

Q3 2021 Report

# THE STATE OF THE HOT 100 TOP 10



SELECT HIGHLIGHTS

*Compositional and Industry Trends  
for the Billboard Hot 100 Top 10*

**HIT SONGS DECONSTRUCTED**

The #1 Source for Hit Songwriting Analysis and Trends

The State of the Hot 100 Top 10 takes an in-depth look at Q1 - Q3 2021's compositional and industry-related trends for the Billboard Hot 100 Top 10. What follows are a few select highlights from the report.

- Data is for songs that charted in the Billboard Hot 100 Top 10 and excludes holiday songs.
- Data related to compositional characteristics are propriety to Hit Songs Deconstructed.
- Artist, songwriter, producer, label and charting information are aggregated from the PRO's, Billboard, and streaming platforms.
- All credits are from the date songs entered the Top 10.
- At times percentages may not add to 100% due to numbers being rounded up or down.
- Production teams (i.e. The Audibles) are counted as a single producer.

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# Hot 100 Top 10 Overview (Q1 - Q3 2021)

10

59



TOP 10 SONGS



14



#1 HITS



50

PERFORMING  
ARTISTS



244

CREDITED  
SONGWRITERS



118

CREDITED  
PRODUCERS



12

RECORD  
LABELS

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a concert stage. In the background, a band is performing on stage, illuminated by several bright spotlights that create a hazy, bokeh effect. In the foreground, the backs of a large crowd of people are visible, many with their arms raised in the air, suggesting a high-energy performance. The overall color palette is dominated by deep blues and greys, with the warm tones of the stage lights providing contrast.

# Performing Artists

Select Report Highlights

(Q1 - Q3 2021)

# Performing Artists

There were 37 primary artists and 18 featured artists who charted in the Top 10 in the first three quarters of 2021. Five had both primary and featured artist credits: 21 Savage, Cardi B, Lil Baby, SZA and Young Thug.



**50**  
PERFORMING  
ARTISTS

**37**  
PRIMARY  
ARTISTS

**18**  
FEATURED  
ARTISTS



**#1**  
HITS

In the first three quarters of 2021, 13 primary artists were credited on a #1 hit.

Primary Artists

BTS, Drake, Justin Bieber and Olivia Rodrigo scored the most with two each, and BTS alone charted at #1 for the most weeks with 11.



**BTS**

*Butter, Permission To Dance*

- 24kGoldn, *Mood*
- Ariana Grande, *Save Your Tears*
- Anderson .Paak, *Leave The Door Open*
- Bruno Mars, *Leave The Door Open*
- BTS, *Butter, Permission To Dance*
- Cardi B, *Up*
- Drake, *Way 2 Sexy, What's Next*
- Justin Bieber, *Peaches, Stay*
- Lil Nas X, *Montero (Call Me By Your Name)*
- Olivia Rodrigo, *Drivers License, Good 4 U*
- Polo G, *Rapstar*
- The Kid LAROI, *Stay*
- The Weeknd, *Save Your Tears*

# Performing Artists

## Primary Artists with More than Three Top 10 Hits



**Olivia Rodrigo**  
*Deja Vu, Drivers License,  
Good 4 U, Traitor*



4

TOP 10 HITS



33

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**Drake**  
*Certified Lover Boy (9 Songs)  
Laugh Now Cry Later, Lemon  
Pepper Freestyle, Wants and  
Needs, What's Next*



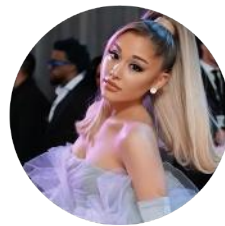
13

TOP 10 HITS



7

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**Ariana Grande**  
*34+35, Positions, Save  
Your Tears (Remix)*



3

TOP 10 HITS



32

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**J.Cole**  
*95.south, Amari, Interlude,  
My.life, Pride.is.the.devil*



5

TOP 10 HITS



2

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**BTS**  
*Butter, Dynamite,  
Permission To Dance*



3

TOP 10 HITS



16

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**Justin Bieber**  
*Anyone, Holy,  
Peaches, Stay*



4

TOP 10 HITS



32

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



**The Weeknd**  
*Blinding Lights, Save Your  
Tears (Remix), Take My  
Breath*



3

TOP 10 HITS



33

WEEKS IN THE  
TOP 10



# Songwriters

Select Report Highlights

(Q1 - Q3 2021)

# Songwriters

In the first three quarters of 2021, 244 credited songwriters charted in the Hot 100 Top 10.



# 244

CREDITED  
SONGWriters

## Songwriters with Four or More Top 10 Hits

Eight songwriters scored four or more Top 10 hits in the first three quarters of 2021.



### Drake

# 10

TOP 10 HITS

# 13



# 7

WEEKS IN  
THE TOP 10

- **Drake (13)**, *Certified Lover Boy (9 Songs)*, *Laugh Now Cry Later*, *Lemon Pepper Freestyle*, *Wants and Needs*, *What's Next*
- **J. Cole (5)**, *95.south*, *Amari*, *Interlude*, *My.life*, *Pride.is.the.devil*
- **Daniel Nigro (4)**, *Deja Vu*, *Drivers License*, *Good 4 U*, *Traitor*
- **Justin Bieber (4)**, *Anyone*, *Holy*, *Peaches*, *Stay*
- **Lil Baby (4)**, *Girls Want Girls*, *Hurricane*, *Pride.is.the.devil*, *Wants and Needs*
- **Olivia Rodrigo (4)**, *Deja Vu*, *Drivers License*, *Good 4 U*, *Traitor*
- **Omer Fedi (4)**, *Montero (Call Me By Your Name)*, *Mood*, *Stay*, *Without You*
- **The Weeknd (4)**, *Blinding Lights*, *Hurricane*, *Save Your Tears*, *Take My Breath*

