

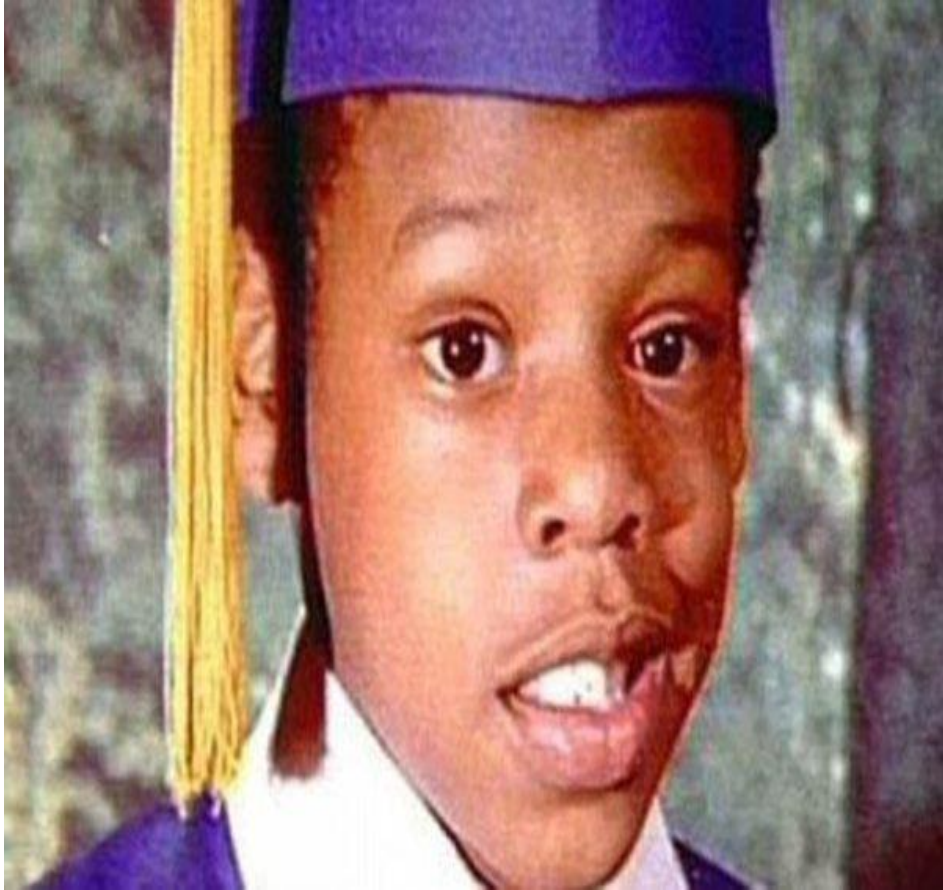


Shawn Corey Carter (born December 4, 1969), known professionally as Jay Z (formerly Jay-Z), is an American rapper, businessman and investor.

Work performed by Alexander Shumaylov



Jay-Z (a.k.a. Jigga, Hova, or Young Hov'; born Shawn Carter on December 4, 1969 in Brooklyn, New York) is a rap/hip hop performer and record label executive; one of the most popular and successful rappers of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Early career. Carter's father abandoned the family when he was a young child and he was consequently raised by his mother Gloria. As a young man, he claims to have been caught up in selling crack cocaine on the streets of New York. He briefly attended high school in Trenton, New Jersey. He dropped out, but is still remembered there for his rhyming.



Early career. Originally from the Marcy Projects in the Bed-Stuy section of Brooklyn, Carter's father abandoned the family when he was a young child and he was consequently raised by his mother Gloria. As a young man, he claims to have been caught up in selling crack cocaine on the streets of New York. He was known as "Jazzy" in his neighborhood, a nickname he soon shortened to "Jay-Z" while in pursuit of a career in music. The name Jay-Z is also a homage to his musical partner Jaz-O (AKA The Jaz) as well as to the J-Z subway lines that go from Manhattan to Brooklyn. Jay-Z can be heard on several of The Jaz's early recordings including *The Originators* and *Hawaiian Sophie*. He briefly attended high school in Trenton, New Jersey. He dropped out, but is still remembered there for his rhyming. It was said that his involvement in dealing drugs ended after he was shot at six times (he was not hit) in a dispute with another dealer, after which he became more serious about music as a profession. After several unsuccessful attempts to launch a career - first with Jaz-O, and then as part of a group called Original Flavor - Jay-Z co-founded Roc-a-Fella Records with partners Damon Dash and Kareem "Biggs" Burke. His debut album *Reasonable Doubt* was released in 1996 to considerable acclaim within the hip hop community, and included four charting singles: "Ain't No Nigga" (with Foxy Brown), "Can't Knock the Hustle" (with Mary J. Blige), "Dead Presidents" and "Feelin' It".

