

BAD BLOOD

TAYLOR SWIFT

APPEARS IN
ROCK & POP
2018

⚡ Released: 2015 ⚡ Album: 1989 ⚡ Label: Big machine, Republic

ABOUT THE SONG

'Bad Blood' – from Taylor Swift's Grammy award-winning 2014 album *1989* – was a worldwide hit, reaching No. 1 in the USA, Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand and Scotland. Written and performed by Taylor Swift, Max Martin and Shellback, the remixed single version was released on 17 May 2015 with added verses by rapper Kendrick Lamar. Inspired by the pop scene of the 1980s, Swift described *1989* as her 'first documented official pop album'.

Like many of her songs, Taylor Swift draws on her own experiences for inspiration in 'Bad Blood'. The song describes the betrayal of a close friend, and the resulting breakdown of the friendship. Despite intense speculation that the friend involved could be another well-known artist, Swift has always refused to name them.

RECORDING AND PRODUCTION

'Bad Blood' was produced by Swedish songwriter, record producer and singer Max Martin, who worked with Swift on 'Black Space' in 2014. Martin has also written, co-written and/or produced hits for Britney Spears, Katy Perry, Maroon 5 and The Weeknd among many others. 'Bad Blood' was recorded at MXM Studios in Stockholm and mixed at MixStar Studios in Virginia Beach, Virginia. It was mastered at Sterling Sound in New York.

COMPOSITION

Unusually, the song starts with a chorus, with powerhouse drums adding a stadium-anthem feel to the otherwise a cappella vocals. The single version takes Swift's departure from a 'pure' country sound on *1989* further still, with a hip-hop edge delivered by throbbing synth sounds and Lamar's rapped verses.

Based around a repeating 4-chord pattern, quieter verses provide contrast to the powerful choruses, with a crescendo through the pre-chorus. A breakup song with a strong undercurrent of defiance, the repeated phrases of the chorus need commanding delivery of the lyrics.

“ CAUSE BABY NOW WE’VE GOT
BAD BLOOD
YOU KNOW IT USED TO BE
MAD LOVE
SO TAKE A LOOK WHAT YOU’VE DONE ”

AWARDS

- ⚡ **Video of the Year**
MTV Video Music Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Best Collaboration**
MTV Video Music Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Best Song**
MTV Europe Music Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Best Music Video**
Grammy Awards 2016
- ⚡ **Most Performed Songs**
ASCAP Pop Music Awards 2016



THE VIDEO

The star-studded video for 'Bad Blood' held the 24-Hour Vevo Record, with over 20 million views in the 24 hours after its release (before being surpassed by Adele's 'Hello' and then again by the video for Swift's new single 'Look What You Made Me Do'). The video features more than 15 of Taylor Swift's 'squad', including Selena Gomez, Cara Delevingne and Lena Dunham. Directed by Joseph Kahn, who also directed the video for Swift's 'Blank Space', the futuristic video nods to a number of cult films. It has had over 1 billion views on YouTube and won Video of the Year at the 2015 MTV Awards and the Grammy for Best Music Video in 2015.



THE ALBUM

1989 was released on 27 October 2014 and is Taylor Swift's fifth studio album. It was written over a two-year period and Swift primarily collaborated with Max Martin and Shellback on the album. 1989 was the best-selling album of 2014 in the US and won the 2016 Grammy Award for Album of the Year. Three singles reached No. 1 in the US Billboard Hot 100: 'Shake It Off', 'Blank Space' and 'Bad Blood'.

'MANY ARTISTS HAVE ATTEMPTED THE SEA CHANGE THAT SWIFT ACCOMPLISHED ON 1989, BUT FEW HAVE RENDERED THAT VISION AS SUCCESSFULLY.'

BILLBOARD

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Certain from an early age that she wanted to be a country singer, at 14, Swift persuaded her parents to move from Pennsylvania to Nashville so that she could pursue her career. Swift was spotted at an industry showcase at the Bluebird Café in 2005 and subsequently signed with Big Machine Records. Her first album 'Taylor Swift' was released when she was only 16, and sold nearly eight million copies. Taylor Swift has won five Guinness World Records, eight Academy of Country Music Awards, 10 Grammy Awards, 21 Billboard Music Awards, 11 Country Music Association Awards, an Emmy Award and a Brit Award. She's sold over 40 million albums and was included in Forbes' 100 Most Powerful Women list in 2015.

INFLUENCES

Inspired by Shania Twain's music at a young age, Swift started to perform country music at local events in Pennsylvania. A documentary about Faith Hill convinced her that she needed to go to Nashville and her first demo tape contained Dolly Parton and Dixie Chicks covers. Swift has said 1989 was influenced by the music that artists like Annie Lennox and Madonna were making in the late 80s, particularly Madonna's 'Like a Prayer'.

'IT WAS A VERY EXPERIMENTAL TIME IN POP MUSIC... PEOPLE REALISED SONGS DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THIS STANDARD DRUMS-GUITAR-BASS-WHATEVER.... WE CAN DO SO MANY DIFFERENT THINGS.'

TAYLOR SWIFT

MORE TO EXPLORE

Songs: 'Hello', Adele (2015), 'Shake It Off', Taylor Swift (2014), 'Blank Space', Taylor Swift (2014), 'Like A Prayer', Madonna (1989). **Influencers:** Annie Lennox, Dixie Chicks, Dolly Parton, Faith Hill, Madonna, Shania Twain.

Artists & collaborators: Britney Spears, Katy Perry, Maroon 5, The Weeknd, Lamar, Max Martin, Shellback.

Trinity Rock & Pop 2018 syllabus: Vocals, Grade 2.

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