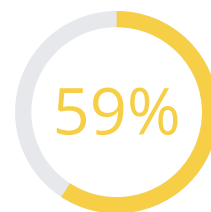
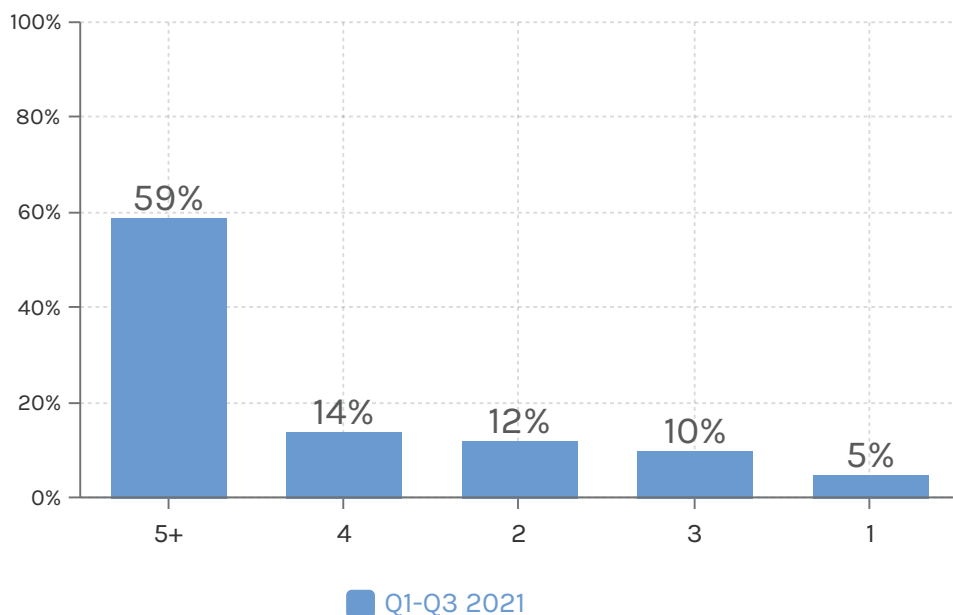


# Songwriters

Songwriting team sizes of five or more continued to be the most popular, while writers who go it alone continued to be scarce. The songs written by a solo songwriter were all written by J. Cole: *95.south*, *Amari* and *Interlude*.

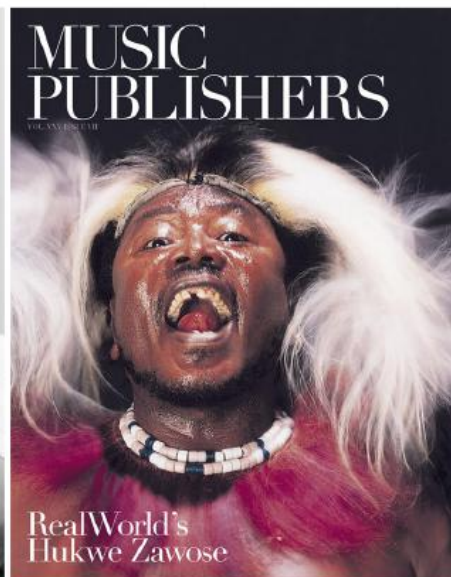
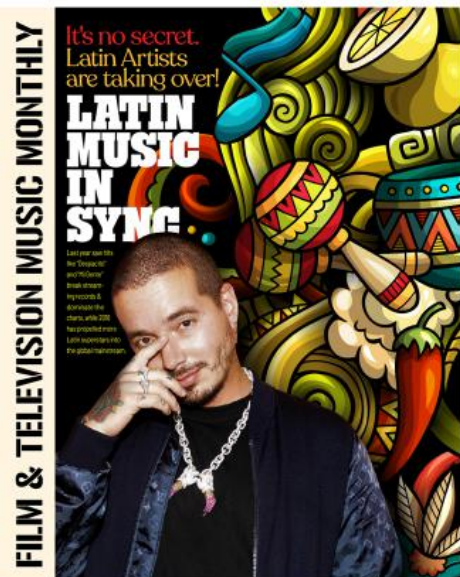
## Songwriter Team Size

Q1-Q3 2021



### 5+ Songwriters

In the first three quarters of 2021, 59% of songs had five or more credited songwriters.



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mblists.com



# Producers

Select Report Highlights

(Q1 - Q3 2021)

# Producers

Producers with Three or More Top 10 Hits



**118**  
CREDITED  
PRODUCERS



## Daniel Nigro

*Deja Vu, Drivers License, Good 4 U, Traitor*

10

4

TOP 10 HITS



33

WEEKS IN THE TOP 10



## Omer Fedi

*Montero (Call Me By Your Name), Mood, Stay, Without You*

10

4

TOP 10 HITS



36

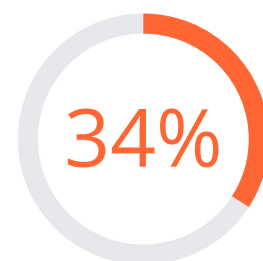
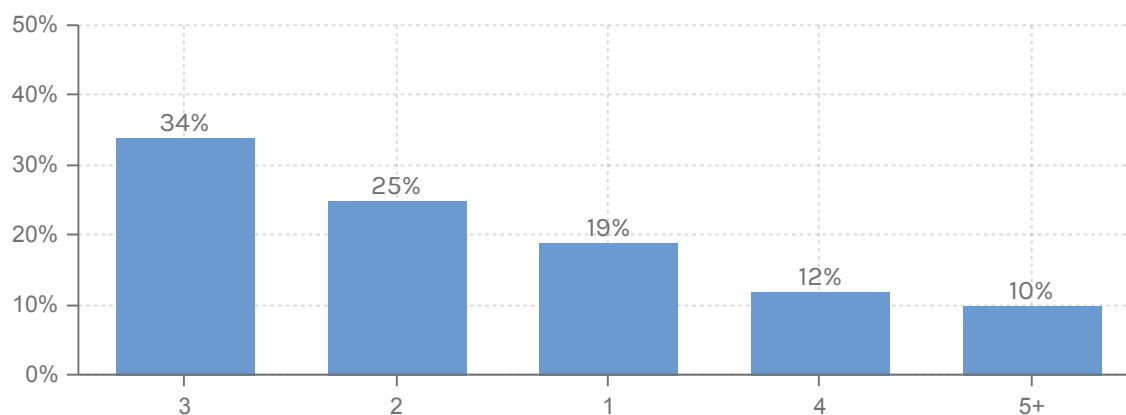
WEEKS IN THE TOP 10

