

**Subject:** Tunes Weekly - Part Two of 12 Artists Who Never Had a Number-One Song!

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## Part Two of 12 Artists Who Never Had a Number-One Song!



The U.S. Billboard Top-40 Singles Chart was always sort of the last word on "making it" in the music biz, and having a number one hit was the pinnacle toward which most artists strived. Oh, you'll hear some of them claim to never have cared about top-40 success, but they were being rather economical with the truth. I'll tell you right now, most were lying.

But, you will be surprised....no, shocked...at who never had a number one song on the U.S. Billboard Top-40. And, of the 12 listed here, only Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young is not in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (though Crosby, Stills, Nash are in there without Young). So, sit back with me and throw darts at the record-buyers of yesteryear as Tunes Company takes a look at part two of "12 Artists Who Never Had a U.S. Number-One Song!"



### **R.E.M.**

Reached #4 with "*Losing My Religion*" in 1991.

These guys were one of the first alternative bands to really have monster success. No, they were not a hits machine, but that wasn't what they were aiming for. "*Everybody Hurts*" (#29) was a very special tune for a lot of folks, and "*Shiny Happy People*" (#10) always made me feel tremendously happy. Their music conjured up the feel of the sixties, but they also explored new frontiers with their jangly guitars and folkish vocals. Most importantly, R.E.M. was ALWAYS cool. Unfortunately for their many loyal fans, on September 21, 2011, the band announced they were calling it quits. The flags were flying half-mast in Athens, Georgia that day. On a personal level, I'll always love them for having the gonads to take a stand on various social and political issues. R.E.M. was a citizen of the world and they were unafraid.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLhD-h1LRQs>



### **The Who**

Reached #9 with "*I Can See for Miles*" in 1967.

I've always loved The Who. They were smart, they were loud, they rocked HARD, they created mayhem, and they were pissed off; even to the point of destroying their instruments onstage. One of the truly great bands in history, The Who brought loud, youthful aggression, monster power chords and exquisite, literate songwriting into play and produced a mountain of great songs. But they never had a number one record. Dammit, there must be a mistake! Just look at the hits! "*I Can't Explain*" (#93), "*My Generation*" (#74), "*Happy Jack*" (#24), "*Pinball Wizard*" (#19), "*Won't Get Fooled Again*" (#15), "*Who Are You*" (#14)...the list is almost endless. Their Marshall stacks, large PA systems, use of synthesizer, their own aggressive playing styles, and their development of the rock opera were all huge contributions to rock music. So, are they still pissed off? Probably not, but their lyric,

"*Hope I die before I get old,*" written by an angry young man named Pete Townshend, surely still speaks for a part of every new generation.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62ZJn0cTASo>



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### **Van Morrison**

Reached #9 with *Brown Eyed Girl* in 1970.

"Van the Man." "The Belfast Cowboy." The master of "Celtic Soul" means so much to so many of us. His music is spiritual, sexy, soulful, mystical, blissful, visionary, romantic and transcendental. Rock's favorite angry curmudgeon has influenced just about everyone and; let's just face it: the top-forty was never good enough for this guy.

Just look at some of his singles: "*Crazy Love*" ( 39)" "*Domino*" (#9)" "*Wild Night*" (#28)" "*Tupelo Honey*" (#47)" "*Moondance*" (#92)" "*Someone like You*" (-)" "*Have I Told You Lately*" (-).

He has produced songs of unspeakable beauty, and I'm betting that many of you were conceived to a Van Morrison song. One cannot overstate how influential he has been; artist after artist has sung his praises. He is a complicated man of contrasts. He is sensitive and gruff. He is effusive and withdrawn. He is a private man who makes his living in public. He has been described as a chameleon. He doesn't give a damn about top-40 hits. Like every great artist, his need is to pull out that which exists inside of him and present it to

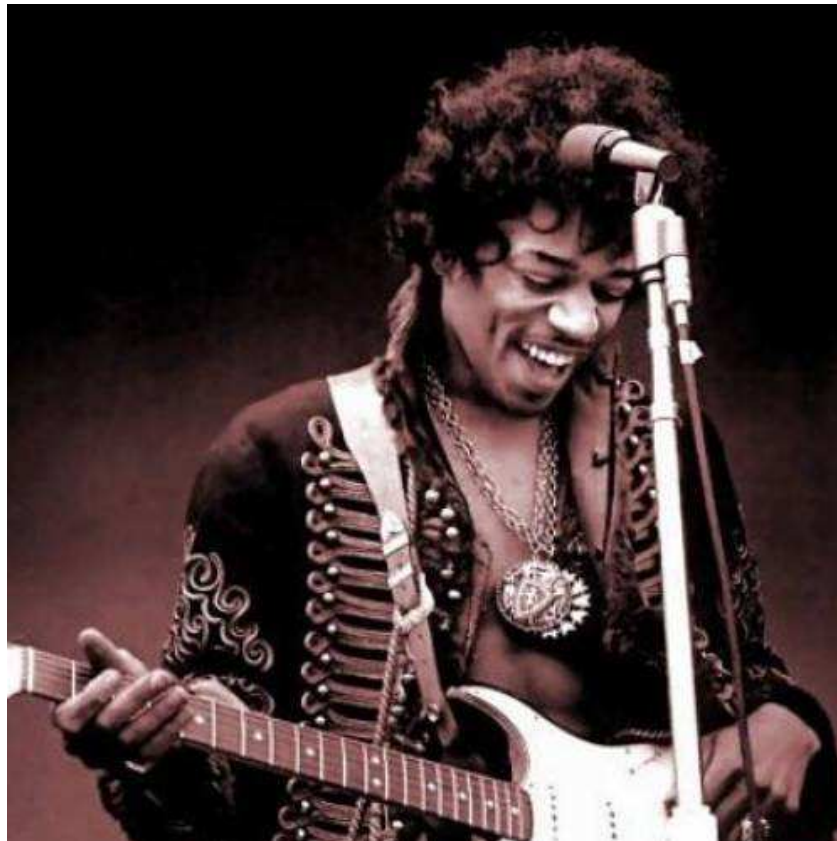


the world.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaz1AB006-g>



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### Jimi Hendrix

Reached #20 with "*All Along the Watchtower*" in 1968.

