



Kenny Chesney

Kenneth Arnold Chesney (born March 26, 1968) is an American country singer. With 30 million albums sold worldwide, he released his debut, *In My Wildest Dreams*, in 1994, and has since released 19 follow-ups. His albums spawned 27 singles that have peaked within the top 40 of the *Billboard* Hot 100.^[2]

Chesney has received twelve Country Music Association Awards, including the Country Music Association Award for Entertainer of the Year honor four times, and eleven Academy of Country Music Awards, including four consecutive Academy of Country Music Award for Entertainer of the Year from 2005 to 2008,^[3] as well as six Grammy Award nominations. He has remained one of the most popular touring acts in United States country music.^[4]

Early life

Chesney was born on March 26, 1968, in Knoxville, Tennessee, United States, at St. Mary's Medical Center and was raised in Luttrell. He is of English and Irish descent. He is the son of David Chesney, a former elementary school teacher, and Karen Chandler, a hair stylist in the Knoxville area. Chesney has one sibling, a younger sister named Jennifer Chandler. In 1986, Chesney graduated from Gibbs High School, where he played baseball and football. He received his first guitar for Christmas and began teaching himself how to play it.^[5]

Chesney studied advertising at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, where he was a member of the ETSU Bluegrass Program and the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and graduated in 1990.^[6] In 1989, he recorded a self-released demo album, *Good Old Boy At Heart* at the Classic Recording Studio in Bristol, Virginia. He sold 1,000 copies while performing at the local clubs in Johnson City and used the money from album sales to help himself buy a new guitar.^[7]

Kenny Chesney



Kenny Chesney performing in 2007

Background information

Birth name	Kenneth Arnold Chesney
Born	March 26, 1968 <div> Knoxville, Tennessee, U.S.</div>
Genres	<u>Country</u> · <u>country rock</u> · <u>gulf and western</u>^[1] · <u>neotraditional country</u> (early)
Occupations	Singer · musician · songwriter
Instruments	Vocals · guitar
Years active	1993–present
Labels	<u>Capricorn</u> · <u>BNA</u> · <u>Columbia Nashville</u> · <u>Warner Nashville</u> · <u>Blue Chair</u>
Spouse	<u>Renée Zellweger</u> (<u>m.</u> 2005; <u>ann.</u> 2005)
Website	<u>kennychesney.com</u> (<u>http://kennychesney.com</u>)

After graduation from East Tennessee State in 1990,^[6] he moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he performed at several local clubs. In March 1991, he passed an audition to sing at The Bluebird Cafe.^[8] He became the resident performer at The Turf, a honky tonk bar in the city's historic district.^[9]

Career and awards

In 1992, the head of writer relations at BMI, Clay Bradley, recommended Chesney to his friend, Troy Tomlinson, at Opryland Music Group. Chesney performed five songs during his audition for Tomlinson.^[10] Chesney left the audition with a songwriter's contract. A year later, an appearance at a songwriter's showcase led to a contract with Capricorn Records, which had recently started a country division.^[11]

Chesney's debut album, *In My Wildest Dreams*, was released on the independent Capricorn Records label in April 1994. The album's first two singles, "Whatever It Takes" and "The Tin Man", both reached the lower regions of the U.S. *Billboard* Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. The album sold approximately 10,000 copies before Capricorn Records closed its country music division in Nashville later that year and moved to Atlanta.^[9]

In June 1995, Chesney signed with BNA Records, and released his second studio album *All I Need to Know*.^[11] The album produced three singles. "Fall in Love" and the title track both reached the Top 10, while "Grandpa Told Me So" peaked at number 23.^[9] That same year, Chesney co-wrote Confederate Railroad's single "When He Was My Age" from their album *When and Where*.^[12] Chesney utilized musicians playing the fiddle and pedal steel guitar throughout this album, as he felt this would highlight the open-country, "down-home" feelings in his music; fiddle and pedal steel further helped to compliment his eastern-Tennessean accent and "twang" heard in his singing and inflections. One of the intentions behind the record was to capture the "traditional" spirit that had made early country music so popular.

