The team spent over 50 studio hours recording “Punky’s Dilemma”, for example, and re-recorded vocal parts, sometimes note by note, until they were satisfied. Garfunkel’s songs and voice took a lead role on some of the songs, and the harmonies for which the duo was known gradually disappeared. For Simon, *Bookends* represented the end of the collaboration and became an early indicator of his intentions to go solo. Although the album had been planned long in advance, work did not begin in earnest until the late months of 1967.

Prior to release, the band helped put together and performed at the Monterey Pop Festival, which signaled the beginning of the Summer of Love on the West Coast. "Fakin’ It" was issued as a single that summer and found only modest success on AM radio; the duo were much more focused on the rising FM format, which played album cuts and treated their music with respect. In January 1968, the duo appeared on a Kraft Music Hall special, *Three for Tonight*, performing ten songs largely culled from their third album. *Bookends* was released by Columbia Records in April 1968. In an historical context, this was just 24 hours before the assassination of Civil Rights Movement activist Martin Luther King, Jr., which spurred nationwide outrage and riots. The album debuted on the *Billboard* Top LPs in the issue dated April 27, 1968, climbing to number one and staying at that position for seven non-consecutive weeks; it remained on the chart as a whole for 66 weeks. *Bookends* received such heavy orders weeks in advance of its release that Columbia was able to apply for award certification before copies left the warehouse, a fact it touted in magazine ads. The record became the duo’s best-selling album to date: it fed off the buzz created by the release of *The Graduate* soundtrack album ten weeks earlier creating an initial combined sales figure of over five million units.

Davis had predicted this fact, and suggested raising the list price of *Bookends* by one dollar to $5.79, above the then standard retail price, to compensate for including a large poster included in vinyl copies. Simon instead scoffed and viewed it as charging a premium on “what was sure to be that year’s best-selling Columbia album”. According to biographer Marc Eliot, Davis was “offended by what he perceived as their lack of gratitude for what he believed was his role in turning them into superstars”. Rather than implement Davis’ price increase plan, Simon & Garfunkel signed a contract extension with Columbia that guaranteed them a higher royalty rate. The lead single “Mrs. Robinson” became, at the 1969 Grammy Awards the first rock and roll song to receive Record of the Year; it was also awarded Best Contemporary Pop Performance by a Duo or Group.

**Growing apart and final years (1969–70)**

*Bookends*, alongside *The Graduate* soundtrack, propelled Simon & Garfunkel to become the biggest rock duo in the world. Simon was approached by producers to write music for films or license songs; he turned down Franco Zeffirelli, who was preparing to film *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* and John Schlesinger, who likewise was readying to shoot *Midnight Cowboy*. In addition to Hollywood proposals, producers from the Broadway show *Jimmy Shine* (starring Simon’s friend Dustin Hoffman, also the lead in *Midnight Cowboy*) asked for two original songs and Simon declined. He collaborated briefly with Leonard Bernstein on a sacred mass before withdrawing from the project due to “finding it perhaps too far afield from his comfort zone”. Garfunkel took the role of
Captain Nately in the Nichols film *Catch-22* based on the novel of the same name. Initially Simon was to play the character of Dunbar, but screenwriter Buck Henry felt the film was already crowded with characters and subsequently wrote Simon's part out.[78][79]

The filming of *Catch-22* began in January 1969 and lasted about eight months.[80][81] The unexpectedly long film production endangered the relationship between the duo.[79] Simon had not completed any new songs at this point, and the duo planned to collaborate when the filming would be finished.[79] Following the end of filming of *Catch-22* in October, the first performance of what was, for a time, their last tour, took place in Ames, Iowa.[82] The US leg of the tour ended in the sold-out Carnegie Hall on November 27.[83] [84] Meanwhile, the duo, working with director Charles Grodin, produced an hourlong CBS special, *Songs of America*, which is a mixture of scenes featuring notable political events and leaders concerning the USA, such as the Vietnam War, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy's funeral procession, Cesar Chavez and the Poor People's March. It was broadcast only once, due to internal tension at the network regarding its content.[85][86]

