

THE TAYLOR SWIFT EVOLUTION

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The #1 Source for Hit Songwriting Analysis and Trends



INSTRUMENTS & SOUND



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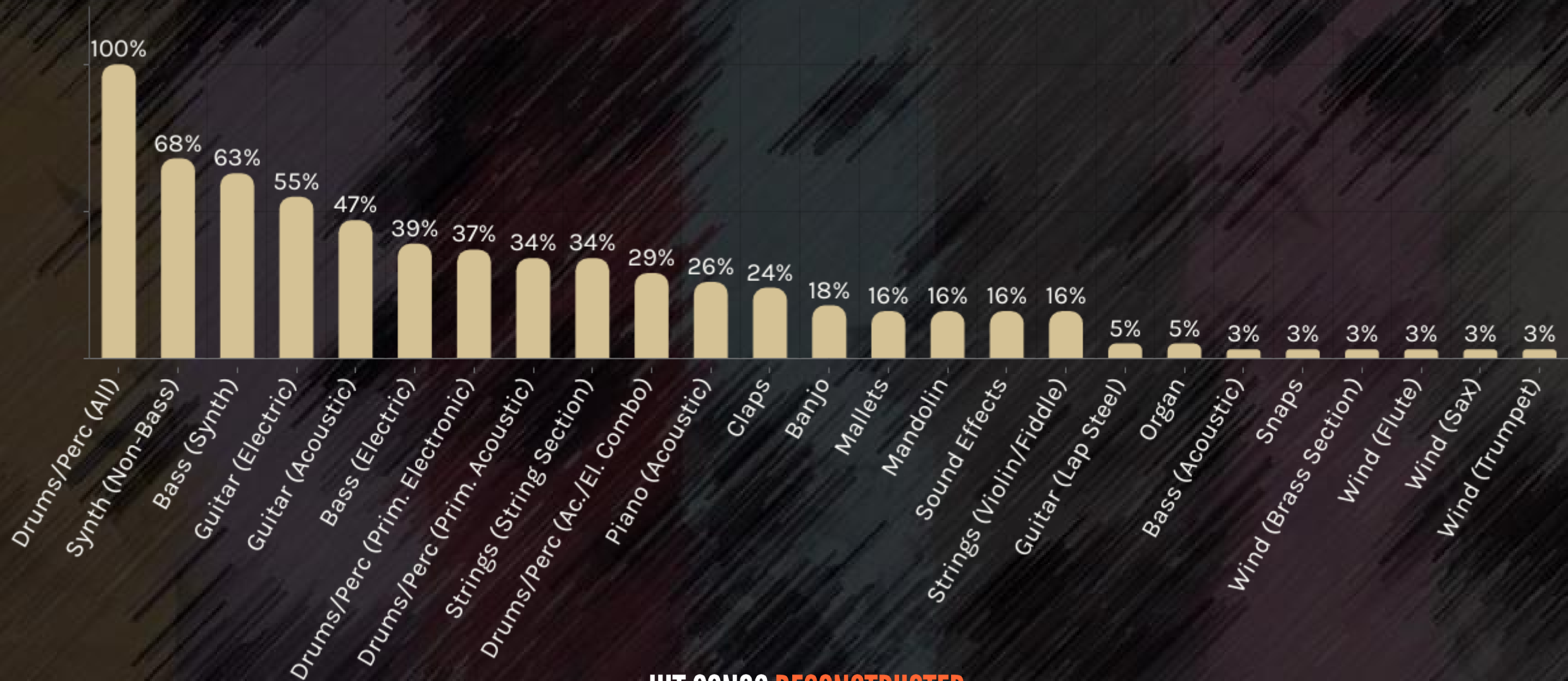
Strategic Instrument Choices

Twenty-four prominent instruments shaped the sound and vibe of Taylor Swift Hot 100 top 10 hits.

Every song features drums/percussion, with electronic drums slightly edging out acoustic drums. Non-bass synth, synth bass, and electric guitar are present in over half of all songs.

As Swift's music started to shift from country to overt pop and beyond, her instrument choices followed suit.