- **40**, *Champagne Poetry, In The Bible, Wants and Needs*
- **Blake Slatkin**, *Mood, Stay, Without You*
- **J. Cole**, *Amari, Interlude, My.life*
- **Kanye West**, *Hurricane, Industry Baby, Jail*
- **Maneesh**, *95.south, Champagne Poetry, What's Next*
- **Max Martin**, *Blinding Lights, Save Your Tears, Take My Breath*
- **Mr. Franks**, *34+35, Holy, Positions*
- **Oscar Holter**, *Blinding Lights, Save Your Tears, Take My Breath*
- **OZ**, *Fair Trade, Girls Want Girls, Love All*
- **T-Minus**, *Amari, Interlude, Pride.is.the.devil*
- **The Weeknd**, *Blinding Lights, Save Your Tears, Take My Breath*
- **Tommy Brown**, *34+35, Holy, Positions*

# Producers

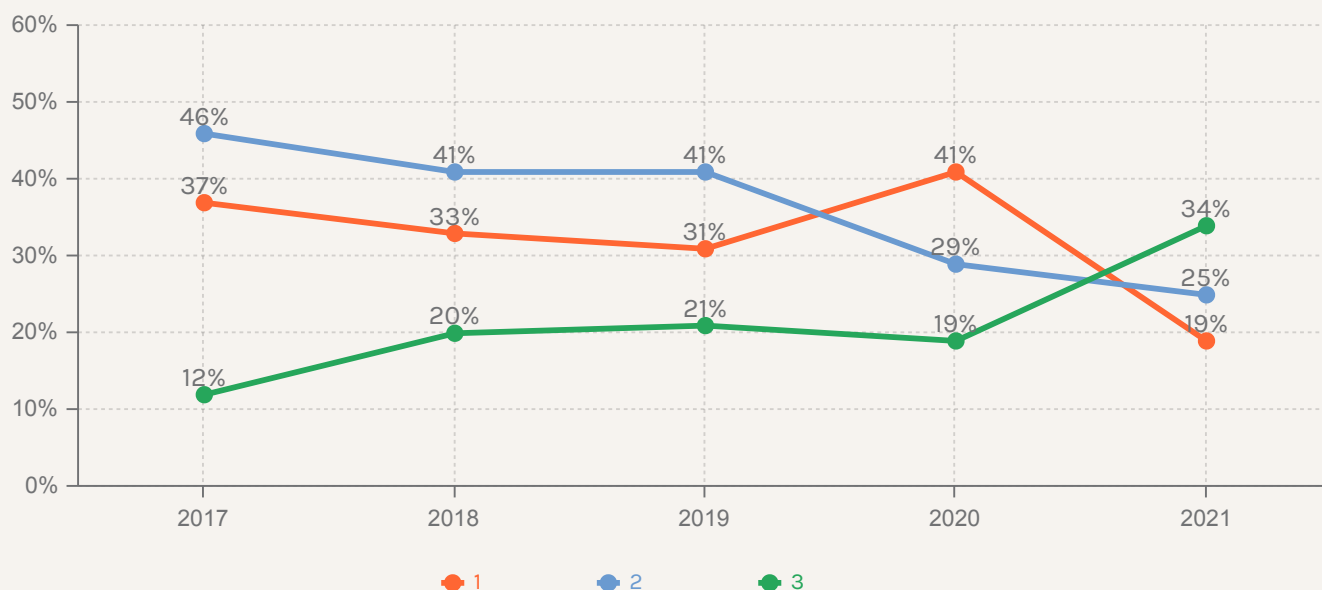
In the first three quarters of 2021, songs with only one producer fell to their lowest level in well over five years, accounting for just under one-fifth of songs. Simultaneously, larger producer teams are getting more popular, with teams of three nearly doubling to just over one-third of songs.

Producer Team Size  
Q1-Q3 2021



**3 Producers**  
In the first half of 2021, 34% of songs were produced by teams of three

Producer Team Size  
2017 - Q3 2021





# Record Labels

Select Report Highlights

(Q1 - Q3 2021)

# Record Labels

Twelve record labels had songs charting in the Hot 100 Top 10 in the first three quarters of 2021. Republic has had by far the most Top 10 hits so far in 2021 with 20, double the number of hits from runner-up Interscope. This is largely due to Drake's record-breaking nine simultaneous Top 10s.



**12**  
**RECORD LABELS**

- 300
- Atlantic
- Columbia
- Def Jam
- EMG
- Interscope
- RCA
- Republic
- Rimas
- S-Curve
- Warner
- Warner Music Nashville

## Labels with the Most Top 10 Hits

(Q1-Q3 2021)

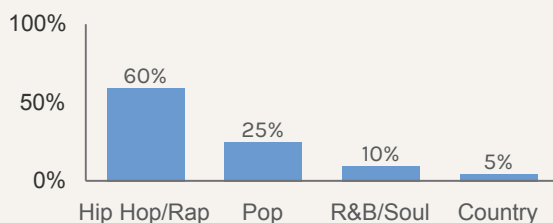


**Republic**

20 Top 10 Hits  
3 #1 Hits

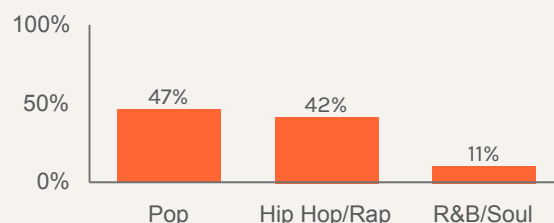
### Republic 2021

Genre Breakdown



### Republic 2020

Genre Breakdown

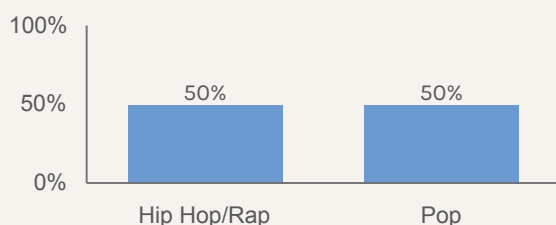


**Interscope**

10 Top 10 Hits  
2 #1 Hits

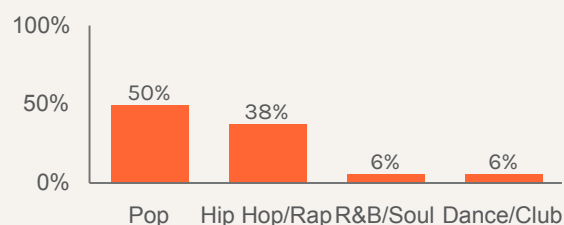
### Interscope 2021

Genre Breakdown



### Interscope 2020

Genre Breakdown



# 2021 TikTok Hits

While just about every Top 10 hit has been used and promoted on TikTok, there are some hits that overwhelmingly owe their initial rise to fame to the app.

