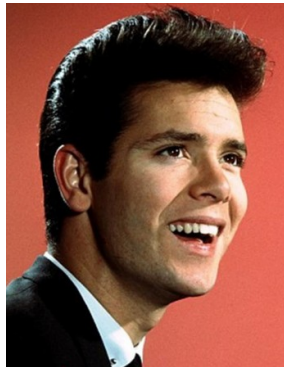


Cliff Richard

Sir Cliff Richard (born 14 October 1940) is a British singer and actor. He has total sales of over 21.5 million singles in the United Kingdom and, in 2012, he was the third-top-selling artist in the UK Music Chart history, behind only the Beatles and Elvis Presley.



1962



2025

Who is Cliff Richard?

Cliff Richard was born as Harry Webb, in India, to English parents in 1940. In 1948, following Indian independence, his family decided to relocate to England where Harry's father got a job in a large electric company. When he was 16, Harry became interested in *skiffle*, so his father bought him a guitar, and in 1957, he formed the school vocal harmony group "The Quintones". Later, he became a singer in the "Dick Teague Skiffle Group". In 1958, Harry became the lead singer of a rock and roll group called "The Drifters". The group's manager changed Harry's name to "Cliff" (associated with "Rock") and "Richard" (as a tribute to the musical legend Little Richard). The group then became known as "Cliff Richard and the Drifters". Their first success as a group, was "Move It", which was credited as being the first British rock song.

Skiffle example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3rawgRVpE0>

Move it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5mlq3yF6Nc>

At this time, Cliff Richard was marketed as the British equivalent of Elvis Presley, and he adopted Elvis-like dress and hairstyle. The song "Living Doll" was the group's first No. 1 single. Soon after, the group changed their name to "The Shadows". The group was contractually separate from Cliff Richard, and they released many songs and instrumentals without him. They went on to achieve five No. 1 hits. Unlike the Beatles, neither Cliff nor the Shadows achieved success in the USA.

Living Doll: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAZYet-jqR8>

Cliff Richard and the Shadows appeared in six feature films. These films created their own genre, and became known as "Cliff Richard musicals", in the same way that Elvis Presley films were their own genre too! Cliff Richard became the No. 1 cinema box office attraction in the UK in 1962 and 1963, even beating James Bond. The title song of the film "The Young Ones" became his biggest-selling single in the UK, selling over one million copies. Here are two songs from his films:

The Young Ones: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNYvVqgc3dE>

Summer Holiday: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xddl8fpf2uA>

In 1964, Cliff became an active evangelical Christian and his faith became an important aspect of his life. He believed that he should quit rock 'n' roll because he was "too sexy for TV". He intended to leave music and become a teacher, but his friends advised him not to abandon his career. So he performed with Christian groups and recorded some Christian songs, but he still recorded secular songs with the Shadows.

Between 1959 and 1965 he achieved 23 consecutive Top 10 hits. In 1968, he sang the UK's entry in the Eurovision Song Contest, "Congratulations", which won second place, and in 1973, he sang the British Eurovision entry "Power to All Our Friends" which took third place.

Congratulations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJcE9tnY6E>
Power to All Our Friends: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAOwf78KKmY>

The Shadows disbanded in 1968, but Cliff continued a solo career. During the 1970s he had a highly-successful career on TV, having his own shows and working with Olivia Newton-John, Hank Marvin and Una Stubbs.

Cliff and Olivia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehwMTcZRhNM>

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Cliff continued to produce and sing many songs, both in the rock and Christian genres.

Do you Wanna Dance (rock): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBRK9v840gg>
The Millennium Prayer (Christian): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mL9yDb134Rk>

In 1989, Richard received a Brit Award for "Outstanding Contribution to Music". In June of that year, he played in Wembley Stadium for two nights with a spectacular called "The Event" in front of a combined audience of 144,000 people. In June 1995, he was knighted by the queen, becoming the first rock star to receive a knighthood.