Chesney's third studio album and his second major-label one, titled *Me and You*, was released in June 1996.^[9] Its first single, "Back In My Arms Again", peaked just outside the Top 40 on the country charts, while both the title track (which Chesney had recorded on his previous album) and "When I Close My Eyes" (previously recorded by Keith Palmer on his 1991 debut album and then by Larry Stewart on his 1993 debut album *Down the Road*) peaked at number 2. *Me and You* was Chesney's first album to be certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).^[9] A cover of Mac McAnally's 1990 single "Back Where I Come From" was also included on this album. Even though Chesney's version was never released as a single, it has been regularly performed during his concerts.

Chesney was honored with the 1997 Academy of Country Music's New Male Vocalist of the Year award.^[6]

I Will Stand, Chesney's fourth album and his third from BNA Records, followed in July 1997. The album's first single, "She's Got It All", became Chesney's first number one hit on the *Billboard* country charts and spent three weeks at that position.^[9] The album's second single, "A Chance", peaked just shy of the Top 10. The third single, "That's Why I'm Here", peaked at number 2 in 1998.

Everywhere We Go, Chesney's fourth album from BNA, was released in March 1999. That album produced two consecutive number one hits with "How Forever Feels" and "You Had Me from Hello" (the latter inspired by a line in the movie *Jerry Maguire*).^[9] The album also produced two more singles with

"She Thinks My Tractor's Sexy" and "What I Need to Do",^[9] which peaked at numbers 11 and 8 on the country charts, respectively. *Everywhere We Go* was Chesney's first album to be certified platinum.^[9] The album marked a departure from his original neotraditional country sound, to his more familiar country pop/trop rock/Gulf and Western sound he has since become known for.^[13]

In September 2000, Chesney released his *Greatest Hits* compilation album.^[9] It included four new tracks, as well as updated versions of "Fall in Love", "The Tin Man", and "Back Where I Come From". The new version of "The Tin Man" was one of the disc's three singles, along with two of the new tracks, "I Lost It" and "Don't Happen Twice".^[9] In 2001, he performed with Kid Rock at a Waylon Jennings tribute concert covering Waylon's song "Luckenbach Texas".

The album *No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems* was released in April 2002. Its lead-off single, "Young", peaked at number 2, while the follower "The Good Stuff" spent seven weeks at number 1 and became *Billboard's* number one country song of the year for 2002. In June 2002, the video for "Young" was honored by CMT with the Video of the Year and Male Video of the Year awards.^[14] A Lot of Things Different originally written by Bill Anderson, was the third single from the album and peaked at number 6. Big Star, released January 2003, was the fourth single released from the album and peaked at number 2 seven weeks later. In May 2003, ACM honored Chesney as Top Male Vocalist of the Year, while "The Good Stuff" received the award for Single Record of the Year.^[15] In April 2004, title track won the Hottest Video of the Year at the CMT awards, given to the fan-voted "sexiest" clip.^[16]

In October 2003, Chesney recorded *All I Want for Christmas Is a Real Good Tan*. The album's title track peaked at No. 30 on the country charts from holiday airplay. Other notable work Chesney did in 2003 is that he co wrote Kid Rock's single "Cold and Empty" from his self-titled 6th studio album *Kid Rock*.

In February 2004, Chesney released *When the Sun Goes Down*. Its lead-off single, "There Goes My Life", spent seven weeks at number one on the *Billboard* country charts. On April 21, 2004, the accompanying music video for that song was honored by CMT with the Male Video of the Year award. The album's title track, a duet with Uncle Kracker, also went to number one. The music video for the album's third single, "I Go Back", was honored on April 11, 2005, with Country Music Television's Male Video of the Year Award. This song, along with the album's fourth single, "The Woman with You", both peaked at number two. The fifth single, "Anything But Mine", reached number one, and the final single, "Keg in the Closet", peaked to number six.

When the Sun Goes Down was honored with the 2004 CMA award for Album of the Year while Chesney was honored as the Entertainer of the Year. He was also presented with AMA's 2004 Artist of the Year award.