In the first three quarters of 2021, the most notable were: *Drivers License*, which had a popular trend involving the song's emotional chorus and bridge; *Astronaut In The Ocean*, which had its chorus featured in both comedic and serious videos alike; and *Fancy Like*, *Mood* and *What You Know Bout Love*, all of which were featured in popular choreographed dances, among other uses.

*Drivers License*  
Olivia Rodrigo



**1** **16**  
PEAK CHART WEEKS  
POSITION IN THE TOP 10

*Mood*  
24kGoldn (feat. iann dior)



**1** **13**  
PEAK CHART WEEKS  
POSITION IN THE TOP 10

*Fancy Like*  
Walker Hayes



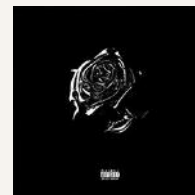
**3** **6**  
PEAK CHART WEEKS  
POSITION IN THE TOP 10

*Astronaut In The Ocean*  
Masked Wolf



**6** **11**  
PEAK CHART WEEKS  
POSITION IN THE TOP 10

*What You Know Bout Love*  
Pop Smoke



**9** **4**  
PEAK CHART WEEKS  
POSITION IN THE TOP 10

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# Hot 100 Top 10

Select Report Highlights

(Q1 - Q3 2021)

# Primary Genres: Top 10

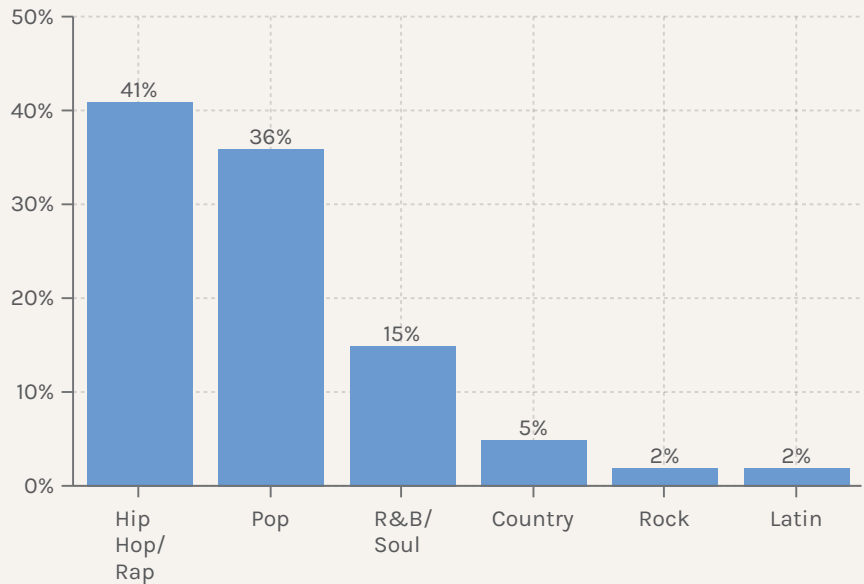
The two most prominent genres, which together represented 77% of the Top 10 during the first three quarters of 2021, were hip hop and pop.

After seeing its prominence cut nearly in half in 2019, hip hop as a primary genre rebounded in 2020 and remains the most popular genre YTD.

However, it's important to note that in Q3, Drake landed a slew of hip hop Top 10 hits from his album *Certified Lover Boy*, which made up eight of the quarter's 11 hip hop hits, most of which stayed in the Top 10 for only one week.

Pop accounted for 36% of the year's Top 10 hits with chart-toppers including *Good 4 U*, *Butter*, *Stay* and *Save Your Tears*.

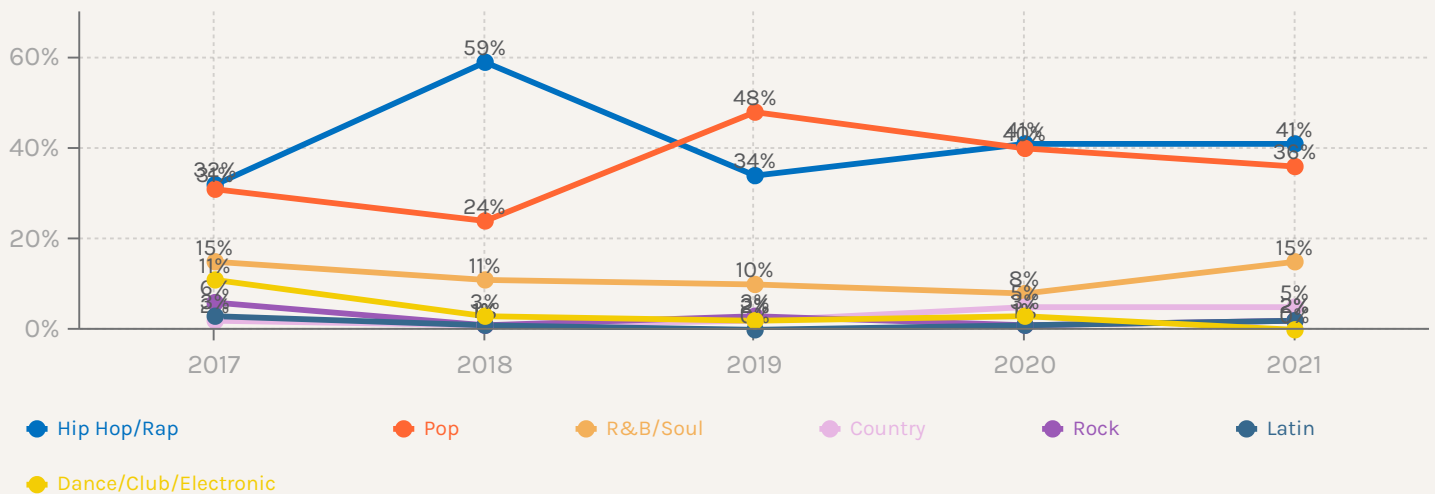
Primary Genres  
Q1 - Q3 2021



R&B/soul is up from 8% to 15% as a primary genre and gaining even more momentum as a genre influence. The genre was represented by #1 hits *Leave The Door Open* and *Peaches*.