*Bridge over Troubled Water*, their final studio album, was released in January 1970 and charted in over 11 countries, topping the charts in 10, including the *Billboard* Top LP's chart in the US and the UK Albums Chart.[87][88] It was the best-selling album in 1970, 1971 and 1972 and was at that time the best-selling album of all time.[89] It was also CBS Records’ best-selling album before the release of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* in 1982.[90] The album topped the *Billboard* charts for 10 weeks and stayed in the charts for 85 weeks.[89] In the United Kingdom, the album topped the charts for 35 weeks, and spent 285 weeks in the top 100, from 1970 to 1975.[89] It has since sold over 25 million copies worldwide.[91][92] “Bridge over Troubled Water”, the album's lead single, hit number one in five countries and became their biggest seller.[12] The song has been covered by over 50 artists since then,[93] including Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Aretha Franklin, Willie Nelson, Roy Orbison, and Josh Groben.[94] “Cecilia”, the follow-up, hit number four in the US, and El Condor Pasa' hit number 18.[12]

The recording process was tough for both musicians, and their breakup was almost certain considering the deterioration of their relationship. "At that point, I just wanted out," Simon later said.[95] Their breakup was not intended to be semi-permanent: Garfunkel hoped for a two-year break from Simon & Garfunkel and did not intend to pursue a film career. Likewise, Simon did not intend to begin a solo career.[96] A brief British tour followed the album release, and the duo's last concert as Simon & Garfunkel occurred at Forest Hills Stadium.[97] In 1971, the album took home six awards at the 13th Annual Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year. Simon's wife, Peggy Harper, pushed for him to make the split official, and he placed a call to Davis to confirm the duo's breakup: "I want you to know I've decided to split with Artie. I don't think we'll be recording together again."[98] For the next several years, the duo would only speak “two or three” times a year.[99]

### Breakup, rifts, and reunions (1971–2005)

In the 1970s, the duo reunited several times. Their first reunion was a benefit concert for presidential candidate George McGovern at New York's Madison Square Garden in June 1972.[12] In 1975, they reconciled once more when they visited a recording session with John Lennon and Harry Nilsson.[100] For the rest of the year, they attempted to make the reunion work, but their collaboration only yielded one song, "My Little Town", that was featured on Simon's *Still Crazy After All These Years* and Garfunkel's *Breakaway.*[100] It peaked at number nine on the Hot 100. In 1975, Garfunkel joined Simon for a medley of three songs on the television series *Saturday Night Live* which Simon was guest hosting.[101] In 1977, Garfunkel joined Simon for a brief performance of their old songs on Simon's television special *The Paul Simon Special* and later that year they recorded a cover of Sam Cooke's "(What a) Wonderful World" along with James Taylor.[12] Old tensions finally appeared to dissipate upon Garfunkel's return to New York in 1978, when the duo began interacting more often.[99] On May 1, 1978, Simon joined Garfunkel for a concert held at Carnegie Hall to benefit the hearing disabled.[102]

By 1980, the duo's respective solo efforts were not doing well.[99] To help alleviate New York's economic decline, concert promoter Ron Delsener came up with the idea to throw a free concert in Central Park.[103] Delsener contacted Simon with the idea of a Simon & Garfunkel reunion, and once Garfunkel agreed, plans were made.[104] The Concert in Central Park, performed September 19, 1981, attracted more than 500,000 people, at that time the largest-ever concert attendance.[12] Warner Bros. Records released a live album of the show that went double platinum in the US.[12] A 90-minute recording of the concert was sold to Home Box Office (HBO) for over $1 million.[105] The concert created a renewed interest in the duo's work.[106] They had several "heart-to-heart
Garfunkel describing his six-decade-long friendship with Simon, attempting to put past issues behind them. The duo planned a world tour, kicking off in May 1982, but their relationship grew contentious: for the majority of the tour, they did not speak to one another. Warner Bros. pushed for them to extend the tour and release an all-new Simon & Garfunkel studio album.

