

The Hip-Hop Songs You Didn't Know Were Samples But Really Should



Hip-hop's relationship with samples is legendary. From its very conception, the genre has looked to loop sections of other tracks and transform them into some of the biggest and most famous hip-hop songs of all time.

But sometimes its done so well that you don't even realise it's a sample, so sit back and join us as we look at some of the best hip-hop samples ever. For the best experience, listen to the first track and then check out the sample.

(Warning: some of these songs contain strong language that some people may find offensive.)

1) First up, Eminem - 'My Name Is'.

Released in 1999, the track set the standard for everything that followed from [Eminem](#), introducing the rapper to the mainstream in an emphatic way. But that iconic bassline is actually a sample.

'My Name Is' samples Labi Siffre's 'I Got The...'.

The Hammersmith born soft rock star's 'I Got The' has been sampled by both Jay Z and Eminem, but most famously - and to best effect - by the Detroit rapper.

2) Warren G - 'Regulate'

If you were compiling a list of the best hip-hop songs of all time and you missed of 'Regulate', then you just made your first mistake. The 1994 song is rap at its finest, but did you know that the song takes the majority of its structure from a song by Michael McDonald?

'Regulate' samples Michael McDonald's 'I Keep Forgetting'. Let's be honest, it's a pretty loop, right?

If you're not familiar with 'I Keep Forgetting', it was released in 1982. It peaked at number four on the Billboard Pop Singles charts, and number seven on the Billboard R&B chart. The bassline - or rather, *THAT* - bassline comes thanks to Louis Johnson.

3) Drake Feat. Jay Z - 'Pound Cake'

While we all know [Drake's](#) 'Too Much' was based largely around a Sampha loop, you might not know that the 'Nothing Was The Same' track 'Pound Cake' samples Ellie Goulding.

'Pound Cake' samples Ellie Goulding's 'Don't Say A Word'.

Yep, that rather ethereal vocal is all the doing of Ellie. The British star admits that she struggled to "play it cool" when she heard Drizzy had looped her vocals for 'Pound Cake'.

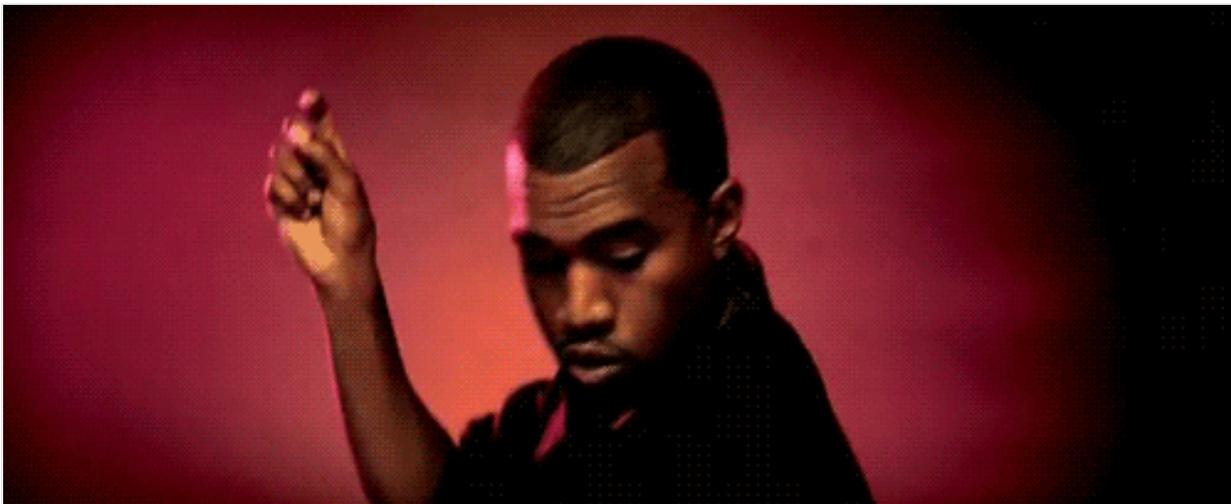
4) It's time for the sample king, Kanye West and the mighty 'Gold Digga'.

'Gold Digga' is hands down one of Kanye's best songs and lets be honest, it's no secret that 'Ye loves a sample - or two. But you might not know where this comes from.

'Gold Digga' samples Ray Charles' 'I Got A Woman'

While Kanye's 'Gold Digga' is sped up, as you can hear from Ray Charles' 'I Got A Woman', the original vocal is set much slower on the record, which was released in 1954.