Country was represented by *Fancy Like*, *I Hope and Wasted On You*, and rock and Latin were represented by *Jail* and *Yonaguni*, respectively.

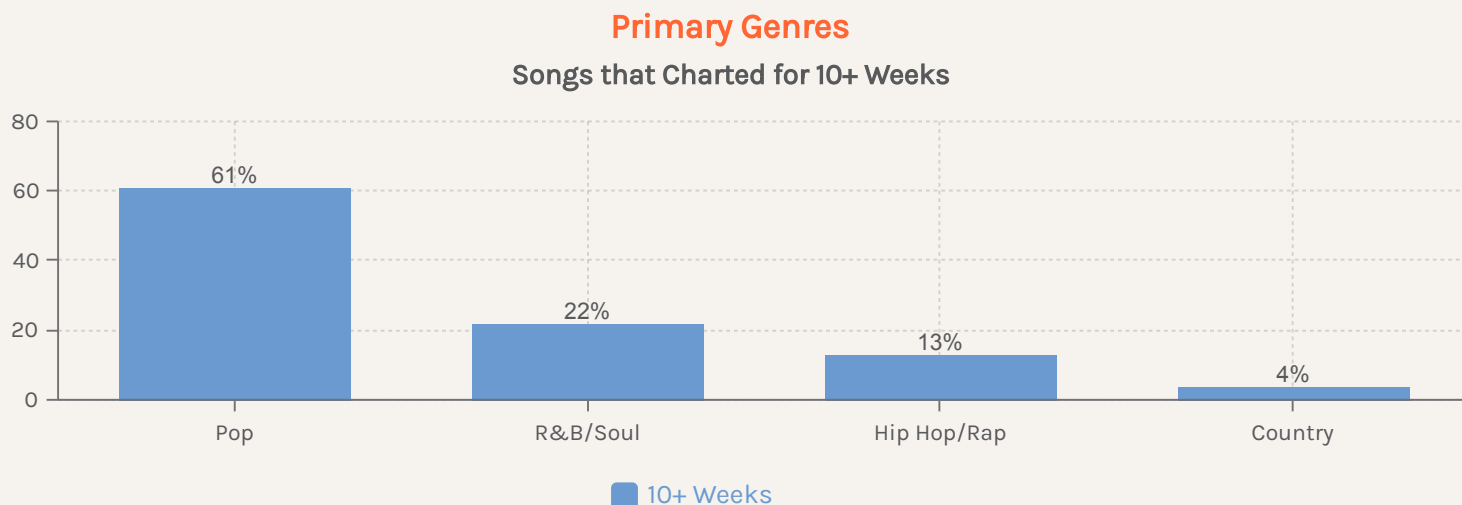
Primary Genres  
2017 - Q3 2021



# Primary Genres: Staying Power

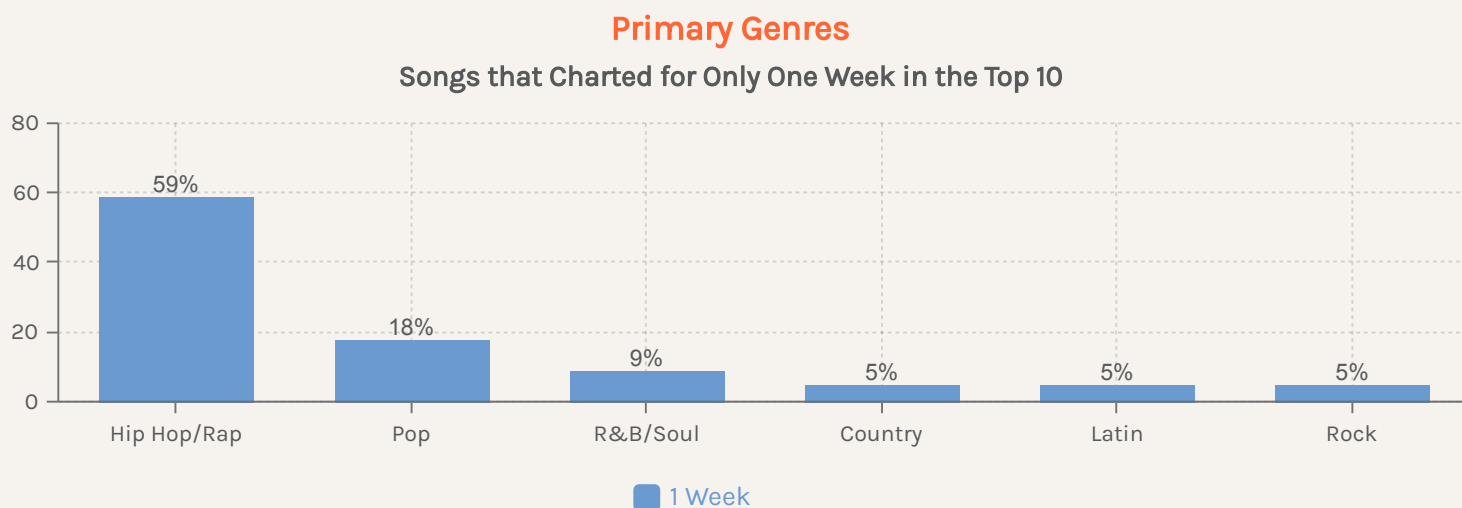
## Songs that Charted for 10+ Weeks in the Top 10

While hip hop was the most popular genre in the overall Top 10, when looking specifically at songs that charted for 10+ weeks in the Top 10, pop was the most prominent genre, accounting for 61% of songs.



## Songs that Charted for One Week in the Top 10

When looking at songs that remained in the Top 10 for just one week, the most prominent genre was hip hop.



