

Top 100 Under 3-minute Songs

I need stuff to download on a slow connection!

1. Trina ft. Tweet - "No Panties"

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 13:54 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

2. Ultramagnetic MCs - "Travellin At The Speed Of Thought"

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 13:59 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

you have to post track timings with each nominee! hahahahaha

— zebedee, Friday, 22 November 2002 13:59 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

oh ok 1 is 2'46" and 2 is um i dont know really short about 2 mins.

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:03 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

5. Black Box Recorder - Start as You Mean to Go On (2:30)6. Turbonegro - I Got Erection (FC St. Pauli version) (2:13)7. Kenickie - 60s Bitch (2:55)

Sorry about posting several simultaneously, but will be offline until Monday...

— OleM (OleM), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:15 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

Buzzcocks - Love you more (until the razor CUTS)dunno, under 2 minutes

Young Marble Giants - Final Day

— jon (jon), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:23 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

14. Subway Sect - Rock And Roll Even 2'56"

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:25 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

15. Glenn Campbell - Wheres The Playground Susie 2'56"

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:26 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

17. Single Gun Theory - "Thetan" 2'54"

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:30 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

Just about any Minutemen, "There's a Place" Beatles (1.50 or thereabouts), I'm too tired to think properly, sorry

— Andrew Thames (Andrew Thames), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:40 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

22. Minor Threat - "Straight edge"

— Jacob, Friday, 22 November 2002 14:41 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

3 minutes dead on doesnt count :)

— Tom(Groke), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:46 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

23. New Establishment - "The People Skanking" (2:37)

— Curt (cgould), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:48 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

24. Ol Dirty Bastard - "Baby I like it raw" 2'28"

— Jacob (Jacob), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:49 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

28. Ricky Skaggs - Ridin that midnight train 2'47"

— Jacob (Jacob), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:55 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

29. Would-Be-Goods - "Cecil Beaton's Scrapbook" (2:53)

— Curt (cgould), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:56 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

30. Jimmy Cliff - Many rivers to cross 2'59"

— Jacob (Jacob), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:56 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

31. Lois Maffeo & Brendan Canty - "Monument" (2:33)

— Curt (cgould), Friday, 22 November 2002 14:57 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

32. Bad Brains - "Pay to Cum" ('bout 1:50)

— Lee G (Lee G), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:00 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

33. Larry and Lorrie Collins - "Mercy" (2:02)Also search on "Collins Kids"

My work here is done.

— Curt (cgould), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:00 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

34. Wire - "A Field Day for the Sundays" (dunno--no reference handy)

Could be lotsa Pink Flag tunes in this category.

— Lee G (Lee G), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:02 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

35. Boards Of Canada 'Roygbiv' - not much of a 'song' tho

— stevem (blueski), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:14 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

'Roygbiv' is 2:28 long roughly

— stevem (blueski), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:16 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

36. Liam Lynch 'United States Of Whatever' (2:03 including the Sifl & olly dialogue at the start)

— stevem (blueski), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:17 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

37. Basement Jaxx 'SFM' (2:39)

— stevem (blueski), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:19 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

40. Lee Dorsey "Holy Cow" (2'39)41. Lee Dorsey "Working In A Coal Mine" (2'50)42. Lee Dorsey "Ya Ya" (2'37)

— Dom Passantino (Dom Passantino), Friday, 22 November 2002 15:59 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

0. Sly and the Family Stone, "There's a Riot Goin' On" (0:00)

44. Afghan Whigs, "Sweet Son of a Bitch" (0:23)

— j.lu (j.lu), Friday, 22 November 2002 16:08 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

45. The Roots "Panic"

(honorable mention for my band Green Theory...of the ten songs on our first and only album so far, six are under 3 minutes, with the whole thing clocking in at 29:45)

— nickalicious, Friday, 22 November 2002 16:17 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

46. Aphex Twin - Nannou (2:47)

— robin (robin), Friday, 22 November 2002 16:24 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

47. The Residents - Act Of Being Polite (1'00")

— Jeff W (Jeff W), Friday, 22 November 2002 16:27 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

48. Soft Cell - Tainted Love (2:30)

— Aaron W, Friday, 22 November 2002 16:28 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

49. Marvin Gaye - Can I Get a Witness (2:54)

— Aaron W, Friday, 22 November 2002 16:29 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

has anyone bothered to upload that?

if so:52. Napalm Death - Dead (0'01")

— Jeff W, Friday, 22 November 2002 17:37 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

53. The Venue - Mnhm! (1:03)54. Rocket From The Crypt - Straight American Slave (1:56)55. All-Girl Summer Fun Band - Dreamy You (1:37)56. Maow - Miss Lefevre (1:50something)

— Mr Swygart (mrswygart), Friday, 22 November 2002 17:38 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

57. Chris Kenner - "Sick and Tired" (2:13)

Under three minutes isn't much of a challenge. Under two maybe . . .