Commercial success. In 1997, Jay-Z's follow-up, *In My Lifetime, Vol. 1*, peaked at #3 on the Billboard album charts, and helped establish his career and mainstream success. In spite of the success, Jay-Z's image was tarnished by what his core audience perceived as pandering to mainstream audiences with a more pop-friendly sound. The next year, Jay-Z released *Vol. 2: Hard Knock Life*, continuing this evolution towards a pop-oriented market. *Hard Knock Life* debuted at #1 on the Billboard Charts and stayed there for five weeks on its way to selling over 5 million records. It included several huge singles, including "Can I Get A" (featuring Ja Rule and Roc-a-Fella artist Amil), "Hard Knock Life (Ghetto Anthem)" "Nigga What, Nigga Who (Originators '99)" (featuring Jaz-O and Amil), "It's Alright" and "Money Ain't a Thang" (with Jermaine Dupri). In 1999, Jay-Z released *Vol. 3: Life and Times of S. Carter* (debuted #1), which was another big hit in spite of continued criticism for his pop-oriented sound, and a large roster of collaborators that many felt crowded out Jay-Z himself. His next album, *The Dynasty: Roc La Familia* (debuted #1), was originally intended as a collaboration album with many guests from Roc-a-Fella's roster, including Beanie Sigel, Memphis Bleek and Amil, as well as Scarface, Just Blaze, R. Kelly, Kanye West, The Neptunes and Snoop Dogg. 2001's *The Blueprint* (debuted #1) is considered to be one of the best hip hop albums in history. Released on September 11, 2001, the album managed to debut at #1, selling more than 450,000 albums in its first week despite being upstaged by the September 11 attacks. Although it never surpassed Reasonable Doubt's status in the hip hop community, *The Blueprint* contained a balanced blend of soulful samples that had both street credibility and mainstream appeal, receiving recognition from both audiences. Eminem was the only guest artist on the album, appearing on the track "Renegade". *The Blueprint* also includes "Izzo (HOVA)" a top ten hit, and "Takeover" a song which puts on blast rivals Prodigy of Mobb Deep and Nas. The latter responded to Jay-Z with both an underground single entitled "Stillmatic" and a track, "Ether" on his 2001 LP "Stillmatic" and the pair's resulting rivalry became one of the most talked-about subjects in the hip hop community. The feud between Jay-Z and Nas escalated until 2003, when the two MCs ended their rivalry peacefully.



Two side projects followed **The Blueprint**:

late 2001 MTV Unplugged album called Jay Z: Unplugged (debuted #6) (featuring The Roots as Jay-Z's backing band), and a collaborative album with R. Kelly, *The Best of Both Worlds* (debuted #1), in 2002. Jay-Z's next solo album was 2002's *The Blueprint²: The Gift & the Curse* (debuted #1), a sprawling double-album which included the Top 10 single "'03 Bonnie & Clyde" a duet with his girlfriend, Beyoncé Knowles of Destiny's Child. *The Blueprint²: The Gift & the Curse* was later reissued in a single-disc version, *The Blueprint 2.1*, which retained half of the tracks from the double-album.

Later years.

In 2003, Jay-Z toured with 50 Cent, Busta Rhymes and Sean Paul while finishing work on what was announced as his final album, *The Black Album* (debuted #1). The album featured the Top 10 singles "Change Clothes" and "Dirt Off Your Shoulder" one of a number of Jay-Z singles produced by Timbaland.