In 2004, Chesney collaborated with one of his personal heroes, Jimmy Buffett, on a remake of Hank Williams' single "Hey Good Lookin'" (with Clint Black, Alan Jackson, Toby Keith, and George Strait), and a second song "License To Chill". Both songs are on Buffett's 2004 album *License To Chill*.

In January 2005, Chesney released the album *Be as You Are (Songs from an Old Blue Chair)*, supporting it with his Somewhere in the Sun Tour. *Be as You Are* is composed mostly of ballads. The album qualified for RIAA Platinum and entered the top of both mainstream country and pop music.

In May 2005, Chesney was honored with the prestigious Triple-Crown Award presented by the Academy of Country Music. This award was presented after Chesney's 2004 Academy of Country Music's Entertainer of the Year award was combined with 1997's New Male Vocalist of the Year award and 2003's Top Male Vocalist of the Year award.

Chesney's next album, *The Road and the Radio*, released in November 2005, debuted at number one the *Billboard 200* and produced five singles. "Living in Fast Forward", "Summertime", and "Beer in Mexico" all reached number one, while "Who You'd Be Today" and "You Save Me" both broke the Top 5. Chesney promotes his beliefs of perfection, as getting songs right in the studio, ultimately leads to performing^[17] it right on the road and on the radio.



Kenny Chesney performing in the East Room of the White House on May 16, 2006, at the official dinner for Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Mrs. Janette Howard

In May 2006, Chesney was honored with his second Entertainer of the Year at the Academy of Country Music Awards.^[18]

Live: Live Those Songs Again, Chesney's first live album was released in September 2006, via BNA Records. This album includes live renditions of 15 songs, 11 of which were singles. "Live Those Songs", "Never Gonna Feel Like That Again", "On the Coast of Somewhere Beautiful", and "Back Where I Come From" were never released by Chesney as singles, although "Back Where I Come From" was released as a single from Mac McAnally's 1990 album *Simple Life*.

In 2006, Chesney, along with Tim McGraw, contributed to a version of Tracy Lawrence's single "Find Out Who Your Friends Are", which can be found on his album *For the Love*. The official single version, only featuring Lawrence's vocals, was released in August 2006 but did not reach the Top 40 on the country charts until January 2007, when the album was released. After the album's release, the version with him, Chesney, and McGraw began receiving significant airplay, boosting the single to No. 1 on the country charts. The song became Lawrence's first No. 1 single in 11 years, as well as the second-slowest climbing No. 1 single in the history of the *Billboard* music charts.

In 2007, with Neil Thrasher and Wendell Mobley, Chesney also co-wrote Rascal Flatts' 2007 single "Take Me There", which served as the lead-off single to their album *Still Feels Good*.^[19]

In 2007, Chesney also recorded a duet with Reba McEntire on her album *Reba: Duets*. "Every Other Weekend" peaked at No. 15 on the *Billboard* Hot Country Songs chart and No. 104 on the *Billboard* Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart. The album has sold 2.1 million copies world-wide and is certified Platinum by the RIAA for sales of over 1 million. "Every Other Weekend" was the final single from the album.

In November 2007, Chesney was named the CMA Entertainer of the Year for the third time in four years.^[20] Also in November 2007, the compilation *Super Hits* album was released as part of Sony BMG's *Super Hits* series.^[21]

In September 2007, Chesney released the album *Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates*. This album represented a move to a more Gulf and Western sound with a number of "breezy, steel-drum island songs".^[22] It placed third in album sales that week, behind *Graduation* by Kanye West and *Curtis* by 50 Cent.^[23] The lead-off single from the album was "Never Wanted Nothing More", written by Ronnie Bowman and Chris Stapleton. It reached number one *Billboard* country charts.^[24] On the U.S. *Billboard* Hot Country Songs chart dated for the week ending on September 15, 2007, the album's second single "Don't Blink" debuted at No. 16, setting a new record for the highest debut on that chart since the inception of SoundScan electronic tabulation in 1990, although the record was broken the following week by "More Than a Memory" by Garth Brooks.^[25] The third single, "Shiftwork" (a duet with George Strait) peaked at No. 2 on the country charts. In June 2008, the fourth and final single, "Better as a Memory", became Chesney's fourteenth number one hit.^[26]