After recording several vocal tracks for a possible new Simon & Garfunkel album, Simon decided to adopt it as his own solo album. Garfunkel refused to learn the songs in the studio and would not give up his longstanding cannabis and cigarette habits despite Simon's requests. An official spokesperson remarked, "Paul simply felt the material he wrote is so close to his own life that it had to be his own record. Art was hoping to be on the album, but I'm sure there will be other projects that they will work on together. They are still friends." The material was later released on Simon's 1983 effort _Hearts and Bones_. Another rift opened between the duo when the lengthy recording of Simon's 1986 album _Graceland_ prevented Garfunkel from working with Roy Halee on a Christmas album. In 1990, the duo was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Garfunkel thanked his partner, calling him "the person who most enriched my life by putting those songs through me," to which Simon responded, "Arthur and I agree about almost nothing. But it's true, I have enriched his life quite a bit." After three songs, the duo left without speaking. In August 1991 Simon staged his own concert in Central Park, which was released a few months later. Art Garfunkel had offered to lend his friend a hand in creating another park reunion in which Simon declined, leading the concert as a solo act.

By 1993, their relationship had thawed again, and Simon invited Garfunkel on an international tour with him. Following a 21-date, sold-out run at the Paramount Theater in New York and an appearance at that year's Bridge School Benefit in California, the duo toured the Far East. The duo had a falling out over the course of the rest of the decade, the details of which have never been disclosed. Simon thanked Garfunkel at his 2001 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a solo artist: "I regret the ending of our friendship. I hope that some day before we die we will make peace with each other," resuming after a pause, "No rush." They were awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 45th Annual Grammy Awards in 2003, for which the promoters convinced them to reconcile and open the show with a performance of "The Sound of Silence." The performance was satisfying for both musicians, and they planned out a full-scale reunion tour over the summer. The Old Friends tour began in October 2003 and played to sold-out audiences across the United States for 30 dates until mid-December. The tour earned an estimated $123 million. Following a twelve-city run in Europe in 2004, they ended their nine-month tour with a free concert along Via dei Fori Imperiali, in front of the Colosseum in Rome. It attracted 600,000 fans, even more than their The Concert in Central Park. In 2005, Simon and Garfunkel performed three songs for a Hurricane Katrina benefit concert in Madison Square Garden. The duo performed Mrs. Robinson, and Homeward Bound. Bridge Over Troubled Water was then performed by the duo with singer Aaron Neville.

Recent years (2007–present)

In 2007, the duo reunited again for three songs during Simon's two-night engagement at New York's Beacon Theatre. This led to meetings in 2008 and a reunion tour of Asia and Australia in June 2009. Their headlining set at the 2010 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival was very difficult for Garfunkel, who was experiencing serious vocal problems. "I was terrible, and crazy nervous. I leaned on Paul Simon and the affection of the crowd," he told _Rolling Stone_ several years later. Garfunkel was diagnosed with vocal cord paresis, and the remaining tour dates were postponed indefinitely. His manager, John Scher, informed Simon's camp that...
Garfunkel would be ready within a year, which did not happen, leading to poor relations between the two. Despite tensions, Simon continued to publicly wish his old friend Artie better health and gave him praises for his then angelic voice. Garfunkel regained his vocal strength over the course of the next four years, performing shows in a Harlem theater and to underground audiences.[111]

Despite this, the duo have not staged a full-scale tour or performed shows since 2010. Garfunkel confirmed to Rolling Stone in 2014 that he believes they will tour in the future, although Simon had been too "busy" in recent years. "I know that audiences all over the world like Simon and Garfunkel. I'm with them. But I don't think Paul Simon's with them," he remarked.[111] In a 2016 interview with NPR's David Greene, when asked about the possibility of reuniting, Simon stated; "Well, I don't think most people do [constantly want Simon to relive the olden days]. The fact is, is, like, we did do two big reunions, and we're done. There's nothing really much to say. You know, the music essentially stopped in 1970. And, you know, I mean, quite honestly, we don't get along. So it's not like it's fun. If it was fun, I'd say, OK, sometimes we'll go out and sing old songs in harmony. That's cool. But when it's not fun, you know, and you're going to be in a tense situation, well, then I have a lot of musical areas that I like to play in. So that'll never happen again. That's that."[115]