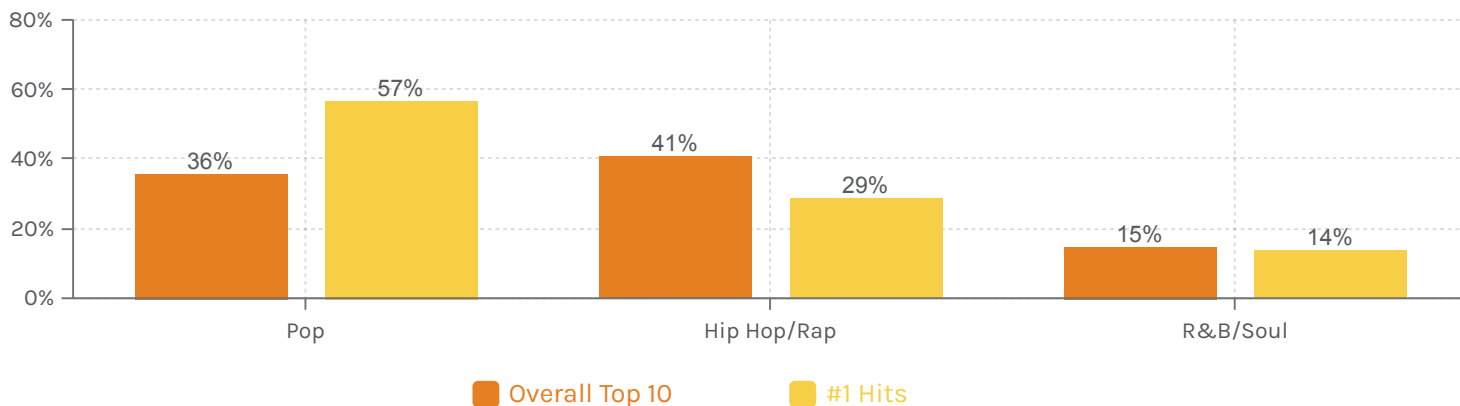
# Primary Genres: #1 Hits

Fourteen songs charted at #1 during the first three quarters of 2021.

While hip hop was the most popular genre in the overall Top 10, when looking specifically at number one hits, pop was the most prominent genre, accounting for 57%.

## Primary Genres

#1 Hits vs. Overall Top 10



*Butter*  
BTS



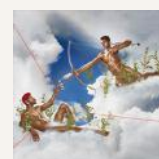
*Drivers License*  
Olivia Rodrigo



*Good 4 U*  
Olivia Rodrigo



*Leave The Door Open*  
Silk Sonic



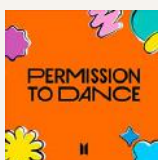
*Montero (Call Me By Your Name)*  
Lil Nas X



*Mood*  
24Goldn



*Peaches*  
Justin Bieber  
feat. Daniel  
Caesar & Giveon



*Permission To Dance*  
BTS



*Rapstar*  
Polo G



*Save Your Tears (Remix)*  
The Weeknd &  
Ariana Grande



*Stay*  
The Kid LAROI &  
Justin Bieber



*Up*  
Cardi B



*Way 2 Sexy*  
Drake feat. Future  
& Young Thug

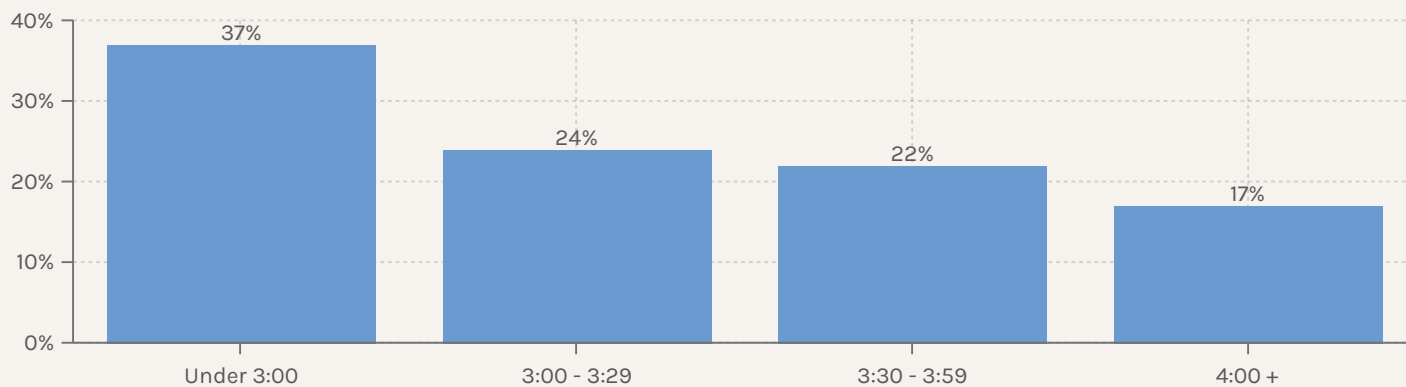


*What's Next*  
Drake

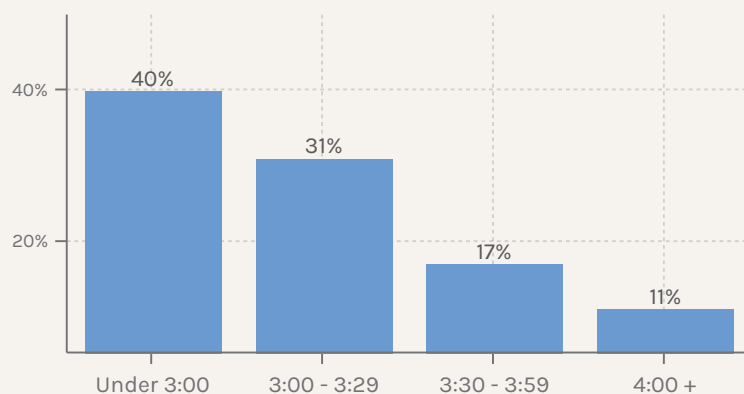
# Song Length: Top 10

In the first three quarters of 2021, 37% of all Hot 100 Top 10 hits were under three minutes long. Average song length was 3:24.

**Song Length**  
Q1 - Q3 2021



**Song Length Range**  
Non-Hip Hop: Q1 - Q3 2021



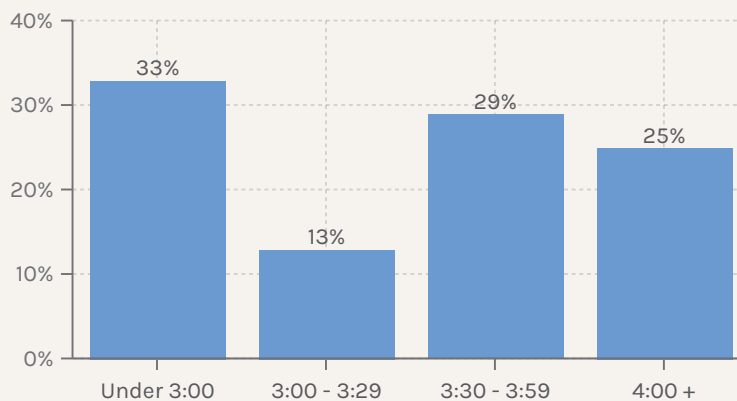
Outside of hip hop, average song length was shorter than the overall Top 10, landing at 3:16.