— Burr, Friday, 22 November 2002 17:39 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

58. Operation Ivy - Sound System

— bnw (bnw), Friday, 22 November 2002 19:59 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

59. Blue Man Group - "Drumbone" (2:44)60. Daniel Johnston - "I Did Acid With Caroline" (1:42)61. Weezer - "Buddy Holly" (2:39)

— Curtis Stephens, Friday, 22 November 2002 20:35 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

62. Sly & the Family Stone: "There's a Riot Goin' On" (0:00)

— M Matos (M Matos), Friday, 22 November 2002 20:47 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

63. The Descendents: "All" (0:01)

— gygax!, Friday, 22 November 2002 22:45 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

64. Lightning Bolt, "13 Monsters"65. Los Crudos, "Curiosidad"66. Ted Leo, "Treble In Trouble"

— Ian Johnson (orion), Saturday, 23 November 2002 00:42 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

67. Dropdead - Dead Inside68. Xiu Xiu - I Broke Up69. Big Black - Pavement Saw

— Ian Johnson (orion), Saturday, 23 November 2002 00:46 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

A variation on the Random Winamp thing, here're the first 10 sub-3-minute songs I called up on my playlist:

70: Lemonheads, "So I Fucked Up" (1:02)71: The Clash, "Brand New Cadillac (live at Bond's Casino Halloween 1982)" (1:48)72: Lalo Schiffrin, "Enter the Dragon" (2:22)73: Sahara Hotnights, "Down and Out" (2:40)74: Buzzcocks, "Fast Cars" (2:31)75: Man... or Astro-Man?, "Out of Limits" (2:00)76: Eddie Bo & Inez Cheatham, "Lover And A Friend" (2:34)77: Scrawl, "Public Image" (2:56)78: Dead Kennedys, "Buzzbomb From Pasadena" (2:21)79: Giorgio Moroder, "Lost Angeles" (2:44)

— Nate Patrin (Nate Patrin), Saturday, 23 November 2002 01:11 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

80. The Byrds - Time Between81. Rolling Stones - Miss Amanda Jones

— Squirrel Police, Saturday, 23 November 2002 01:27 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

82. Minutement - Joe McCarthy's Ghost

— Ian Johnson (orion), Saturday, 23 November 2002 01:28 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

84 primal scream 'velocity girl' i think it's like 1:45

— keith (keithmcl), Saturday, 23 November 2002 02:48 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

86. Guided By Voices - Game of Pricks

— Chris Davis, Saturday, 23 November 2002 08:07 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

Flipper - "Living for the Depression" (1.25)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:12 (twenty years ago) [link](#)

89. Germs, "Lexicon Devil" (1.11)90. Destroy All Monsters, "Mom's & Dad's Pussy" (2.00)91. Van Halen "Tora! Tora!" (0.56)92. Black Sabbath "E5150" (2.54)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:18 (twenty years ago) link

93. Dils "I Hate the Rich" (1.40)94. Grateful Dead "And We Bid You Goodnight" (0.36)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:21 (twenty years ago) link

I got a Grateful Dead song onto THIS list. Do I get an award?

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:22 (twenty years ago) link

Fine, I'll give myself the award then. 95 - Brazen Hussies, "Decathexis" (1.58)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:24 (twenty years ago) link

96 montgolfer brothers ~ pro-celebrity standing around (1:45)

— garth (garth), Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:40 (twenty years ago) link

"Do I get an award?"

yes. a kiss from me at a future london FAP.