### Musical style and legacy

Over the course of their career, Simon & Garfunkel's music gradually moved from a very basic folk rock sound to incorporate more experimental elements for the time, including Latin and gospel music.[1] Many adolescents of the 1960s found their music relevant, while adults regarded them as intelligent[12] Their music, according to Rolling Stone, struck a chord among lonely, alienated young adults near the end of the decade.[116]

Despite its popularity, the group was also criticized sharply, especially in its heyday. Rolling Stone critic Arthur Schmidt, for example, described the duo's music as "questionable ... it exudes a sense of process, and it is slick, and nothing too much happens."[117] New York Times critic Robert Shelton said that the group had "a kind of Mickey Mouse, timid, contrived" approach to music.[118]

Their clean sound and muted lyricism "cost them some hipness points during the psychedelic era" according to Richie Unterberger of AllMusic, who also notes that the duo "inhabited the more polished end of the folk-rock spectrum and was sometimes criticized for a certain collegiate sterility."[3] Unterberger further observes that some critics would later regard Simon's lyricism in his work with Simon & Garfunkel to pale in comparison to his later solo material. But Unterberger himself believed that "the best of S&G's work could stand among Simon's best material, and the duo did progress musically over the course of their five albums, moving from basic folk-rock productions into Latin rhythms and gospel-influenced arrangements that foreshadowed Simon's eclecticism on his solo albums."[1] Their rocky personal relationship led to their "breaking up and making up about every dozen years."[113]

### Awards

#### Grammy Awards

The Grammy Awards are held annually by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. Simon & Garfunkel have won 9 total competitive awards, 4 Hall of Fame awards, and a Lifetime Achievement Award.[119]
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**Other recognition**
- Brit Awards (1977) – Best International Album (for *Bridge over Troubled Water*)
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1990) – Inductee

**Discography**

**Studio albums**
- *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.* (1964)
- *Sounds of Silence* (1966)
- *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme* (1966)
- *Bookends* (1968)

**Live albums**

**References**
Sonny & Cher were an American duo of entertainers made up of husband-and-wife Sonny Bono and Cher in the 1960s and 1970s. The couple started their career in the mid-1960s as R&B backing singers for record producer Phil Spector.

The pair first achieved fame with two hit songs in 1965, "Baby Don't Go" and "I Got You Babe". Signing with Atco/Atlantic Records, they released three studio albums in the late 1960s, as well as the soundtrack recordings for two unsuccessful movies, Good Time and Chastity, with Cher contributing vocals to one cut, "Chastity's Song (Band of Thieves)". In 1972, after three years of silence, the couple returned to the studio and released two other albums under the MCA/Kapp Records label.

In the 1970s, they also positioned themselves as media personalities with two top ten TV shows in the US, The Sonny & Cher Comedy Hour and The Sonny & Cher Show. The couple's career as a duo ended in 1975 following their divorce. In the decade they spent together Sonny and Cher sold over 40 million records worldwide.

Performing under her first name, Cher went on to a highly successful career as a solo singer and actress, while Sonny Bono was eventually elected to Congress as a Republican U.S. Representative from California. The two performers were inducted to the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1998, following Sonny's death in a skiing accident.