In 2004, an a capella special edition of *The Black Album* (which sported a red CD cover) was released with the intention of allowing others to create remixes. The most controversial of the ensuing remixes was by DJ Danger Mouse, entitled "The Grey Album". It combined the a capella version with instrumental samples of The Beatles' *White Album*. DJ Danger Mouse was sent a cease and desist order from EMI, The Beatles' record company, due to illegal sampling. As a result, many copies were destroyed and an original is now a rare find.

On November 25, 2003, Jay-Z held a legendary concert at Madison Square Garden, which would later be the focus of his film *Fade to Black*. This concert was his "retirement party". All proceeds went to charity. Other performers included The Roots, Missy Elliott, Memphis Bleek, Beanie Siegel, Freeway, Mary J. Blige, Beyonce, Twista, Ghostface Killah, Foxy Brown, and R.Kelly with special appearances by Voletta Wallace and Afeni Shakur, the mothers of Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur.

Jay-Z and R. Kelly released a follow up to their *Best of Both Worlds* album in October 2004 entitled *Unfinished Business* (debuted #1), which includes 11 previously unreleased tracks by the duo. This release was timed to coincide with the *Best of Both Worlds* Tour, which played half of its dates before R. Kelly was booted off the tour in November 2004 after his unpredictable and unprofessional behaviour. The tour was then changed to "Jay-Z and Friends" and completed its run with artists such as P.Diddy, Mary J. Blige, T.I., Busta Rhymes, and fellow members of the ROC accompanying Jay-Z.



On June 18, 2004, Jay-Z appeared live with the jam band Phish at KeySpan Park in Brooklyn, performing some of his hit singles with the band while the "jam-band hippie" audience sang along - a defining moment of Jay-Z's popularity.

On November 30, 2004, Jay-Z released Collision Course, a collaboration with Linkin Park. It features remixes of songs from the rock band's two studio albums, Meteora and Hybrid Theory; and also several from the rapper's albums including his latest, The Black Album. It debuted at #1 in the US Billboard Album Charts, #12 in Australia and #38 in the UK. The lead single "Numb/Encore" debuted at #14 in the UK, and remained on the charts for nearly six months.

On January 3, 2005, Jay-Z was appointed the new President and CEO of Def Jam Recordings. Damon Dash had left Roc-a-Fella Records in late 2004 to pursue other ventures; the label will be retained as a Def Jam imprint.

On July 2, 2005, Jay-Z made an appearance at Live 8 with Linkin Park performing songs from Collision Course and the song "Public Service Announcement".

Business interests.

Apart from being President and CEO of Def Jam Recordings, Jay-Z is also one of the owners and founders of the Roc-A-Fella empire, which includes Roc-A-Fella Records, Roc-La-Familia, Roc-A-Fella Films and Rocawear, a clothing brand established in 1999. Just recently Jay-Z bought out co-founder Damon Dash for an estimated \$25 million in the Rocawear clothing line, in addition to developing his own S. Carter high-end clothing line. Roc-A-Fella also distributes "Armada" a Scottish vodka, in the U.S. Jay-Z is a part owner of the New Jersey Nets NBA team, and is rumored to be one of the franchise owners interested in relocating the team to Brooklyn. In September 2005, he was reported in English media as considering a takeover of Arsenal F.C., an English soccer team. He also co-owns The 40/40 Club, a New York sports bar, and has a line of Reebok sneakers called The S.Carter Collection. These shoes still hold the record for fastest selling Reebok shoe in history and made him the first non-athlete to have a signature line of sneakers. In the spring of 2005, he introduced his collaboration with Swiss luxury-watch maker Audemars Piguet.

Jay-Z is at heart a true entrepreneur, like his fellow hip hop moguls Russell Simmons and Sean "Diddy" Combs, who also have business holdings such as record companies and clothing lines. He redirected the hip hop culture from hooded sweatshirts and baggy jeans to buttons ups and crisp jeans, and received the British GQ's International Man of the Year award.

While Jay-Z has found financial success through such business ventures now [worth \$300 million], some of his fans feel he has drifted away from the music. In response, Jay-Z states that "Nothing is hot about a 45-year old rapper". Plus he wanted to leave at his prime stated in one of his rhymes; Jay's status appears to be at an all-time high/Perfect time to say goodbye - "Encore" 2003.



Thank you for attention!!!