

TUNE INTO ENGLISH

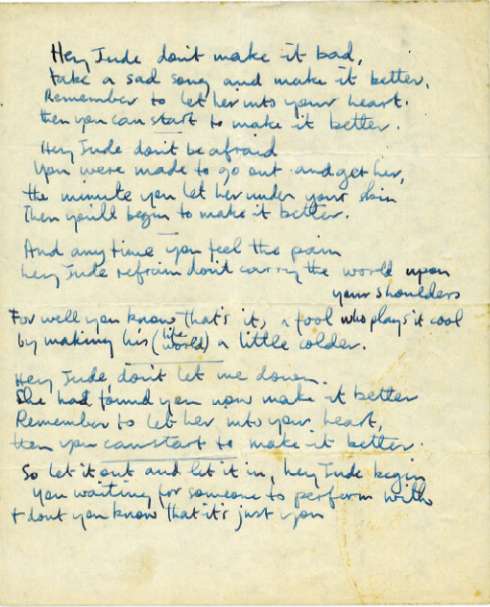
The Beatles' Hey Jude

Questa canzone scritta da McCartney è uno dei più grandi successi del quartetto di Liverpool, un'esortazione al positivismo che a quanto pare era dedicata al figlio di uno dei membri della band.

Hey Jude was the first single on The Beatles' Apple record label¹, topping² the US charts³ for a then-record nine weeks in 1968. It was also, at over seven minutes, the then-longest single ever released⁴. Shortly after John Lennon's break-up⁵ with his wife Cynthia, Paul McCartney drove over to visit the couple's five-year-old son Julian, coming up⁶ with a song of support for the boy on the journey. It was originally called 'Hey Jules', but he decided 'Hey Jude' was more ambiguous. In fact, Julian was a teenager before he realised⁷ the song was about him, and John was convinced the line⁸ "You have found her, now go and get her" was Paul's message of encouragement⁹ for him and his new partner, Yoko Ono.

When Paul presented it to his songwriting¹⁰ partner John, he (Paul) said he would change the line "the movement you need is on your shoulder¹¹", calling it a "stupid expression." Lennon replied that it was "the best line in the song." This was one of the few Beatles songs not recorded at Abbey Road, but at Trident Studios, with McCartney conducting¹² a thirty-six-piece orchestra¹³. At one point, if you listen carefully, you can hear Paul cursing¹⁴ when he flunked¹⁵ a chord¹⁶ (at 2'58"). Lyrically the song uses mostly imperatives, with the singer offering advice¹⁷ to Jude, then climaxing in a celebratory four-minute chorus¹⁸ of "na na na na-na-na na". McCartney says it's one of his favourite songs to play live because "in these dark times it's so fantastic to see the audience come together singing the end." ☺

Left to right: Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, George Harrison and John Lennon in 1963. Above: McCartney's lyrics for Hey Jude, written at a difficult time for Lennon's family.



UPPER INTERMEDIATE B2

ON CD 10

GLOSSARY

- 1 **label**: etichetta
- 2 **to top**: essere in cima
- 3 **charts**: classifiche
- 4 **to release**: pubblicare
- 5 **break-up**: separazione
- 6 **to come up**: venire fuori
- 7 **to realise**: rendersi conto
- 8 **line**: linea
- 9 **encouragement**: incoraggiamento
- 10 **songwriting**: composizione
- 11 **shoulder**: spalla
- 12 **to conduct**: dirigere
- 13 **36-piece orchestra**: orchestra formata da 36 strumenti
- 14 **to curse**: imprecare
- 15 **to flunk**: sbagliare
- 16 **chord**: accordo
- 17 **advice**: consiglio
- 18 **chorus**: ritornello
- 19 **to let into**: lasciar entrare
- 20 **to refrain**: astenersi
- 21 **fool**: stupido
- 22 **to annoy**: infastidire
- 23 **to behave**: comportarsi
- 24 **reassuring**: rassicurante

the minute: this phrase, usually followed by 'that', means 'at the exact or first moment when'.

carry the world upon your shoulders: meaning 'to take on a lot of problems'. In Greek mythology, Atlas carried the world on his shoulders as Hercules' punishment.

to let someone down: a phrasal verb meaning 'to disappoint'.

let it out and let it in: McCartney uses two phrasal verbs that only differ in the preposition, but that have a very different meaning: 'to let out' means 'to let something go free', while 'to let in' means 'to accept', 'to allow something to happen'.

you'll do: this reassuring²⁴ phrase means that you are (or Jude is) strong enough to confront things alone.

Hey Jude, don't make it bad
Take a sad song and make it better
Remember to let her into¹⁹ your heart,
Then you can start to make it better
Hey Jude, don't be afraid
You were made to go out and get her
The minute you let her under your skin,
Then you begin to make it better
And anytime you feel the pain,
hey Jude, refrain²⁰,
Don't carry the world upon your shoulders
For well you know that it's a fool²¹ who plays it cool
By making his world a little colder
Hey Jude, don't let me down
You have found her, now go and get her
Remember to let her into your heart,
Then you can start to make it better
So let it out and let it in, hey Jude, begin,
You're waiting for someone to perform with
And don't you know that it's just you, hey Jude, you'll do,
The movement you need is on your shoulder
Hey Jude, don't make it bad.
Take a sad song and make it better.
Remember to let her under your skin,
Then you'll begin to make it
Better better better better better better, oh.
Na na na nananana, nananana, hey Jude...

let her under your skin: this phrase usually has negative connotations, meaning to be annoyed²² by someone, but here it is used positively.

to play it cool: this is an idiom meaning 'to behave²³ in a calm, controlled way', often intentionally appearing not to be interested in the thing that you very much want.

to perform with: McCartney uses the metaphor of a band performing together to describe Jude's desire for someone to help with the difficulties of life.

SCAN & WATCH



Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet and listen to the official song on YouTube while reading the lyrics.



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