

Human beings like change. We like creating new ways of doing things and don't like to stay static for very long. Rock music is no exception. Rock and Roll music had become entrenched in popular culture during the 1950s, and by the 1960s some artists had already begun experimenting and creating harder, more daring sounds. The result was what we now refer to as hard or heavy rock, and it would continue to be a very influential style into 21st century.

**Classic Rock:** The hard rock of the 1970's is commonly referred to as "Classic Rock", although in its day, there was nothing 'classic' about it - it was all new. Classic Rock was heavily influenced by **Blues**, which can be heard throughout a lot of classic rock, especially in the guitar solos. British Invasion groups like Led Zeppelin and The Who thrived during this time, gradually moving away from their blues and rockabilly roots into a harder and harder sound.

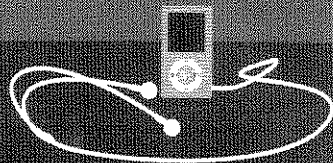
**Hair Bands and Hard Rock:** There was a definite change in rock in the 1980s, and some people may argue that it wasn't for the better! Some hard rock bands were better known as Hair Bands or Glam Rock. It was a time when guys in bands had long teased-out hair and wore lots of makeup and leather or spandex pants. Legendary hair bands include Motley Crue, Poison, Twisted Sister and Kiss. Alice Cooper, known for his lively theatrics, is another colorful artist from this time. A few bands, like Def Leppard and Vince Neil of Motley Crue still continue to tour, although usual without the big hair. As the 1980s came to a close, so did the popularity of the big hair bands.

**Heavy Metal:** Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Ozzy Osbourne, and The Scorpions were among the more well known heavy metal acts of the 1980's. Heavy Metal had lost almost all signs of its blues and rock and roll roots, and was instead characterized by **power chords, distortion and showmanship**. It was the era of the "guitar solo," an opportunity to show off technical playing, speed and often colorful theatrics. Fans of heavy metal were sometimes called "headbangers".

**Progressive Rock:** You may not have heard of the term "progressive rock"; but chances are that you have heard this style of music. Bands such as Yes, Rush, Dream Theater, Genesis, Emerson Lake and Palmer, Pink Floyd, Jethro Tull, and Kansas are all progressive rock bands. These bands didn't stick to the standard rules when writing and recording music. Their harmonies were more technical and even jazzy and the music itself drew on influences from a wide variety of styles from world music, to classical, to jazz and everything in between.

Hard Rock continues to be a style that shifts and changes, but still hangs around. Many of the hard-rockers of the past have reinvented themselves in recent years in order to keep their careers alive.

## Fast Facts



**Time Span:** Classic Rock 1970s; Hair Bands 1980s; Heavy Metal and Hard Rock 1980s-1990s; Progressive Rock Late 1960s early 1980s

**Influences:** Initially Blues

**Primary Instruments:** keyboard, guitars, drums and vocals

**Major Artists:** Led Zeppelin, The Who, Twisted Sister, Kiss, Iron Maiden, Pink Floyd

## Fun Fact



Although the band Kiss struggled to sell records in their early years, they never seemed to have trouble selling tickets to their live concerts. This may have been due to the theatrics they created, including Gene Simmons spitting fake blood on stage (which was really yogurt mixed with food coloring) or "breathing fire" which involved spitting a flammable liquid at a flame. There were also exploding guitars, fireworks and guitars being smashed on stage!