

# Music of the United Kingdom

# British popular music

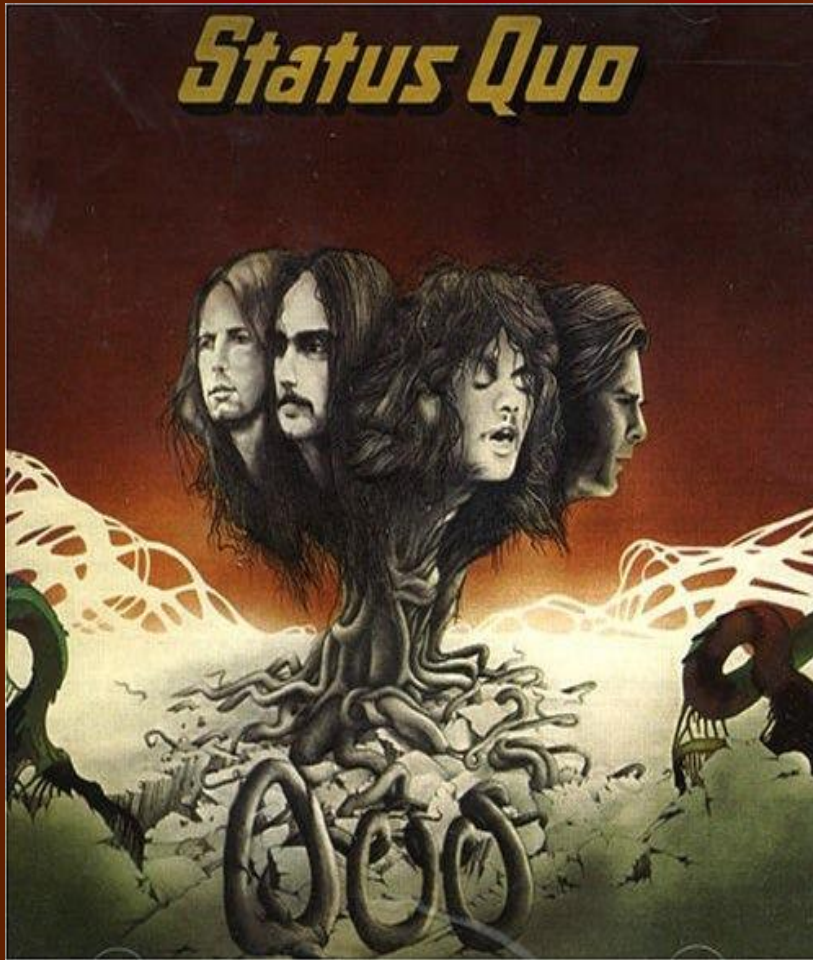
British popular music and popular music in general, can be defined in a number of ways, but is used here to describe music which is not part of the art/classical music or Church music traditions, including folk music, jazz, pop and rock music. These forms have particularly flourished in Britain, which, it has been argued, has had an impact on popular music disproportionate to its size, partly due to its linguistic and cultural links with many countries, particularly the former areas of British control such as United States, Canada, and Australia, but also a capacity for invention, innovation and fusion, which has led to the development of, or participation in, many of the major trends in popular music. This is particularly true since the early 1960s when the British Invasion led by the Beatles, helped to secure British performers a major place in development of pop and rock music, which has been revisited at various times, with genres originating in or being radically developed by British musicians, including: blues rock, heavy metal music, progressive rock, punk rock, electric folk, folk punk, acid jazz, drum and bass, grime and Britpop.

# Classical music

Musical composition, performance and training in the United Kingdom inherited the European classical traditions of the eighteenth century (above all, in Britain, from the example of Handel) and saw a great expansion during the nineteenth century. Romantic nationalism encouraged clear national identities and sensibilities within the countries of the United Kingdom towards the end of the nineteenth century, producing many composers and musicians of note and drawing on the folk tradition. These traditions, including the cultural strands drawn from the United Kingdom's constituent nations and provinces, have continued to evolve in distinctive ways through the work of such composers as Arthur Sullivan, Gustav Holst, Edward Elgar, Hubert Parry, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten.

