

Country Music Is Making A Comeback

Country music was always thought to be for those in the South. It was not very popular and did not gain much of an audience. That is until recently. Country music has made a massive comeback in the last decade and has gained a big following.

Country music was never really thought of as the kind of genre to have top #1 hit until very recently. Many people previously associated country music with stars such as Dolly Parton, George Strait, or Brad Paisley. However, that sentiment is changing. Today, breakout artists such as Jelly Roll, Morgan Wallen, Zach Bryan, Lainey Wilson, and more have revived country music and added their spin. Many country artists are dipping their toes into other genres, such as rock and pop, to create massive hits and gain more audience. An example of such a shift can be seen in Morgan Wallen and Post Malone's song "I Had Some Help." With Morgan Wallen's country twang and Post Malone's rap sections, this song became Billboard's 2024 song of the summer. This highlighted the country music community as Billboard concluded that country music's consumption in the U.S. increased by 20.5% within a year. This is surprising as in prior years, there was a consistent 2.5% growth in audience. This shows how big of an increase in followers country music has gained and how fast its audience has grown.

Further, country music is making a splash in theaters and record albums. Following the release and great success of the movie *Twisters*, its soundtrack has gained popularity. With famous country artists such as Luke Combs, Bailey Zimmerman, Lainey Wilson, and others contributing to the soundtrack, the movie has introduced even more people to country music. Many of such new followers also become fans of Country even if they have not previously listened to Country. Although *Twisters'* soundtrack did not get any awards, country music has recently been getting a few. Morgan Wallen broke the Neyland Stadium attendance record on

September 20-22, 2024. While on his "One Night At A Time" tour, he hit Tennessee for two nights, which around 156,000 people attended. This broke the previous record held by the Jackson 5 when they played for three nights in 1984, and 148,407 people attended. Other notable mentions of awards are Zach Bryan, who won four Grammys, and Lainey Wilson, who won the 2024 Country Music Award for Entertainer of the Year and Female Artist of the Year. If you have not turned on a country radio station recently, such as 101.9 Gator Country, you should try. You may be pleasantly surprised.