

Whitney Houston



Whitney Houston, (born [August 9, 1963](#), [Newark, New Jersey](#), U.S.—died February 11, 2012, [Beverly Hills](#), California), American singer and actress who was one of the best-selling musical performers of the 1980s and '90s. The daughter of Emily (“Cissy”) Houston—whose vocal group, the Sweet Inspirations, sang backup for [Aretha Franklin](#)—and the cousin of singer [Dionne Warwick](#), Whitney Houston began [singing](#) in church as a child. While still in [high school](#), she sang backup for Chaka Khan and [Lou Rawls](#) and modeled for fashion magazines.

At age 19 she signed with Arista Records, whose president, [Clive Davis](#), groomed the [gospel](#)-based singer for crossover pop success. Her debut album, *Whitney Houston* (1985), yielded three number one singles in the United States: “Greatest Love of All,” which became her signature; “Saving All My Love for You”; and “How Will I Know.” *Whitney* (1987) delivered four more number ones and earned Houston a [Grammy Award](#) (for the single “I Wanna Dance with Somebody”). In 1992 she married singer Bobby Brown and made her motion-picture debut in [The Bodyguard](#); the [film](#) featured her rendition of [Dolly Parton’s](#) “I Will Always Love You,” which stayed at number one for 14 weeks. The film’s sound track dominated the Grammys the following year, with Houston winning the awards for album of the year, record of the year, and best female pop vocal performance. In the mid-1990s she continued [acting](#), in films such as *Waiting to Exhale* (1995) and *The Preacher’s Wife* (1996), and the sound track of each film generated hit singles for her.

In 1998 Houston released *My Love Is Your Love*, which did not sell as well as previous efforts but was praised by the critics and earned her another Grammy Award. In 2001 she signed a new multialbum contract with Arista for \$100 million, but personal difficulties soon overshadowed her recording career. Houston’s tumultuous relationship with Brown (the couple divorced in 2007) provided fodder for the tabloids, as did her acknowledged [drug use](#) and financial issues. Her 2002 album, *Just Whitney*, was a personal response to her detractors, but its sales were disappointing compared with earlier efforts. Other than a lacklustre holiday album, *One Wish* (2003), Houston spent subsequent years in a state of virtual retirement.

In February 2009 she began a comeback effort with a four-song set at Clive Davis’s annual pre-Grammy Awards gala. The performance was greeted warmly, and in June Houston announced that an album of new material would be available later that year. *I Look to You* was released in August to positive reviews, and standout songs included the up-tempo “Million Dollar Bill” (penned by [Alicia Keys](#)) and the title track, a slow-building ballad written by [R. Kelly](#). In February 2012 Houston died in a bathtub at a Beverly Hills hotel shortly before Davis’s pre-Grammy party. A coroner’s report released in March stated that the cause of death was accidental [drowning](#), with [heart disease](#) and [cocaine](#) use listed as contributing factors. Houston posthumously appeared in the [musical film](#) *Sparkle* (2012), which she had coproduced.

In January 2015 Houston’s only child, Bobbi Kristina Brown, was found unconscious in a bathtub at her home near Atlanta. She died in July.

Answer these questions

1. Which decades saw Whitney Houston’s glory?
2. Where did she start singing?
3. Apart from singing, what did she while still at school?
4. When did she start singing professionally?
5. For which song did she win her first Grammy?
6. Which was her first movie?
7. How many Grammy Awards did she win for this film’s soundtrack?
8. What problems did she have in the new century?
9. How old was she when she died?
10. How did she die?
11. When did her daughter die?

