



The British first invaded the United States during the American Revolution in 1775. Almost 200 years later, the British invaded again! Except this time it was not with guns, but with music in the form of a band called The Beatles. Their emergence onto the world stage began a trend that saw British bands dominate the charts in the US for several years.

The Beatles made their American debut in 1964 on **The Ed Sullivan Show**, a variety show that ran from 1948 to 1971. An appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show usually guaranteed a successful career. Although widely popular in the United Kingdom, there had been a reluctance to release The Beatles' records in the US, partly because their record company was not sure how the American public would take to their mop-top haircuts! An international news report on the **Beatlemania** sweeping the UK changed all of that and just two weeks before their appearance on the Ed Sullivan show, they became overnight sensations in America, with their hit *I Want to Hold Your Hand* reaching Number 1 on the Billboard Charts. Thousands of screaming, hysterical fans met them at the airport and within months, not only did they occupy the top five spots on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart, but everything including their hairdos was being copied!

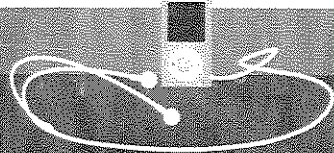
The Beatles became a voice for young people, many of whom were disillusioned by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the controversy over the war in Vietnam. Their popularity also began a sudden rush of interest in other bands from the UK Groups such as The Rolling Stones, The Animals, The Hollies, The Troggs, The Zombies, Herman's Hermits, The Who, The Bee Gees, The Kinks, and the Dave Clark Five were also highly successful in America and dominated the charts there.

The Rolling Stones were also ridiculed for their haircuts during their first US tour, but their rebellious image was a hit with young people. This reputation tended to create chaos, and their debut performance on The Ed Sullivan show was such a debacle, that Ed Sullivan himself vowed to never have them on the show again. Of course, their popularity prevailed and they did in fact reappear five more times.

Although the style of each band varied, the British Invasion bands generally played a type of rock music that was heavily influenced by blues or a mix of rock and pop music that was dominated by the use of guitars.

The incredible success of The Beatles and The Rolling Stones led to them both being named in the top 10 of Billboard's Top 100 artists of all time. In fact not only did the Beatles come number 1 in that list, but they also rated a mention in the Time Magazine list of the 20th Century's most important and influential people.

### Fast Facts



**Time Span:** 1964-1966  
**Influences:** Rock and Roll, Skiffle, Rockabilly  
**Primary Instruments:** Guitar, Bass, Vocals, Drum Set  
**Major Artists:** The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Herman's Hermits

### Fun Fact

In 1964, Ed Sullivan received over 50,000 requests for tickets to the Beatles Appearance. The theater only seated 728!