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1965–1966: Career development
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Sonny Bono (deceased)
Cher
Cherilyn Sarkisian first met Salvatore Bono in a Los Angeles coffee shop in November 1962,[4] when she was sixteen.[5] Eleven years her senior,[6] Bono was working for record producer Phil Spector at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood.[7] The two became best friends, eventual lovers, and were supposedly married in 1964, but Bono says in his autobiography that it was not an official marriage (they actually were legally wed after their first child, Chastity, was born). Through Bono, Cher started as a session singer, and sang backup on several of Spector's classic recordings, including "Be My Baby" by the Ronettes, "You've Lost That Loving Feeling" by The Righteous Brothers and Darlene Love's "A Fine, Fine Boy". In the composition by Darlene Love, the listener can clearly hear Cher and Sonny close to the mic (along with Love, who recorded her own backing vocals).[7]

1965–1966: Career development

With Bono continuing to write, arrange and produce the songs, the couple's first incarnation was as the duo "Caesar and Cleo".[4][8][9] They received little attention, despite releasing some singles in 1964: "The Letter", with Vault Records, and "The Letter", "Do You Wanna Dance" and "Love Is Strange", with Reprise Records.[10] In September 1964, they released "Baby Don't Go"[9] under the name of Sonny & Cher, which became their first regional hit. The song was later included on the 1965 Reprise compilation Baby Don't Go – Sonny & Cher and Friends, which also included songs from artists such as Bill Medley, The Lettermen and The Blendells.

The duo released their first album Look at Us in the summer of 1965,[11] The album contained the eventual number-one single "I Got You Babe".[12] Look at Us sold briskly, peaking at number two on the Billboard chart for eight weeks in the later part of 1965.[9]

The couple soon appeared on many of the top television shows of the era including The Ed Sullivan Show, American Bandstand, Where The Action Is, Hollywood A Go-Go, Hollywood Palace, Hullabaloo, Beat Club, Shindig!, Ready Steady Go! and Top of the Pops.[11] They also appeared as themselves in the film Wild on the Beach, singing "It's Gonna Rain". On their first album Bono also displayed his political interest long before running for Congress in the lyrics of the song, "The Revolution Kind".

As the followup to the success of Look at Us, they released their second studio album in April 1966, The Wondrous World of Sonny & Chér, which peaked at number 34. The couple also traveled and performed around the world, and tickets were some of the hottest at the time. Fans lined up to buy Sonny and Cher tickets for their first tour, the Wondrous World Tour.[13] The two became a quick sensation, dressed in animal skins with Bono wearing knee high caveman boots and Cher going barefoot.

During 1965, five of their songs were in US Billboard Top 20, a record passed only by Elvis Presley and behind famous artists like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and others. Periodic solo releases by Cher continued during this period, including major successes with "Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)", and Burt Bacharach & Hal David's theme from "Alfie" (as heard in the motion picture Alfie, as well as a single release), both in 1966. They did become briefly controversial in Los Angeles for siding with the young people being harassed on the Sunset Strip as a result, they were removed from their promised position of honor in the Tournament of Roses Parade in January 1967.[14]

1967–1969: Career woes

In 1967 Sonny and Cher released their third album, In Case You're In Love. It peaked at number 45 in the U.S. charts. It contained two hit singles, both written by Bono, "The Beat Goes On" (No. 6 on the Billboard Hot 100) and "Little Man" (No. 21 on the Billboard Hot 100), that peaked at the number one in five European countries.

In an attempt to capitalize on the duo's initial success, Bono speedily arranged a film project for the duo to star in. But the 1967 feature, Good Times, was a major bomb, despite the efforts of fledgling director William Friedkin and co-star George Sanders.[15] After Good Times flopped in 1968, Columbia Pictures immediately sold rights to their intended follow-up film Speedway to
The couple were replaced by Elvis Presley and Nancy Sinatra. In 1969, another film, *Chastity*, starring Cher, written and produced by Sonny was also a commercial bomb.

Sonny and Cher's career had stalled by 1968 as album sales quickly dried up. Their gentle, easy-listening pop sound and drug-free life had become unpopular in an era increasingly consumed with the psychedelic rock of the evolving landscape of American pop culture during the late 1960s.