1960s

# Status Quo



Status Quo, also known as The Quo or just Quo, is a rock band from England. They were called "The Status Quo" in late 1967, and settled on the name "Status Quo" in 1970. They have recorded over 60 chart hits in the UK, and have sold a total of 118 million records worldwide. They have also had a total of 33 hit albums in the UK charts - more than any other band other than the Rolling Stones. Their hayday was in the early to mid '70's with hits like Caroline, Whatever You Want, and Down Down. They formed in 1962.

Although sometimes criticized for a repetitive and apparently simple guitar riff sequence and harmonies on many of their numbers, their musical versatility can be heard in some of their earlier or less well-known numbers, such as Ice in the Sun, Pictures of Matchstick Men and Forty-Five Hundred Times. The latter probably highlights, more than any other, Rossi and Parfitt's talent for close vocal and guitar harmonies, which owe much to the English folk and folk/rock genres. Whether intentional or not this has become their hallmark.

Status Quo famously opened the Live Aid concert in 1985 with 'Rocking All Over the World' - the then largest live television broadcast ever. The band are currently (2008) hoping for No.1 success with their current Christmas song 'It's Christmas Time'.

# The Rolling Stones



The Rolling Stones are an English rock band formed in London in April 1962 by guitarist and harmonica player Brian Jones, pianist Ian Stewart, vocalist Mick Jagger and guitarist Keith Richards. Bassist Bill Wyman and drummer Charlie Watts completed the early lineup. Rhythm and blues cover songs dominated The Rolling Stones' early material; they are credited for raising the international regard for the more primitive blues typified by Chess Records' artists such as Muddy Waters who wrote "Rollin' Stone", the song after which the band is named. Unconcerned with being authentic blues stylists, from the start the Rolling Stones have played rock and roll, and have written and recorded in many genres.

# Deep purple



Deep Purple are an English rock band formed in Hertford in 1968. Along with Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, they are considered to be among the pioneers of heavy metal and modern hard rock, although some band members believe that their music cannot be categorised as belonging to any one genre. The band incorporated classical music, blues-rock, pop and progressive rock elements. They were once listed by the Guinness Book of World Records as "the loudest pop group", and have sold over 100 million albums worldwide. Deep Purple were ranked #22 on VH1's Greatest Artists of Hard Rock programme.

# The Beatles



The Beatles were an English rock band, formed in Liverpool in 1960, who are often recognized as the most commercially successful and critically acclaimed act in popular music. From 1962, the group consisted of John Lennon (rhythm guitar, vocals), Paul McCartney (bass guitar, vocals), George Harrison (lead guitar, vocals) and Ringo Starr (drums, vocals). Rooted in skiffle and 1950s rock and roll, the group later worked in many genres ranging from folk rock to psychedelic rock, often incorporating classical and other elements in innovative ways. The nature of their enormous popularity, which first emerged as the "Beatlemania" fad, transformed as their songwriting grew in sophistication. The group came to be perceived as the embodiment of progressive ideals, seeing their influence extend into the social and cultural revolutions of the 1960s.



# Led Zeppelin



Led Zeppelin was an English rock band. Formed in 1968 in London, the group consisted of guitarist Jimmy Page, singer Robert Plant, drummer John Bonham and bassist John Paul Jones. With their heavy, guitar-driven blues-rock sound, Led Zeppelin are regularly cited as one of the progenitors of heavy metal and hard rock, even though the band's individualistic style drew from many sources and transcends any one music genre. Led Zeppelin did not release songs from their albums as singles in the United Kingdom, as they preferred to develop the concept of "album-oriented rock".

# Pink Floyd



Pink Floyd were an English rock band who achieved worldwide success with their psychedelic and progressive rock music. Their work is marked by the use of philosophical lyrics, sonic experimentation, innovative album art, and elaborate live shows. Pink Floyd are one of the most critically acclaimed and commercially successful rock music groups of all time. It is estimated that they have sold over 200 million albums worldwide, including 74.5 million certified units in the United States.