— Julio Desouza (jdesouza), Saturday, 23 November 2002 11:40 (twenty years ago) link

97 - Guns'n'Roses, "My World" (1.22)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 12:26 (twenty years ago) link

98 - Alice Cooper, "Ten Minutes Before the Worm" (1.36)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 12:28 (twenty years ago) link

99 - Giorgio Moroder, "The Wheel"(from 'Midnight Express' OST) (2.25)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 12:32 (twenty years ago) link

For #100 pick one of three Roxy Music tunes ("Serenade" 2.59, "Virgina Plain" 2.58, "Bitter's End" 2.03) or else the Plasmatics' "Living Dead" (1.36)

— dave q, Saturday, 23 November 2002 12:37 (twenty years ago) link

Descendants - "All" (0:01) has anyone bothered to upload that? if so:52. Napalm Death - Dead (0'01")Yeah, but Napalm Death never did a 0.03 second remix called "No, Dead!"

— Lord Custos Omega (Lord Custos Omega), Sunday, 24 November 2002 02:54 (twenty years ago) link

three years pass...

Sublime - What I got

— Corey Michaels, Tuesday, 28 March 2006 01:27 (sixteen years ago) link

Turtles, "You Know What I Mean" (2.03)Ramones, "Judy is a Punk" (1.30)

— Rickey Wright (Rrickey), Tuesday, 28 March 2006 02:03 (sixteen years ago) link

Unbelievably missing off this list is "Wouldn't it be Nice" (2:25) and at least a half a dozen other Beach Boys tracks.

— Sparkle Motion's Rising Force, Tuesday, 28 March 2006 05:18 (sixteen years ago) link

fifteen years pass...

Jimi Hendrix - Little Wing

— ❌❌❌ (Moka), Wednesday, 23 June 2021 03:44 (one year ago) link

David Bowie - Letter to Hermione

— ❌❌❌ (Moka), Wednesday, 23 June 2021 03:44 (one year ago) link

Jacqueline Taïeb - Le cœur au bout des doigts

— ❌❌❌ (Moka), Wednesday, 23 June 2021 03:45 (one year ago) [link](#)

The Beatles - for noone

— ❌❌❌ (Moka), Wednesday, 23 June 2021 03:47 (one year ago) [link](#)

David Bowie - Breaking Glass (1:58)

— yeah but how, Wednesday, 23 June 2021 13:12 (one year ago) [link](#)

Curtis Mayfield - Eddie You Should Know Better. A grand symphony in two minutes eighteen.

— chap, Wednesday, 23 June 2021 13:16 (one year ago) [link](#)

And only one GBV track?!

Guided by Voices - Dayton OH - 19 Something and 5 [Tonics and Twisted Chasers ver.] (1:45)

— yeah but how, Wednesday, 23 June 2021 13:16 (one year ago) [link](#)

Hardcore punk heroes Jethro Tull:

Cheap Day Return (1:23) Slipstream (1:13)

— Halfway there but for you, Wednesday, 23 June 2021 14:29 (one year ago) [link](#)

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Short Is Sweet: The Greatest Pop Songs Under 3 Minutes

We all know that short is sweet, small is beautiful and the best things come in small packages... and the same applies to pop music. It's those classic singles that are under three minutes long that are very often the greatest pop songs of all time.

Why are pop songs so short?

The reason pop songs were so short, early on at least, stems from the fact that when 78 rpm were the standard records for pop music, there was a limit to what could be put onto a shellac record. Initially, these brittle discs were limited to about two minutes of playing time. By the 1920s, 10" records were virtually all three minutes or under. In 1923, when King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band – the band that included Louis Armstrong – recorded 13 sides at Gennett Records in Richmond, Indiana, the records were almost all between two-and-a-half and three minutes long.

With the coming of the vinyl age in the late 1940s, the trend continued. RCA Victor had nearly gone bust in the 1930s trying to develop a long-playing record, but RCA eventually came up with the 45 rpm, 7" single to rival the 78rpm. A dynamic marketing executive even had the idea of color coding the RCA releases. Bizarrely, their blues and R&B records came out on orange vinyl. Popular music came on blue, while country records were green. Their first blues 45 was Arthur Crudup's "That's All Right," which ran 2:55.

Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup- That's All Right

[Click to load video](#)

Many 45 rpm singles in the 1950s and early 1960s were around three minutes in length. This was a historical hangover, but it was also down to two quirks:

- 1) AM radio liked their records to be short. In case someone didn't like the song that was playing, they didn't have to wait long before the next one started.
- 2) Shorter songs meant less grooves on the record, which meant that the record was louder when it played. And, oftentimes, louder means better in the mind of a listener.