He wasn't exactly in the mainstream, though he DID once tour with The Monkees. No, he was *out there*. The middle of the road had never seen anything like him before, but we still got it when he sang "*Let me stand next to your fire.*" He looked different, and sounded like no one before him. He blazed trails and yet barely even sniffed the top-40. Nevertheless, Jimi Hendrix set the music world ablaze and revolutionized the way the guitar was played. He didn't make much of a dent when it came to radio airplay, but still we all are so familiar with classics like "*Purple Haze*" (#65), "*Foxy Lady*" (#67), and "*Crosstown Traffic*" (#52). It's still hard to believe that "*Hey Joe*" didn't even chart. So, let's hear it for the innovators. Let's hear it for those who take the road never traveled. Let's hear it for those who ignore convention. Go set your guitar on fire and hump your amplifier...and thank Jimi Hendrix.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJunCsrhJjg>



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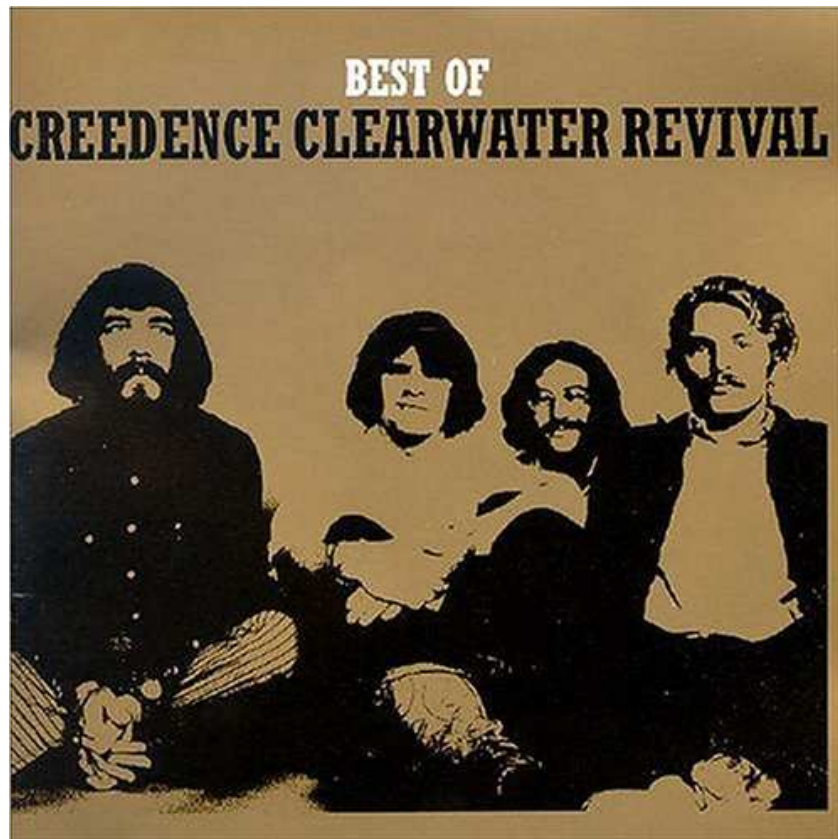


### **Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young**

Reached #7 with "Just a Song before I Go" in 1977.

Crosby, Stills & Nash formed the core of the group with Young periodically sliding in and out as it suited him. Truly a super group, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's hits are among the most beloved of that, or any other, era. But, these guys never had a number one hit. Neither "*Woodstock*" (#11), "*Our House*" (#30), "*Teach Your Children*" (#16), or "*Ohio*" (#14) topped the charts. Just think about THAT for a moment; I'll wait. Can you imagine your album collection without a copy of "*Déjà vu*" in it? I think Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young are another example of trailblazers who were ahead of their time.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goqxoelWiZI>



### Creedence Clearwater Revival

Reached #2 with "Proud Mary" in 1969, "Bad Moon Rising" in 1969, "Green River" in 1969, "Traveling Band" in 1970, and "Lookin' Out my Back Door" in 1970.

Creedence Clearwater Revival was the Buffalo Bills of rock and Roll. Of all the artists on this list, the dilemma of Creedence Clearwater Revival is the one that kept me up half the night. It just did not seem possible that they never had a number one single. A great song like "*Have You Ever Seen the Rain*" only made it to #8. Even my favorite CCR song of all time, "*Fortunate Son*," stalled out at #3. They came so excruciatingly close to the top spot, (five of their songs hit #2) but never could quite get there. You may wonder, as I did, which songs kept them off the top of the mountain? Well, "*Dizzy*" by Tommy Roe, and "*Sugar Sugar*" by The Archies were two of them; those bubble-gummy little bastards. You know, I don't EVER remember John Fogerty having a good hair day. Yeah, maybe that's why.

**Listen:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyREuhUnXic>



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D. Tillis writes "Tunes Weekly" exclusively for [www.tunescompany.com](http://www.tunescompany.com)

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