1970s

# Queen



Queen are a British rock band formed in London in 1971, originally consisting of Freddie Mercury (lead vocals, piano), Brian May (guitar, vocals), John Deacon (bass guitar), and Roger Taylor (drums, vocals). Queen's earliest works were heavily influenced by progressive rock; in the mid-1970s, the band ventured into more conventional and radio-friendly works, bringing them greater commercial success. It also became something of a trademark to incorporate more diverse and innovative styles in their music, exploring the likes of vaudeville, gospel music, electronic music and funk.

# Whitesnake



Whitesnake are an English rock band, founded in 1977 by David Coverdale (formerly of Deep Purple). The band's early material has been compared by critics to Deep Purple but by the mid 1980s Whitesnake had moved away from the early blues influenced hard rock to a more commercial heavy metal style. Whitesnake was named the 85th greatest hard rock band of all time by VH1

# Elton John



Sir Elton Hercules John, CBE (born Reginald Kenneth Dwight; 25 March 1947) is an English singer-songwriter, composer and pianist. He has worked with his songwriting partner Bernie Taupin since 1967; they have collaborated on more than 30 albums to date.

In his four-decade career John has sold more than 250 million records, making him one of the most successful artists of all time. His single "Candle in the Wind 1997" has sold over 33 million copies worldwide, and is the best selling single in Billboard history. He has more than 50 Top 40 hits, including seven consecutive No. 1 US albums, 56 Top 40 singles, 16 Top 10, four No. 2 hits, and nine No. 1 hits. He has won six Grammy Awards, an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award and a Tony Award. In 2004, Rolling Stone ranked him Number 49 on its list of the 100 greatest artists of all time.

John was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994. He has been heavily involved in the fight against AIDS since the late 1980s, and was knighted in 1998.<sup>[6]</sup> He entered into a civil partnership with David Furnish on 21 December 2005 and continues to be a champion for LGBT social movements. In 2008, Billboard magazine ranked him as the most successful male solo artist on "The Billboard Hot 100 Top All-Time Artists" (third overall, behind only The Beatles and Madonna).