The under three minute range was the most popular, accounting for 40% of songs following a year-over-year increase since 2017, when only 7% of songs were under three minutes.

Among hip hop songs, average song length was longer than the overall Top 10, landing at 3:35.

The under three minute range was also the most popular. With the exception of the 3:00 - 3:29 song length range, which plunged from 52% in 2020 to just 13% YTD, all other song length ranges increased in prominence, most notably the 4:00+ range, which rose from 10% in 2020 to 25% YTD. This is largely due to Drake's influx of lengthy Top 10s.

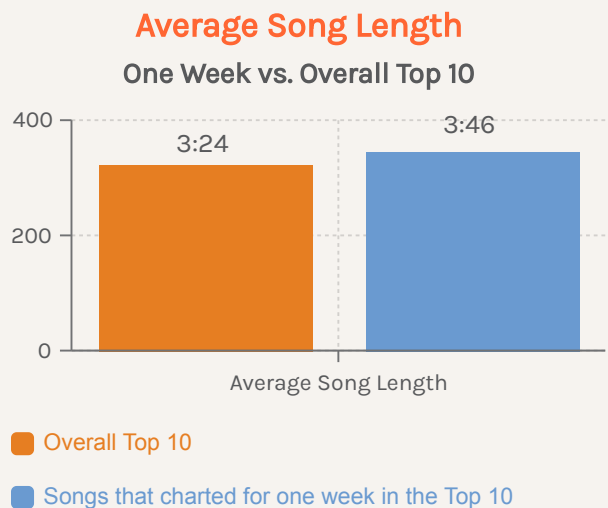
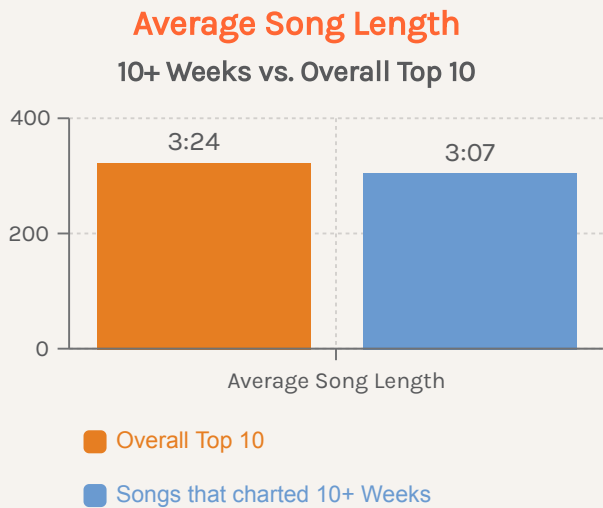
**Song Length Range**  
Hip Hop: Q1 - Q3 2021



# Song Length: Staying Power & #1 Hits

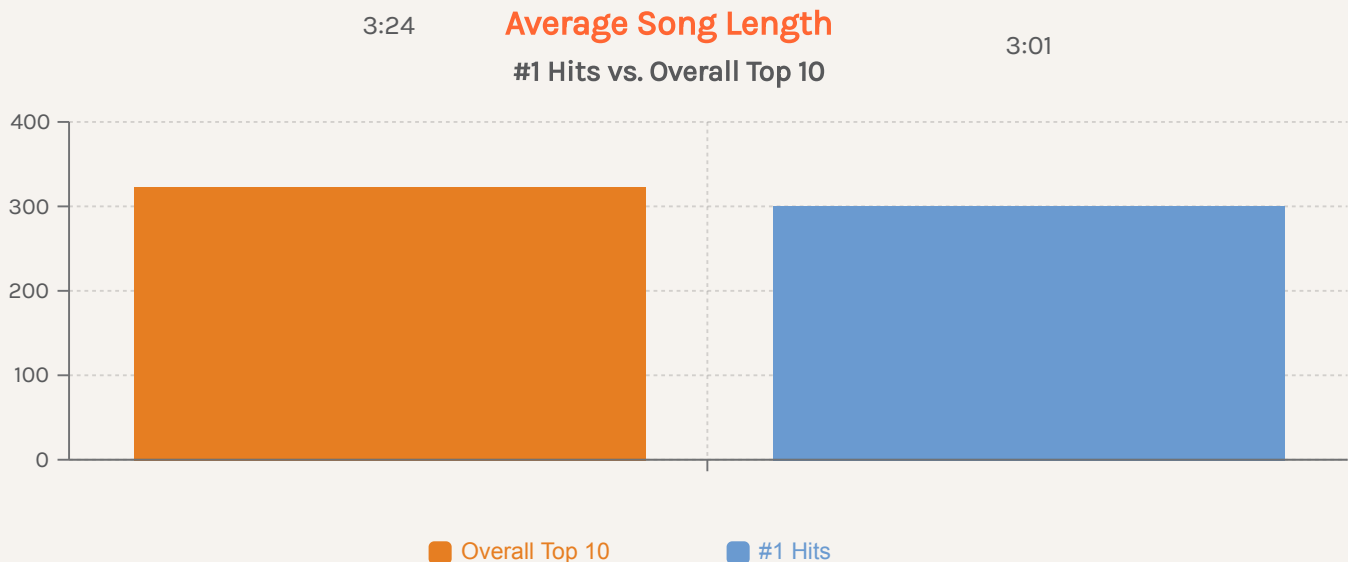
## Staying Power

While average song length for the overall Top 10 was 3:24, when looking specifically at songs that charted for 10+ weeks in the Top 10, average song length was much shorter at 3:07. On the flip side, when looking at songs that charted for just one week in the Top 10, the average song length was much longer, averaging 3:46.



## #1 Hits

When looking at #1s, average song length was even shorter, landing at 3:01.





