



SHANIA TWAIN: MUSIC AND STYLE TRENDSETTER

You could measure Shania Twain’s career strictly by the numbers. With 100 million in album sales, she is country music’s best-selling female artist. But the numbers don’t begin to tell her incredible story.

Twain became a superstar in the mid-1990s, using her unique voice, glamorous style, and catchy pop-country sound to draw millions of new fans into country music.

Born Eillean Regina Edwards in 1965 in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, Twain began her life with hardship and loss. Her father left the family when she was a toddler. Her mother, Sharon, moved to Timmins, Ontario, and remarried. Her stepfather, Jerry Twain, adopted Shania and her two sisters. Her parents struggled to make enough money.

At age three, Twain showed special talent singing along to country songs. She was playing guitar by age eight, writing songs by age ten, and, as a teenager, helping support her family by singing in clubs. At age eighteen, she moved to Toronto, Ontario, to pursue a singing career. Four years later, when her parents were killed in a car accident, Twain returned home to care for her younger siblings.

Twain continued to work on her music and caught the attention of a Nashville record company, which released her first album in 1993. Twain changed her first name to “Shania” (sha-NY-ah), inspired by her stepfather’s Native American heritage.



The album contained only one self-written song and was considered unsuccessful, but her voice attracted the attention of rock producer Robert John “Mutt” Lange. The two co-wrote most of Twain’s next album, *The Woman in Me*, and by its release in 1995, the couple had married.

The album became a hit, selling more than twelve million copies. Twain and Lange then co-wrote her next two albums. *Come on Over* became country’s all-time best-seller with forty million copies sold. *Up!* sold twenty

Continued on back

LISTEN

“From This Moment On,” “That Don’t Impress Me Much,” “Up!,” “You’re Still the One”



SHANIA TWAIN: MUSIC AND STYLE TRENDSETTER (CONTINUED)

million copies. Twain also headlined two world tours, filmed videos, and earned Grammy, Country Music Association, and Academy of Country Music awards.

In 2004, Twain moved to Switzerland with Lange and their son. The couple divorced in 2010, and she began performing again. She released a new album, *Now*, with all self-written songs, in 2017.

Netflix released a documentary about Twain in 2022 titled *Shania Twain: Not Just a Girl*. In 2023, she released her sixth studio album, *Queen of Me*.

“Songwriting is my favorite part of what I do,” Twain says. “I like to give every song its own personality and attitude and to sing each one in its own style.”



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What is the title of Twain’s bestselling album?

2. Circle the word “hardship” in the third paragraph. Underline the clue words and phrases that help you understand the meaning of the word.

3. Explain Twain’s greatest impact on music in your own words. Highlight evidence in the text that supports your answer.