# Dire Straits

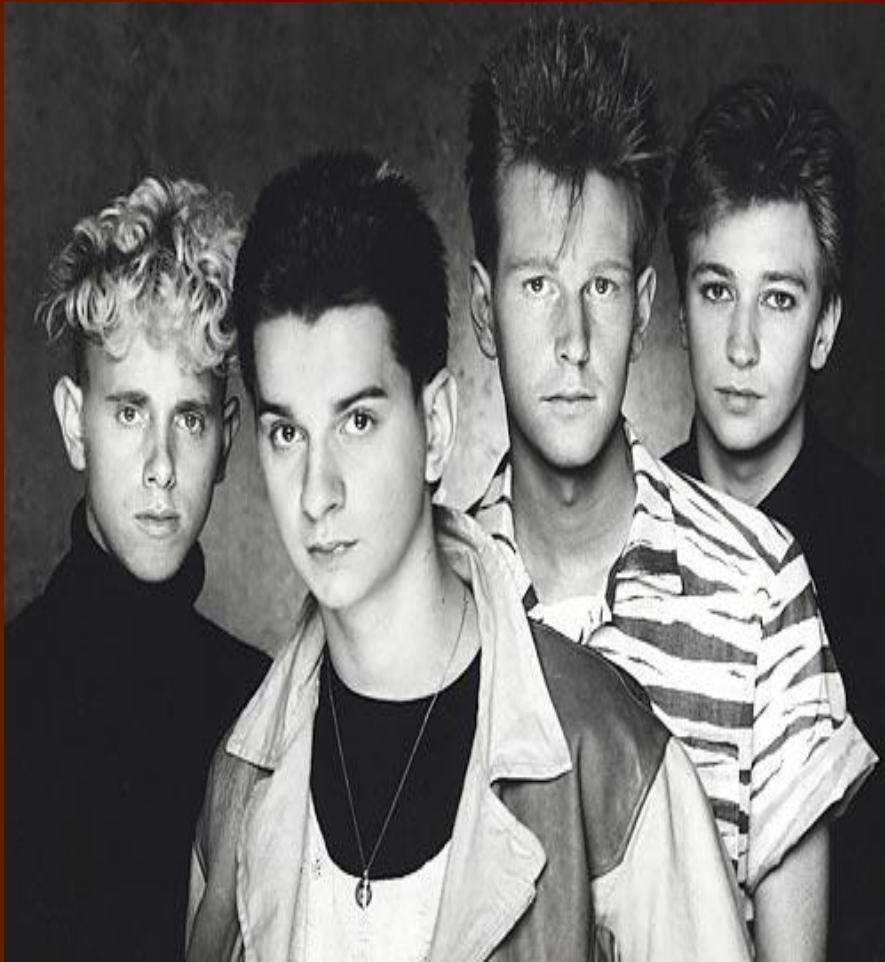


Dire Straits were a British rock band who emerged during the post-punk era of the late '70s, active between 1977 and 1995. Comprising Mark Knopfler (lead vocals and lead guitar), his younger brother David Knopfler (rhythm guitar and backing vocals), John Illsley (bass guitar and backing vocals), and Pick Withers (drums and percussion), and managed by Ed Bicknell, Dire Straits played a more bluesy style, and while their sound was minimalistic and stripped down, they owed little to punk rock which was at the forefront at the time. If anything, the band was a direct outgrowth of the roots revivalism of pub rock, but where pub rock celebrated good times, Dire Straits were melancholy. Despite their oddly self-effacing approach to rock and roll, Dire Straits became one of the world's most commercially successful artists, and sold over 120 million albums worldwide.

