

TUNE INTO ENGLISH

The Beatles'
I Want To Hold
Your Hand

Questa canzone, considerata l'inizio della Beatlemania, ha venduto oltre un milione di copie nel Regno Unito e ha raggiunto la vetta delle classifiche negli Stati Uniti.

Thousands of screaming fans were waiting at the airport when The Beatles first landed¹ in America on 7 February 1964. After a string² of unsuccessful singles, *I Want To Hold Your Hand* was the country's number one, and the English band would soon hold the top five places on the chart³. Beatlemania had arrived!

I Want To Hold Your Hand is still The Beatles' best-selling US single. John Lennon said he and Paul McCartney wrote it "one on one, eyeball to eyeball⁴" in Paul's girlfriend's basement⁵. In a notorious⁶ case of misheard⁷ lyrics, the US folk singer Bob Dylan believed them to be singing "I get high⁸!" rather than "I can't hide!" and offered them marijuana! Lennon later told

Rolling Stone magazine "We've got a lot to thank him [Dylan] for."

The lyrics of the song are entirely in the present simple and future 'will'. The bridge is an example of the zero conditional, when + present. The Beatles paid tribute⁹ to their early years playing in Hamburg, Germany by rerecording the song in German under the title "Komm Gib Mir Deine Hand". They also recorded a German version of *She Loves You*.

The Beatles marked a sea change¹⁰ in music in the 1960s. Brian Wilson, lead singer of US band The Beach Boys recalled¹¹ that when he heard their song "I flipped¹². It was like a shock went through my system¹³ ... I immediately knew that everything had changed." ☺



Below: The Beatles (left to right) Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, John Lennon and George Harrison in 1963.



SCAN, READ
& LISTEN

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LOWER INTERMEDIATE **B1**

GLOSSARY

- 1 **to land:** atterrare
- 2 **string:** serie di, sequenza di
- 3 **chart:** classifica
- 4 **eyeball to eyeball:** faccia a faccia (lett. globo oculare)
- 5 **basement:** sotterraneo
- 6 **notorious:** famigerato
- 7 **to mishear:** capire male
- 8 **to get high:** sballarsi (con droghe)
- 9 **to pay tribute:** rendere omaggio
- 10 **sea change:** grande cambiamento
- 11 **to recall:** ricordare
- 12 **to flip:** dare di matto
- 13 **system:** corpo
- 14 **catchy:** orecchiabile
- 15 **to flow:** fluire

I want to hold your hand: many early Beatles songs used repetition to make the song catchy¹⁴ and easier to remember.

I want to hold your hand: The Beatles also have a song called *I Wanna Be Your Man*. 'Want to' is often shortened to 'wanna' in songs and spoken English. In this song it is written correctly, but sung more naturally.

and when I touch you I feel happy inside: this is an example of the zero conditional, something that is always true.

Oh, yeah, I'll tell you somethin'

I think you'll understand

When I say that somethin'

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

Oh, please, say to me

You'll let me be your man

And please, say to me

You'll let me hold your hand

You'll let me hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

And when I touch you

I feel happy inside

It's such a feelin' that my love

I can't hide

I can't hide

I can't hide

Yeah, you got that somethin'

I think you'll understand

When I say that somethin'

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

And when I touch you

I feel happy inside

It's such a feelin' that my love

I can't hide

I can't hide

I can't hide

Yeah, you got that somethin'

I think you'll understand

When I feel that somethin'

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

I want to hold your hand

Somethin'/feelin': songs often leave out the final 'g' to make them flow¹⁵ better.

SCAN & WATCH



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

Fergal Kavanagh runs the website www.tuneintoenglish.com, the web's largest free resource for learning English through pop music.

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