

About The Songs

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

“Santa Claus Is Coming To Town” was composed in 1934 by *Fred Coots* and *Haven Gillespie* and immediately became a gigantic hit. The song was first on air in November 1934, performed on the Eddie Cantor Radio Show in New York City. On the next day 100,000 pieces of sheet music were preordered and by Christmas Eve 400,000 pieces had been sold.

To all of you that were born just recently: At these times there were no records, CDs or even mp3s around. People bought the music they heard on the radio in special stores as so-called “sheet music”. That was a printed page with one tune (usually in two different keys) and they would play it at home on their pianos! Can you imagine?

Since that time the song has become one of the American holiday classics and has been recorded by hundreds of great singers in a variety of styles. Just a few of a really endless list: *Green Day*, *Frank Sinatra*, *Alice Cooper*, *Michael Jackson and the Jackson 5*, *Mariah Carrey*, *Cindy Lauper*, *Destiny’s Child*, *Dean Martin*, *Bruce Springsteen* and *Aerosmith!*

Sleigh Ride

The music was composed by *Leroy Anderson* during a heat wave in July 1946, while the lyrics were written by *Mitchell Parish* four years later. The song was first recorded by the Boston Pops Orchestra and has become the equivalent of a signature song for the orchestra in the holiday season. According to the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers [ASCAP] review of Christmas music, “Sleigh Ride” ranks in the top 10 list of most performed songs during the Christmas season worldwide!

Great versions have been done by *Neil Diamond*, *Ella Fitzgerald*, *Chicago* and once again, the fantastic *Lou Rawls*.

Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer

Rudolph is, next to “White Christmas” by the famous *Irving Berlin*, probably the best-known American Christmas tune. Not too many people know that this classic was actually inspired by a children’s book from 1939. The book is about a young reindeer called Rudolph and tragically Santa’s other reindeer make fun of poor Rudolph because of his shiny red nose. On a foggy Christmas Eve Rudolph gets the chance to prove his abilities: His “shining red nose” helps Santa to find his way to earth and all the other reindeer start to accept him as a part of their family. *Johnny Marks* (the brother-in-law of the author) composed this song based on this story in 1949 and since then “Rudolph” has become one of the biggest Christmas hits of all times. The first recording by country singer Gene Autry sold more than 12 million copies (the legendary Bing Crosby refused to sing “Rudolph” because he thought the lyrics were too “childish”) and since that time there have been about 500 cover versions of this classic: *Dean Martin*, *Babyface*, *Barry Manilow*, *Chicago*, *the Supremes*, *Jack Johnson*, *The Temptations* and even *The Chipmunks* did their version of Rudolph!