1980s

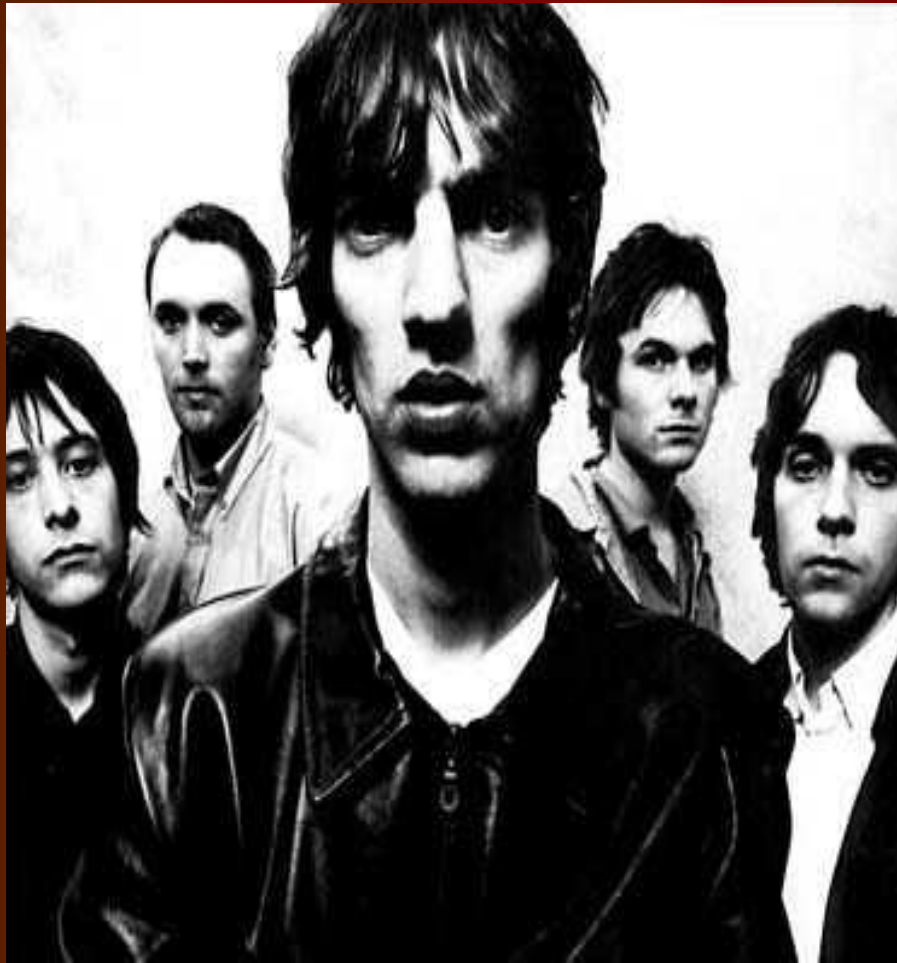


# Depeche mode



Depeche Mode are an English electronic music band which formed in 1980, in Basildon, Essex. The group's original line-up consisted of Dave Gahan (lead vocals), Martin Gore (keyboards, guitar, vocals, chief songwriter after 1981), Andrew Fletcher (keyboards) and Vince Clarke (keyboards, chief songwriter 1980–81). Vince Clarke left the band after the release of their 1981 debut album, *Speak & Spell*, and was replaced by Alan Wilder (keyboards, drums) with Gore taking over songwriting. Wilder left the band in 1995 and since then Gahan, Gore, and Fletcher have continued as a trio. Depeche Mode have had forty-eight songs in the UK Singles Chart and #1 albums in UK, US and throughout Europe. According to EMI, Depeche Mode have sold over 100 million albums and singles worldwide, making them the most successful electronic band in music history. Q magazine call Depeche Mode "The most popular electronic band the world has ever known".

# The Verve



The Verve were an English rock band formed in 1989 in Wigan by lead vocalist Richard Ashcroft, guitarist Nick McCabe, bassist Simon Jones, and drummer Peter Salisbury. Simon Tong later became a member. Beginning with a psychedelic sound indebted to shoegazing and space rock, by the mid-1990s the band had released several EPs and three albums. They also endured name and line-up changes, breakups, health problems, drug abuse and various lawsuits. Filter referred to them as "one of the tightest knit, yet ultimately volatile bands in history". Their commercial breakthrough was the 1997 album *Urban Hymns* and their single "Bitter Sweet Symphony", which became a worldwide hit. Soon after this commercial peak, the band broke up in April 1999, citing internal conflicts. The band's original line-up reunited in June 2007, embarking on a tour later that year and releasing the album *Forth* in August 2008. In 2009, the band broke up for the third time.

# Sting



Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner, CBE (born 2 October 1951), better known by his professional name Sting, is an English musician, singer-songwriter, activist, actor and philanthropist. Prior to starting his solo career, he was the principal songwriter, lead singer and bassist of the rock band The Police.

Sting has varied his musical style throughout his career, incorporating distinct elements of jazz, reggae, classical, and worldbeat into his music. As a solo musician and member of The Police, Sting has received sixteen Grammy Awards for his work, receiving his first Grammy for Best Rock Instrumental Performance in 1981, and an Oscar nomination for the best song. He is a member of both the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame

1990s

# Muse



Muse are an English rock band from Teignmouth, Devon, formed in 1994. The band consists of Matthew Bellamy (lead vocals, guitars, piano, keyboards, keytar), Christopher Wolstenholme (bass, backing vocals, keyboards, guitars, harmonica) and Dominic Howard (drums, percussion, synthesisers, backing vocals, sampling). After the release of their 2006 album *Black Holes and Revelations*, keyboardist and percussionist Morgan Nicholls has performed live with the band. Muse are known for their energetic and extravagant live performances, and their fusion of many music genres, including progressive rock, alternative rock, space rock, pop music, heavy metal, and electronica, with recurring themes of revolution.

# Bullet for my valentine



Bullet for My Valentine are a Welsh heavy metal band from Bridgend, formed in 1998. The band is composed of Matt Tuck (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), Mike Paget (lead guitar), Jay James (bass, backing vocals), and Michael Thomas (drums). They were formed under the name Jeff Killed John and started their music career by covering songs by Metallica and Nirvana. Jeff Killed John recorded six songs which were not released; two of these tracks were reworked later in their career as Bullet for My Valentine. Financial difficulties dictated the name change, which was followed by a change in music direction. In 2002, the band secured a five-album deal with Sony BMG. The band has stated that their music is influenced by classic heavy metal acts such as Metallica, Iron Maiden, and Slayer. The band is part of the Cardiff music scene.