Chesney started his *Poets and Pirates Tour* on April 26, 2008, at Williams-Brice Stadium in Columbia, South Carolina. During the introduction of his set, his boot got caught between a hydraulic lift and the lip of the stage surface, which crushed his foot causing a severe hematoma in the ankle; most of the damage was centering within his toes. It took about 30 seconds for Chesney to pry his foot loose as he squatted down on the stage while the band continued to play an extended introduction of the song. When Chesney finally freed himself, he stood up and held his hand on his knee as he began singing. Chesney did not acknowledge the injury during the early part of his performance. However, he was visibly limping and seemed to rest near a drum riser while leaning over and holding his knee during the instrumental breaks of his songs. As he came offstage, a doctor from the University of South Carolina cut off Chesney's cowboy boot and immediately began treating the foot injury. X-rays that were taken afterwards revealed several crushed bones in his right foot. Chesney did not cancel any shows due to the injury.^{[27][28]}



Kenny Chesney's Poets and Pirates tour bus in 2008

On May 19, 2008, just a day after being honored as the ACM Entertainer of the Year at the 43rd Annual Academy of Country Music Awards, Chesney criticized the change in the awards process to awarding the honor based on fan votes and not determined by music industry professionals.^{[29][30]}

In August 2008, Chesney released a song titled "Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven", which reached number one *Billboard* Hot Country Songs chart.^[26] The album *Lucky Old Sun* was released on October 14, 2008. It was followed by a cover of Mac McAnally's 1990 single "Down the Road".^[31]

Chesney's 2009 tour was titled the *Sun City Carnival Tour* and featured both small and large venues in order to keep his ticket prices down.^[32]

In May 2009, Chesney released his second compilation album, *Greatest Hits II*. This album included the No. 1 hit, "Out Last Night", as the lead single. On February 9, 2010, this album was re-released with two new tracks "This Is Our Moment" and "Ain't Back Yet", with the latter becoming the album's third single in February 2010. Also included on this album is one that Willie Nelson recorded before Chesney did, "I'm Alive". Chesney later recorded a version of the song as a duet with Dave Matthews. This version was released in August 2009 as the album's second single.^[33]

In July 2010, Chesney released "The Boys of Fall" as the lead-off single from his album *Hemingway's Whiskey*, which was released in September 2010. The song reached No. 1 on the Hot Country Songs chart for the week of October 9, 2010. That year, Chesney produced a documentary for ESPN titled *The Boys of Fall* based on his song of the same name.^[34]

In November 2010, Chesney performed at the 44th Annual Country Music Awards.^[35]

The second single from *Hemingway's Whiskey*, "Somewhere with You", was released in November 2010. The song debuted at No. 35 on the country chart for the week of November 6, 2010. Both it and its followup, "Live a Little", reached number 1 on the country charts. The next single was "You and Tequila", co-written and originally recorded by Deana Carter. Chesney's rendition, which featured Grace Potter on backing vocals, reached number 3. "Reality" reached number 1.

Chesney produced and narrated a biographical film, *The Color Orange*, on his favorite football player growing up, Tennessee Volunteers football quarterback and Canadian Football League hall-of-fame Condredge Holloway. The film was produced for ESPN's "Year of the Quarterback" series, and premiered on February 20, 2011.

Chesney released his fourteenth studio album, *Welcome to the Fishbowl*, on June 19, 2012.^[36] Its lead-off single, a Tim McGraw duet titled "Feel Like a Rock Star", debuted at number 13 on the country charts, making it the second-highest debuting country song since the *Billboard* charts were first tabulated via Nielsen SoundScan, and the highest-debuting duet on that chart.^[37] The song peaked at number 11.^[38]

BNA Records closed in June 2012. As a result, Chesney was transferred to Columbia Nashville, now Sony Music Nashville.^[39] His first release under Columbia was the album's second single, "Come Over", which went to number 1. The album's third and final single was "El Cerrito Place", which was written by Keith Gattis and originally recorded by Charlie Robison. Chesney's rendition, which featured Grace Potter on backing vocals,^[40] reached number 10 on the country charts.