# Hot 100 Top 10 2020 vs. Q1 & Q2 2021

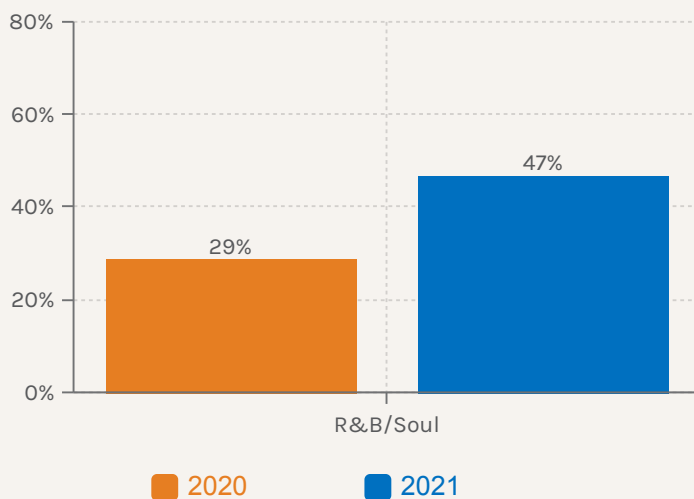
Select Report Highlights

# 2020 vs. Q1 - Q3 2021

How are this year's Top 10 hits shaping up when compared to 2020? Below are a few highlights from the report.

## On the Rise

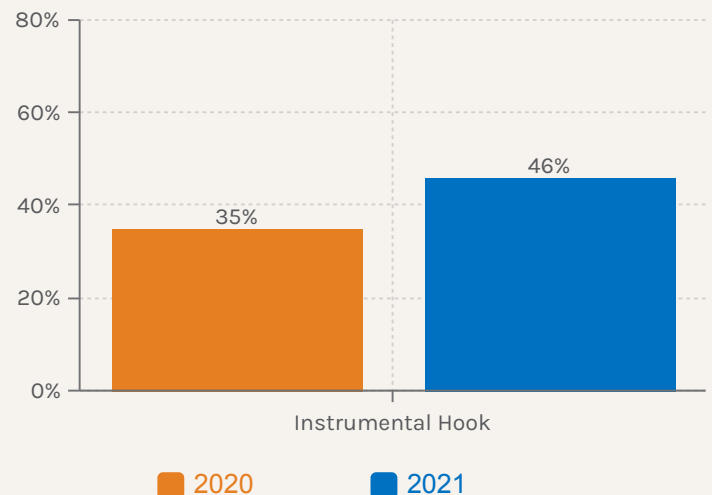
### Sub-Genres & Influences



Songs with an R&B influence have become more prominent in the Top 10, rising from 29% in 2020 to 47% YTD.

Songs that establish an instrumental hook that will later be used throughout the song increased from 35% in 2020 to 46% YTD.

### Hook-Based Intros





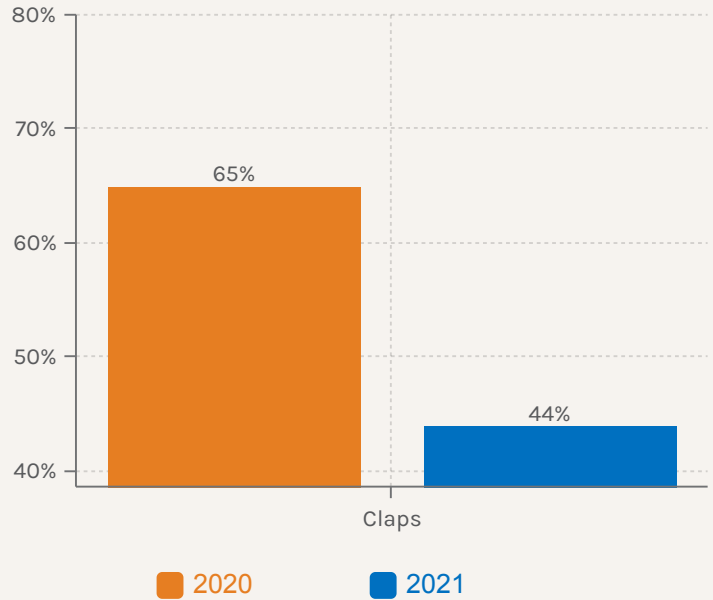
# 2020 vs. Q1 - Q3 2021

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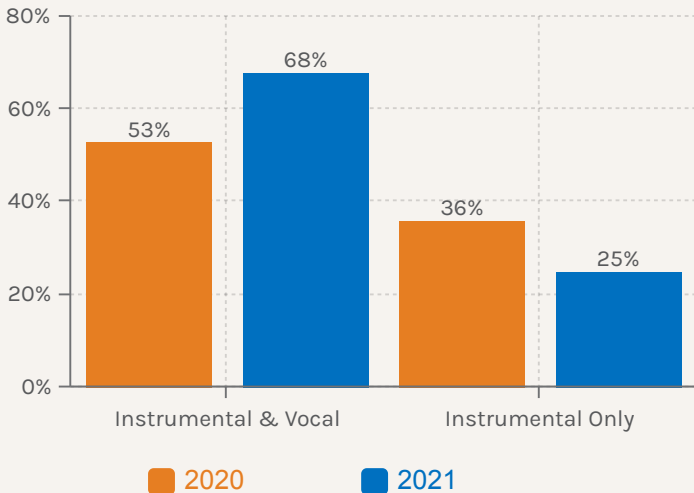
## In Decline

There has been a significant decrease in Top 10 hits featuring claps.

### Prominent Instruments



### Intro: Instrumental vs. Vocal



Purely instrumental intros have declined while intros that feature instruments and vocals have increased.

TikTok Hits.....PAGE 49

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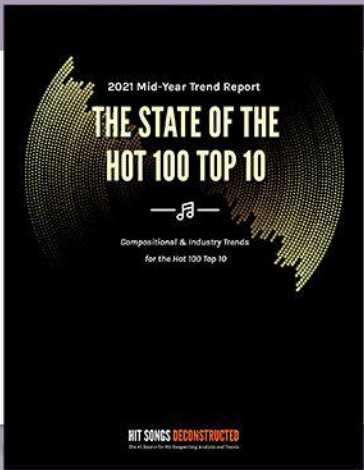
# What's the state of the Hot 100 Top 10?

Who are today's key industry players and influencers? Which compositional characteristics are most prominent in the Top 10? Which are on the rise and which are in decline?

**Today's hits are changing faster than ever.**

To stay ahead of the curve, it's critical to proactively stay on top of what's driving today's most successful songs at the compositional level.

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