# Oasis



Oasis were an English rock band that formed in Manchester in 1991. Originally known as The Rain, the group was formed by Liam Gallagher (vocals and tambourine), Paul "Bonehead" Arthurs (guitar), Paul "Guigsy" McGuigan (bass guitar) and Tony McCarroll (drums, percussion), who were soon joined by Liam's older brother Noel Gallagher (lead guitar and vocals). They have had eight UK number-one singles and eight UK number-one albums, and won fifteen NME Awards, nine Q Awards, four MTV Europe Music Awards and six BRIT Awards, including one in 2007 for outstanding contribution to music and one for the best album of the last 30 years as voted by the BBC Radio 2 listeners; they have been nominated for three Grammy Awards. As of 2009, the band have sold an estimated 70 million records worldwide. Also the band was listed in the Guinness Book of World Records in 2010 for "Longest Top 10 UK Chart Run By A Group" after an unprecedented run of 22 successive Top 10 hits in the UK. The band also holds the Guinness World Record for being the "Most Successful Act of the Last Decade" in the UK between the years 1995 and 2005, spending 765 weeks in the Top 75 singles and albums charts.

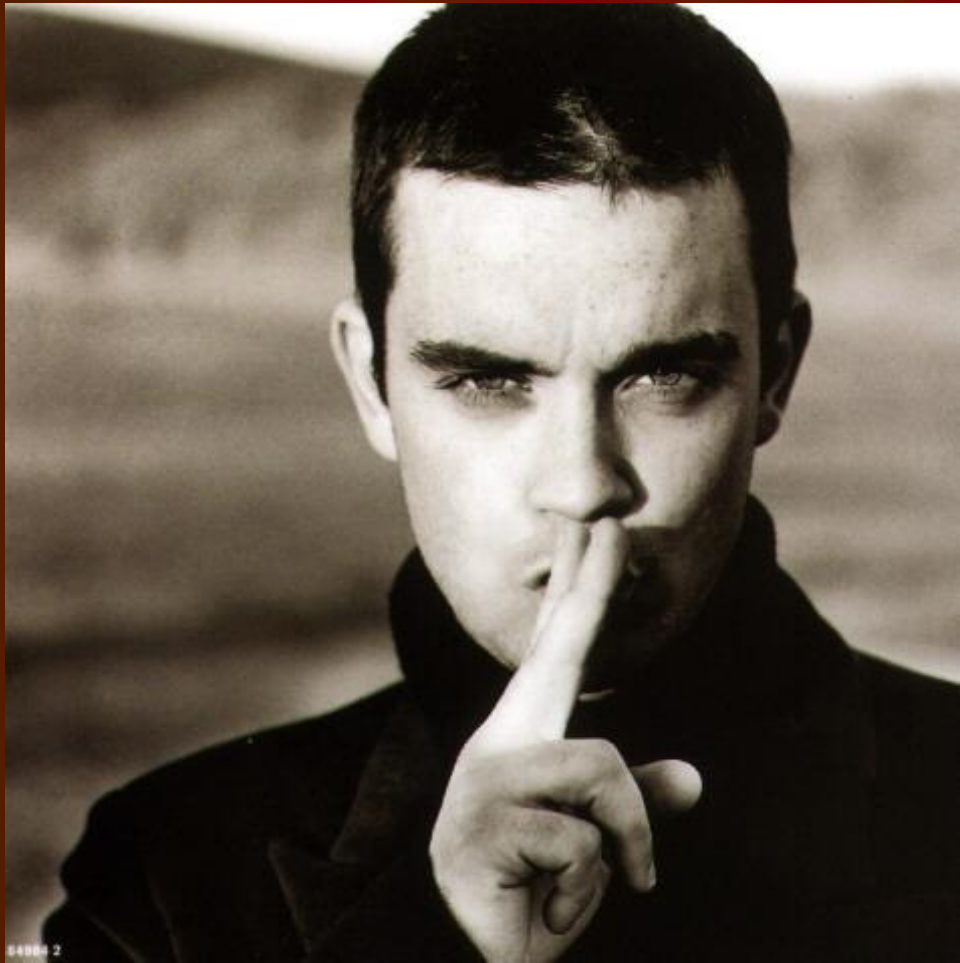
# Spice girls



The Spice Girls were an English pop girl group formed in 1994. The members consist of Victoria Beckham (née Adams), Melanie Brown, Emma Bunton, Melanie Chisholm and Geri Halliwell. They are signed to Virgin Records and released their debut single, "Wannabe" in 1996, which hit number-one in more than 30 countries and helped establish the group as a "global phenomenon". Credited for being the pioneers that paved the way for the commercial breakthrough of teen pop in the late 1990s, their debut album, *Spice*, sold more than 23 million copies worldwide, becoming the best-selling album by a female group in music history. They have sold over 75 million records worldwide, making them the best-selling female group of all time. Measures of their success include international record sales, a 2007–2008 reunion tour, merchandising, record-breaking achievements, iconic symbolism such as the Union Jack dress, "Girl Power", a box office hit film *Spice World* and their nicknames.



# Robbie Williams



Robert Peter "Robbie" Williams (born 13 February 1974) is an English singer-songwriter, vocal coach and occasional actor. He is a member of the pop group Take That. Williams rose to fame in the band's first run in the early- to mid-1990s. After many disagreements with the management and certain group members, Williams left the group in 1995 to launch his solo career. On 15 July 2010, it was announced he had rejoined Take That and that the group intended to release a new album in November 2010.