Bono decided to forge ahead, carving a new career for the duo in Las Vegas resorts, where they sharpened their public persona with Cher as the wise-cracking, glamorous singer, and Bono as the good-natured recipient of her insults. In reality, Bono controlled every aspect of their act, from the musical arrangements to the joke-writing. While success was slow to come, their luck improved when network TV talent scouts attended a show, noting their potential appeal for a variety series.

Sonny and Cher also welcomed their first child, Chastity Sun Bono born on March 4, 1969.

### 1970–1977: TV success and divorce

In 1970, Sonny and Cher starred in their first television special, *The Nitty Gritty Hour*, a mixture of slapstick comedy, skits, and live music. The appearance was a critical success, which led to numerous guest spots on other television shows. They also appeared in The New Scooby-Doo Movies as guest stars.

Sonny and Cher caught the eye of CBS head of programming Fred Silverman while guest-hosting *The Merv Griffin Show*, and Silverman offered the duo their own variety show, *The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour* debuted in 1971 as a summer replacement series. The show returned to prime time later that year and was an immediate hit, quickly reaching the Top 10. The show received 15 Emmy Award nominations during its run, winning one for direction throughout its initial four seasons on CBS. The duo also revived their recording career, releasing the album *All I Ever Need Is You*, and charting two more top ten hits: "All I Ever Need Is You", and "A Cowboy's Work Is Never Done" in 1972.

Sonny and Cher's dialogues were patterned after the successful nightclub routines of Louis Prima and Keely Smith: the happy-go-lucky husband squelched by a tart remark from the unamused wife. The show featured a stock company of zany comedians, includin Teri Garr, Freeman King, Ted Ziegler, and Murray Langston (later The Unknown Comic on The Gong Show). One sketch satirizing CBS's detective show *Cannon* and its portly star William Conrad was so successful that Sonny and Cher staged several follow-ups, with Tony Curtis as "Detective Fat". Everybody in these sketches wore wide-waisted "fat suits" (similar to hoop skirts), so Detective Fat and his clients and his suspects would spend most of the time bumping each other and bouncing across the crowded room.

By the third season of the *Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour*, the marriage of Sonny and Cher was falling apart; the duo separated later that year. The show imploded, while still rating in the top 10. What followed was a nasty, very public divorce (finalized on June 26, 1975). Cher won a Golden Globe Award for Best Performance By an Actress in a Television Series – Musical or Comedy for *The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour* in 1974.

Bono launched his own show, *The Sonny Comedy Revue*, in the fall of 1974, retaining the "Sonny and Cher" troupe of comedians and writers. Cher also announced plans to star in a new variety series of her own. Critics predicted that Bono would be the big winner with a solo comedy vehicle, and held little hope for Cher's more musical showcase. After only six weeks, however Bono's show was abruptly canceled.
The Cher show debuted as an elaborate, all-star television special on February 16, 1975, featuring Flip Wilson, Bette Midler, and special guest Elton John. Cloris Leachman and Jack Albertson both won Emmy Awards for their appearances as guest-stars a few weeks later, and the series received four additional Emmy nominations that year. The first season ranked in the Top 25 of the year-end ratings.

As a result of the divorce, Sonny and Cher went their separate ways until Cher attended the opening of one of Bono’s restaurants in something of a reconciliation. The Sonny & Cher Show returned in 1976, even though they were no longer married (the duo “reunited” with a humorous handshake). After struggling with low ratings through 1977, Sonny and Cher finally parted ways for good. In 1976, Mego Toys also released a line of toys and dolls, in the likeness of Sonny & Cher. The release of these fashion dolls coincided with the popularity of The Sonny & Cher Show.

1978–1999: After Sonny and Cher

Sonny Bono went on to an acting career and later entered politics, eventually becoming a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Cher went on to become a Grammy Award-winning solo singer and an Academy Award-winning actress.