HOLD ON A SECOND. Follow Kanye's hand...



This is where it gets really interesting. Ray Charles' 'I Got A Woman' is actually inspired and based largely on a song by The Southern Tones - also released in 1954 - called 'It Must Be Jesus'. It's subtle, but see if you can spot it.

5) Let's keep it Kanye for a second and take a listen to 'Dark Fantasy'.

The song kicked off Kanye's now legendary 'My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy' with the vocals of Nicki Minaj. But the song's refrain: "Could we get much higher?" is a direct take.

The song features a tiny sample of Mike Oldfield's 'In High Places'.

Originally released in 1987, the pop rock single is very different to Kanye's track, but the vocal will sound very familiar.

6) Let's go back to the old school again with De La Soul's 'Me Myself And I'.

Originally released in 1989, 'Me Myself And I', which, consequently, is a song title used by everyone from [Beyonce](#) to Demi Lovato, is one of the hip-hop collective's seminal records.

Re-wind the clock and you'll discover that 'Me Myself And I' samples Funkadelic's '(Not Just) Knee Deep'.

Released ten years earlier in 1979, Funkadelic's track showcases all the structure of De La Soul's version and is, quite frankly, a brilliant listen.

7) It's time for Tupac's 'California Love'.

Everyone knows the late rapper's 'California Love'. Released in 1995, the track encapsulates the more mainstream side of Tupac with its sing-along chorus that glides over the piano-driven beat. But where does that beat come from?

'California Love' samples Joe Cocker's 'Woman To Woman'.

Another example of hip-hop looking to rock, 'California Love's' structure owes a lot to 'Woman To Woman' by Joe Cocker, which was released in 1972. Gaming fans might also recognise this track from Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.

8) Another classic: The Fugees' 'Ready Or Not'.

'Ready Or Not' is a classic, but now you've listened to The Fugees version, this is what the song sounded like in 1968.

'Ready Or Not' samples The Delfonics' 'Ready Or Not Here I Come'

The Fugees turned to the Delfonics 'Ready Or Not Here I Come' for the inspiration to their seminal hit, transforming the soul track - which is a classic in its own right - into something rather spectacular.

And it also samples Enya's 'Boadicea'.

9) Dizzee Rascal - 'Fix Up, Look Sharp'. An anthem.

Dizzee's grime routes were on full show on 'Fix Up, Look Sharp'. The rapper showcased all of his lyrical wit on the second single from his debut album 'Boy In Da Corner', but what about the beat?

'Fix Up, Up Look Sharp' samples Billy Squier's 'The Big Beat'. Consequently, the track is one of the most sampled in hip-hop history.

You might have also heard the beat on Jay Z's '99 Problems' (more on that later) and Alicia Keys' 'Girl On Fire'.

10) Modern rap legend Kendrick Lamar took things to a new level on 'Don't Kill My Vibe'.

One of the standout tracks from Kendrick's debut album 'good kid, m.A.A.d city', Kendrick looked to Denmark for the mellow looping intro on 'Don't Kill My Vibe'.

'Don't Kill My Vibe' samples Boom Clap Bachelors' 'Tiden Flyver'. They're Danish.

As you can hear, the original is pretty blissed out.

11) There's another modern-day sample on J. Cole's 'She Knows'.

One of the standout tracks from 'Crooked Smile', J. Cole sampled the piano and vocal hook from fellow Americans Cults for his single 'She Knows'.

'She Knows' samples Cults' 'Bad Things'. It's a direct lift.

The American pop duo will be familiar to any indie fans, as they were heralded as ones to watch in 2011, with positive reviews from the likes of NME and Pitchfork.

12) Justin Timberlake Feat Jay Z's 'Suit & Tie' features a familiar trumpet.

The lead single from Justin's comeback in 2013, 'Suit & Tie's' famous trumpet intro is actually a sample of a Sho Nuff track. Ironically the song also samples Jay Z's 'Show You How', which featured on his seminal album 'The Blueprint' in 2001.

'Suit & Tie's' trumpets sample Sho Nuff's 'Sly Slick & Wicked'.

Let's just take a second to enjoy this one.

13) Finally, Jay Z's '99 Problems'.

Watch Jay Z perform live and you'll feel the effect '99 Problems' has on the rapper's audience. It's a call of arms for any Hova fan, but quite a lot of people don't know that Jay took the main lines from an Ice T song of the same name for the track.

'99 Problems' samples Ice T's '99 Problems'. In fact, some have called it a cover.

See what we mean?

Mind. Blown.