Chesney released his fifteenth studio album, *Life on a Rock*, on April 30, 2013.^[41] The first single from the album, "Pirate Flag", was released to iTunes on February 5, 2013, and peaked at number 3 on the Country Airplay chart in May 2013. Pirate Flag peaked at number 7 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, May 25, 2013. The album's second single, "When I See This Bar", was released to country radio on June 10, 2013. When I See This Bar peaked at number 25 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, September 14, 2013. This specific album was a drastic change from his regular country feel, to an all beach and island touch.^[42]

In June 2014, Chesney released the song "American Kids", written by Rodney Clawson, Luke Laird, and Shane McAnally.^[43] This song served as the lead-off single from his sixteenth studio album *The Big Revival*, which was released on September 23, 2014.^[44] The album's second single, "Til It's Gone", was released in mid-October.^[45] It reached number one on the Country Airplay chart the week of January 31, 2015. The third single "Wild Child", which is a duet with Grace Potter, was released two days later. It



Kenny Chesney during a performance in Jacksonville, Florida on August 30, 2008

reached number one on the Country Airplay chart the week of June 27, 2015. The album's fourth single, "Save It for a Rainy Day", was released to country radio on June 29, 2015. It reached number one on the Country Airplay chart.^[46]

On October 24, Chesney announced his 2015 tour *The Big Revival Tour*, which began on March 26, 2015^[47] and included ten shows with Jason Aldean.^[48]

The album *Cosmic Hallelujah*, was released on October 28, 2016.^[49] It included the single "Noise", released in March 2016,^[50] and "Setting the World on Fire", featuring singer P!NK, released in July 2016.^[51]

On August 25, 2012, at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, Kenny Chesney announced "No Shoes Nation" as the name of his fan club.^[52] The term No Shoes Nation originated from Chesney's hit song "No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problem".^[52] The symbol of No Shoes Nation is a black flag with a white skull and crossbones.^[53] The name was accompanied by a live album called *Live in No Shoes Nation*, which topped the *Billboard* 200 after its release in late 2017.^[54] No Shoes Nation inspired the name of Chesney's Sirius XM channel, No Shoes Radio.^[55]

In January 2018, Chesney ended his contract with Sony Music Nashville and signed to Warner Records Nashville.^[56] Chesney released his first album with Warner, entitled *Songs for the Saints*, in July 2018.^[57]

In May 2020, Chesney released *Here and Now*, which features the title track and "Tip of My Tongue", a leadoff single that was released in mid-2019. The album debuted at number one and became Chesney's 16th top 10 album on the U.S. *Billboard* 200, with 233,000 units.^[58]

Personal life

In 2000, Chesney and Tim McGraw were involved in a scuffle with police in Saratoga Springs New York]], after Chesney attempted to ride a police horse. McGraw came to Chesney's aid after police officers nearby believed the horse was being stolen.^[59] The two were arrested and charged, Chesney for disorderly conduct and McGraw for assault, but were acquitted in 2001.^[60]

On May 9, 2005, Chesney married actress Renée Zellweger in a ceremony on the island of St. John. They had met in January at a relief event for the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. On September 15, 2005, after only four months of marriage, they announced their plans for an annulment. Zellweger cited fraud as the reason in the related papers, and after media scrutiny of her use of the word "fraud," she qualified the use of the term, stating that it was "simply legal language and not a reflection of Kenny's character". Chesney later suggested the failure of his marriage was due to "the fact that I panicked".^[61] In an interview by *60 Minutes* with Anderson Cooper, Chesney commented on the failed marriage, "The only fraud that was committed was me thinking that I knew what it was like... that I really understood what it was like to be married, and I really didn't."^[62] The annulment was finalized in late December 2005.