Williams has sold more than 57 million albums worldwide. He is the best-selling British solo artist in the United Kingdom and the best selling non-Latino artist in Latin America. Six of his albums are among the top 100 biggest-selling albums in the United Kingdom. He has also been honored with fifteen BRIT Awards—more than any other artist—and seven ECHO Awards. In 2004, he was inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame after being voted as the "Greatest Artist of the 1990s."

2000s

# Hurts



Hurts are an English synth pop duo from Manchester composed of singer Theo Hutchcraft (originally from North Yorkshire) and synth player Adam Anderson.

In July 2009, the band featured as "Band of the Day" on Guardian.co.uk. They finished in fourth position in BBC's Sound of 2010 poll. Their debut album called Happiness was released on 6 September 2010. It contains a duet with Kylie Minogue entitled "Devotion". To promote the release of their debut album, the band collaborated with author Joe Stretch to produce an interactive audio book narrated by Anna Friel. It is found on the online music player Spotify, with the first entry being found by searching for "a5m4"

# James Blunt



James Hillier Blount (born 22 February 1974), better known by his stage name James Blunt, is an English singer-songwriter and musician, and former army officer, whose debut album, *Back to Bedlam* and single releases, including "You're Beautiful" and "Goodbye My Lover", brought him to fame in 2005. His repertoire can be best described as a mix of acoustic-tinged pop, rock and folk. After recording on the independent American label Custard Records, Blunt won two BRIT Awards, two Ivor Novello Awards, and by 2006 was nominated for five Grammy Awards. The following year, he released his second album *All the Lost Souls* (2007). Blunt's third studio album, *Some Kind of Trouble*, was released in November 2010. Worldwide, Blunt has sold over 15 million albums.

Blunt was an officer in the Life Guards, a Cavalry regiment of the British Army, and served under NATO in Kosovo during the conflict there in 1999. While posted to Kosovo, Blunt was introduced to the work of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF or "Doctors Without Borders"). Since then, Blunt has supported MSF by holding meet-and-greet auctions at many of his concerts

# A1



A1 is a British/Norwegian boy band which was originally made up of Mark Read, Paul Marazzi, Ben Adams and Christian Ingebrigtsen. Their first single, "Be the First to Believe", entered the UK singles chart at #6 in early 1999. They had relative success in the charts with two number #1s and eight top 10 hits. Adding to this they also won a BRIT Award for "British Breakthrough Act" in 2001. They were formed by band manager Tim Byrne, who also formed Steps. A1's journey came to an end when original member Paul Marazzi left in 2002 and the band subsequently decided to split.