Our playlist of the greatest pop songs under three minutes

But enough history for the moment. In this playlist, we've picked 50 of the greatest pop singles under three minutes. The list is extremely varied, moving from the beginnings of pop music into the present day. There's a little bit of country, a little bit of rock 'n' roll, and a whole lot of straight pop. It doesn't include Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs' "Stay," which hit No.1 with just one minute and 37 seconds of sweet singing. Or the under-two-minute gems Herman Hermit's "I'm Henry VIII, I Am" and Lil Nas X's mega-hit "Old Town Road." But we have 50 other greats that we think you'll enjoy.

A few highlights: Who can resist Martha and The Vandellas' clarion call to have us all "Dancing In The Street"? Running time two minutes 39 seconds. Or The Beach Boys and "God Only Knows," which clocks in at two minutes 53 seconds.

God Only Knows (Stereo / Remastered 1996)

[Click to load video](#)

Early rock 'n' rollers liked their songs especially short. Elvis Presley's "Heartbreak Hotel" is just two minutes and eight seconds, while Del Shannon's classic "Runaway" is just eight seconds longer. Eddie Cochran's "Summertime Blues" and Ray Charles's "Hit The Road Jack" both run for just one minute and 58 seconds. But it's not just older artists who like 'em short on our playlist. Blur and Elvis Costello both have great singles that run for little over two minutes.

Runaway '67 (Remastered 2006)

[Click to load video](#)

The Beatles, naturally, have plenty to pick from: "From Me To You," "Yesterday," "Eleanor Rigby," "Can't Buy Me Love," "Lady Madonna," and many of their other hits all run for under three minutes. We've chosen "I Feel Fine" – a mere two minutes 19 seconds to represent their genius.

Likewise, The Rolling Stones released a string of short ones, with their debut, "Come On" running just one minute 48 seconds. There's also "Not Fade Away," "Get Off My Cloud," "Have You Seen Your Mother Baby," and "Mothers Little Helper." On our list of the 50 greatest, though, we've gone for "Honky Tonk Women," which just creeps under the wire at two minutes 59 seconds.

Anyway, time to dive into the wonderful world of the greatest pop songs under three minutes.

Our list

Martha Reeves & The Vandellas – Dancing In The Street
The Beach Boys – God Only Knows
Queen – Crazy Little Thing Called Love
Eddie Cochran – C'mon Everybody
Gene Vincent & His Blue Caps – Be-Bop-A-Lula
The Turtles – Happy Together
Del Shannon – Runaway
The Dean And I Patsy Cline – Crazy
The Jam – Going Underground
The Who – Pictures Of Lily
Elvis Presley – Heartbreak Hotel
Spice Girls – Wannabe
The Temptations – My Girl
Otis Redding – (Sittin' On) the Dock of the Bay
Aretha Franklin – Respect
Sam & Dave – Soul Man
Wilson Pickett – In the Midnight Hour
Elvis Costello & The Attractions – I Can't Stand Up For Falling Down
Pixies – Monkey Gone to Heaven
Blur – Song 2
Soft Cell – Tainted Love
ABBA – Waterloo
Conway Twitty & Loretta Lynn – Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man
The Jackson 5 – ABC
Arctic Monkeys – I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor
Amy Winehouse – Love Is A Losing Game
The Doors – Break on Through (To the Other Side)
The Smiths – This Charming Man
The White Stripes – Fell In Love With a Girl
Buzcocks – Ever Fallen in Love (With Someone You Shouldn't've?)
Gnarls Barkley – Crazy
Jefferson Airplane – White Rabbit
Ariana Grande – 7 Rings
DEVO – Whip It
blink-182 – All The Small Things
The Kinks – You Really Got Me
Ray Charles – Hit the Road Jack
Jilted John – Jilted John
Fats Domino – Blueberry Hill
The Police – Can't Stand Losing You
Cream – Badge
Ricky Nelson – Hello Mary Lou (Goodbye Heart)
The Mamas & The Papas – California Dreamin'
Tom Petty – I Won't Back Down
Little Richard – Tutti Frutti
The Beatles – I Feel Fine
The Rolling Stones – Honky Tonk Women
Louis Armstrong – What A Wonderful World
Jimi Hendrix – Purple Haze

Missed one of the greatest pop songs under three minutes? Let us know in the comments below.