Since 2012, Chesney has been dating Mary Nolan.^[63]

Chesney follows a strict diet that includes avoiding eating carbohydrates after 5 pm.^[64]

In 2018, *Forbes* estimated Chesney's annual income at \$37 million.^[65]

In 2017, Chesney's house on Saint John, U.S. Virgin Islands was destroyed by Hurricane Irma.^[66] He fell in love with the island after shooting the music video for "How Forever Feels".^[67] In January 2022, Chesney sold his 12,600 square foot home on 56 acres in Franklin, Tennessee for \$11.5 million, which represented a loss in real terms; he paid \$9.2 million for it in 2009.^[68]

On religion, Chesney has stated: "There's things about religion that I don't necessarily agree with or understand, but I'm a big believer in spirituality – I've seen songs change people, and that's spiritual."^[69]

Philanthropy

In September 2017, in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, Chesney donated use of his private jet to reunite two teenage boys, who were stranded, with their mother.^[70] Chesney set up a charitable fund, Love for Love City, to help victims of the storm.^[71] Chesney donated all proceeds from his album *Songs for the Saints* to the fund.^[72]

Tours

Chesney won the *Billboard* Touring Award for Top Package Tour five consecutive years between 2005 and 2009, and again in 2011, 2012, and 2015.^[73]

Headlining

- 1998: I Will Stand Tour
- 1999: Everywhere We Go Tour
- 2000-01: Kenny Chesney on Tour^[74]
- 2002: No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems Tour^[75]
- 2003: Margaritas 'n Senoritas Tour^[76]
- 2004: Guitars, Tiki Bars and a Whole Lotta Love Tour^[77]
- 2005: Somewhere in the Sun Tour^[78]
- 2006: The Road and The Radio Tour^[79]
- 2007: Flip-Flop Summer Tour^[80]
- 2008: Poets and Pirates Tour^[81]
- 2009: Sun City Carnival Tour^[82]
- 2013: No Shoes Nation Tour^[83]
- 2015: The Big Revival Tour^[84]
- 2016: Spread the Love Tour^[85]
- 2018: Trip Around the Sun Tour^[86]
- 2019: Songs for the Saints Tour^[87]
- 2022: Here and Now Tour^[88]
- 2023: I Go Back Tour

Co-headlining

- 2011: Goin' Coastal Tour (with the Zac Brown Band)^[89]
- 2012: Brothers of the Sun Tour (with Tim McGraw)^[90]
- 2024: Sun Goes Down Tour (with Zac Brown Band)

Opening act

- 1998, 1999, 2000: George Strait Country Music Festival (for George Strait)^{[91][92]}

Discography

Studio albums

- *In My Wildest Dreams* (1994)
- *All I Need to Know* (1995)
- *Me and You* (1996)
- *I Will Stand* (1997)
- *Everywhere We Go* (1999)
- *No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems* (2002)
- *All I Want for Christmas Is a Real Good Tan* (2003)
- *When the Sun Goes Down* (2004)
- *Be as You Are (Songs from an Old Blue Chair)* (2005)
- *The Road and the Radio* (2005)
- *Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates* (2007)
- *Lucky Old Sun* (2008)
- *Hemingway's Whiskey* (2010)
- *Welcome to the Fishbowl* (2012)
- *Life on a Rock* (2013)
- *The Big Revival* (2014)
- *Cosmic Hallelujah* (2016)
- *Songs for the Saints* (2018)
- *Here and Now* (2020)
- *Born* (2024)

See also

- List of best-selling music artists
- List of highest-grossing live music artists

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External links

- [Official website \(https://www.kennychesney.com/\)](https://www.kennychesney.com/)
- [Kenny Chesney \(https://www.allmusic.com/artist/mn0000068551\)](https://www.allmusic.com/artist/mn0000068551) at AllMusic
- [Kenny Chesney's No Shoes Radio \(https://www.noshoesradio.com/\)](https://www.noshoesradio.com/)
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