In 2004 and 2009, Cliff Richard rejoined the Shadows for a UK tour. A new album, called "Reunited", was released by Richard and the Shadows in September 2009. It was their first studio project in forty years. The album reached No. 4 in the UK Album Charts.

Reunited: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvlpTX4370I>

In October 2011, Richard released his "Soulicious" album, containing duets with American soul singers Percy Sledge, Ashford and Simpson, Roberta Flack, Freda Payne and Candi Staton. It became his 41st Top 10 album. In October 2015, Richard performed in seven cities across the UK to commemorate his 75th birthday,

2011 with Freda Payne: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FEqSMudXag>
2015 Tour (We Don't Talk Anymore): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxhIEBwsLuk>

In August 2018, Richard announced the release of the album "Rise Up", which included new material. The first single of the album, "Rise Up", was released in vinyl format and reached No. 1 in the UK Vinyl Singles Chart in October 2018.

Rise Up: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS-G_S0eSbY



In a career spanning nearly 70 years, Richard has collected several gold and platinum discs and many awards, including two Ivor Novello Awards and three Brit Awards. More than 130 of his songs, albums and EPs have reached the UK Top 20, more than any other artist. He has had 67 UK Top 10 singles, the second highest total for any artist (behind only Elvis Presley). He holds the record, together with Presley, as the only singer to have hits in the UK charts across six decades (1950s–2000s). He has achieved 14 UK No. 1 singles, and is the only singer to have had a No. 1 single in the UK charts in five consecutive decades. He also had four UK Christmas No. 1 singles, including "Mistletoe and Wine" and "Saviour's Day".

Mistletoe and Wine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZCEBibnRM8>

By the late 1990s, Richard had sold more than 250 million records worldwide, making him one of the best-selling music artists of all time. He has never achieved the same popularity in the United States despite having eight US Top 40 singles, including "Devil Woman" and "We Don't Talk Anymore" (see video link above). In Canada, he achieved reasonable success. He is a popular music, film, and television personality in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Northern Europe and Asia. When he is not touring, he divides his time between Barbados and Portugal.

Cliff Richard is a committed bachelor and has never married. In a letter written to his first serious girlfriend, Australian dancer Delia Wicks, he wrote, *"Being a pop singer I have to give up one priceless thing – the right to any lasting relationship with any special girl. I've had to make one of the biggest decisions I'm ever going to make and I'm hoping that it won't hurt you too much. I couldn't give up my career, besides the fact that my mother and sisters, since my father's death, rely on me completely. I have showbiz in my blood now and I would be lost without it. You should find someone who is free to love you as you deserve to be loved and who is able to marry you"*. After Delia Wicks died in 2010, aged 71, her brother Graham Wicks said that she had been devastated by Richard's decision to end their relationship. Richard also had brief romances with actress Una Stubbs, dancer Jackie Irving and tennis pro Sue Barker.

Richard said that his faith in God was tested in 1999 after the murder of his close friend, the British television presenter Jill Dando. He said: "I was really angry with God. It shook me rigid that someone as beautiful, talented and harmless could have been killed". Richard said that Dando had many likeable qualities and described her as "a very genuine person".

Dando murder: <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-66783495>

In 2006, Richard received the "Portuguese Order" in which he was appointed "Commander of the Order of Prince Henry" in recognition of his forty years of personal and business involvement in Portugal, which included investments in winemaking and a house in the Algarve, where he has spent much of his time throughout the decades. Richard has been voted No. 56 in the "100 Greatest Britons" list, sponsored by the BBC and voted for by the public.

In 2010, Richard confirmed that he is no longer a resident of the United Kingdom and has been granted citizenship by Barbados. He has supported many charities over many years through the "Cliff Richard Charitable Trust", with donations and personal visits to schools, churches, hospitals, and homes for special needs children. At 85 years old, he continues to sing and tour.

2025 – Can't stop me now: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUsS6JBET3Q>