The couple made two surprise impromptu reunion performances: the first on The Mike Douglas Show in the spring of 1979, singing a medley of "United We Stand" and "Without You"; and the second on November 13, 1987 on Late Night with David Letterman where they performed their hit song "I Got You Babe"; it turned out to be the last time the two would perform together.

In early 1999, And the Beat Goes On: The Sonny and Cher Story, directed by David Burton Morris and starring Jay Underwood and Renee Faia, was broadcast on ABC. The TV movie was based on the autobiography of Bono, and focuses on the relationship between the couple during the early 1960s to their divorce in the late 1970s. This movie was also nominated for two Emmy Awards.

Bono’s death, and music copyright

On January 5, 1998, Bono died of injuries from hitting a tree while skiing at Heavenly Ski Resort in Lake Tahoe. He was 62 years old. Bono’s death came just days after Michael Kennedy died in a similar accident. Bono’s widow, Mary, was selected to fill the remainder of his congressional term, and was re-elected in her own right, serving until she was defeated for re-election in 2012. She continues to champion many of her late husband’s causes, including the ongoing fight as how to best save the Salton Sea.

The funeral, unbeknownst to Cher, was broadcast live on CNN. She gave a tearful eulogy, after which the attendees sang the song "The Beat Goes On". In front of millions, Cher tearfully and effusively praised Bono, calling him “the most unforgettable character I’ve ever met”. His final resting place is Desert Memorial Park in nearby Cathedral City, California, the same cemetery in which Frank Sinatra was laid to rest later that same year. The epitaph on Bono’s headstone reads: "And The Beat Goes On".

In 1998, Sonny and Cher received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for Television. Cher appeared at the event with Mary Bono, who accepted the award on behalf of her late husband. Cher paid tribute to Bono in the CBS special Sonny and Me: Cher Remembers, calling her grief “something I never plan to get over”. During the same year, Cher also released her twenty-second album Believe that was highly influenced by Bono’s death, and in the booklet Cher wrote “In memory of Son”.

When Cher and Bono divorced, they agreed to split revenue from the songs recorded together. When Bono died, one-third of his interest passed to wife Mary Bono-Mack, and one-sixth interests were split amongst his children. Cher sued UMG in 2009, claiming she and Bono’s heirs were owed $5,000,000 in “hidden” royalties.
### Filmography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Wild on the Beach</td>
<td>Themselves</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Good Times</td>
<td>Themselves/Various characters</td>
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### Television

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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>The Man from U.N.C.L.E.</td>
<td>Jerry and Ramona</td>
<td>Cameo, in the third series’ episode “The Hot Number Affair”</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>The Sonny &amp; Cher Nitty Gritty Hour</td>
<td>Themselves</td>
<td>Television Special, one episode</td>
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<td>1971–1974</td>
<td>The Sonny &amp; Cher Comedy Hour</td>
<td>Themselves/Various characters</td>
<td>Three Seasons; Nominated -Emmy Award, 19 nominations</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>The New Scooby-Doo Movies</td>
<td>Themselves/Dubbing</td>
<td>Voice in the episode &quot;The Secret of Shark Island&quot;</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>The Sonny Comedy Revue</td>
<td>Himself/Various characters</td>
<td>One Season; Nominated -Emmy Award, 1 nomination</td>
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<td>1975–1976</td>
<td>The Cher Show</td>
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<td>Two Seasons; Nominated -Emmy Award, 11 nominations</td>
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<td>1976–1977</td>
<td>The Sonny &amp; Cher Show</td>
<td>Themselves/Various characters</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Sonny and Me: Cher Remembers</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>Television Special, one episode; Tribute to Bono</td>
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</table>

### Discography

- Look at Us (1965)
- The Wondrous World of Sonny & Chér (1966)
- In Case You're in Love (1967)
- All I Ever Need Is You (1972)
- Mama Was a Rock and Roll Singer Papa Used to Write All Her Songs (1973)

### See also

- Cher
- Sonny Bono
- Supercouple
- List of number-one hits (United States)
- List of artists who reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100

### References

#### Books