Instruments: 2008 - 2023



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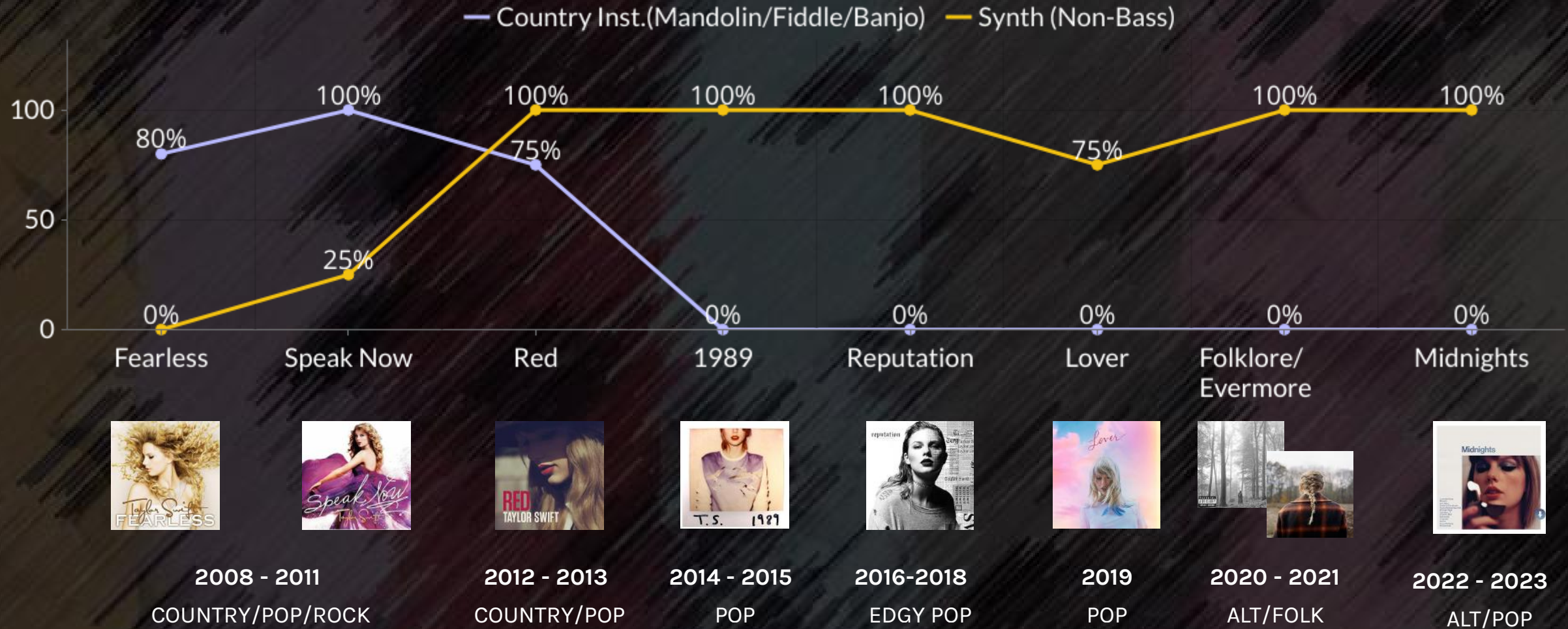
From Country Instrumentation to Pop Synths

Country-leaning instrumentation such as mandolin, fiddle and banjo are highly prevalent in Swift's early body of work. However, after *Red* they were entirely gone, being replaced by pop synths.

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Instrument Evolution by Album



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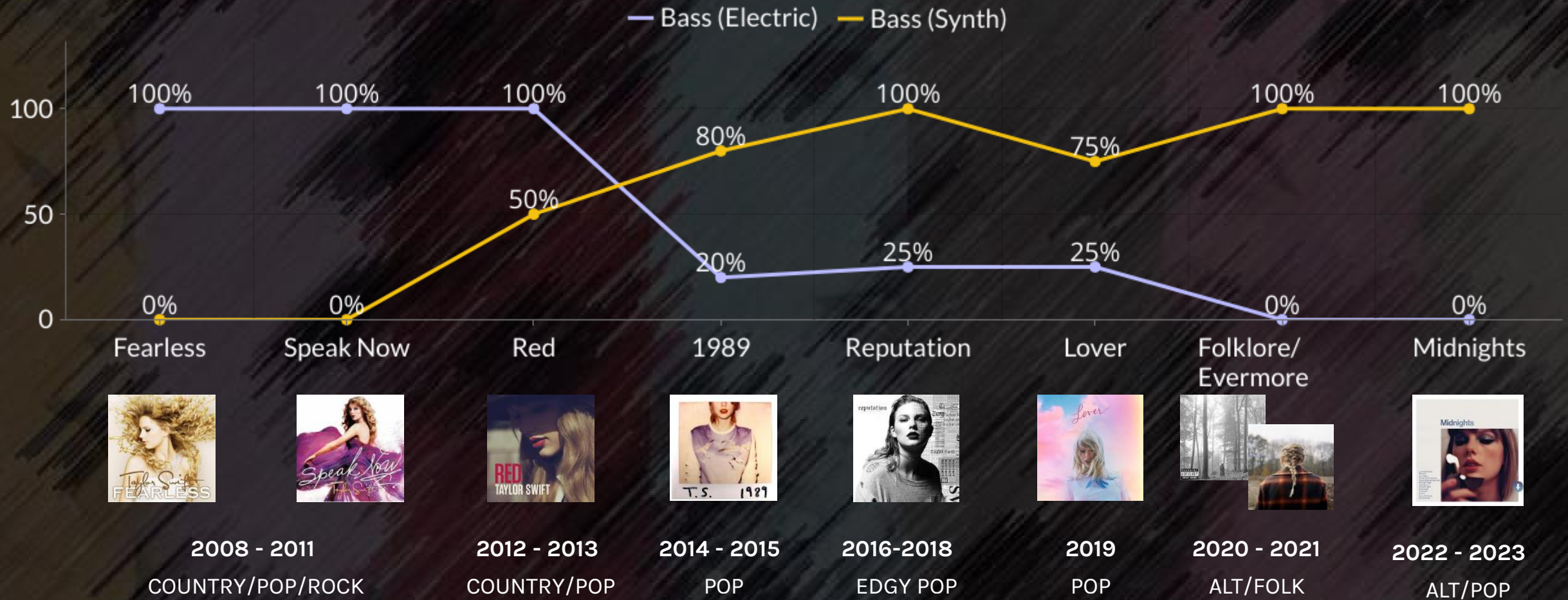
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From Electric Bass to Synth Bass

Electric bass is a staple of Swift's early work, present in all of her top 10s from *Fearless* through *Red*. *Red* also introduced synth bass into the mix, which coincided with her shift into more overt pop territory. From 1989 on, synth bass provided foundation in nearly all of her top 10s, while electric bass faded to nil.

Instrument Evolution by Album



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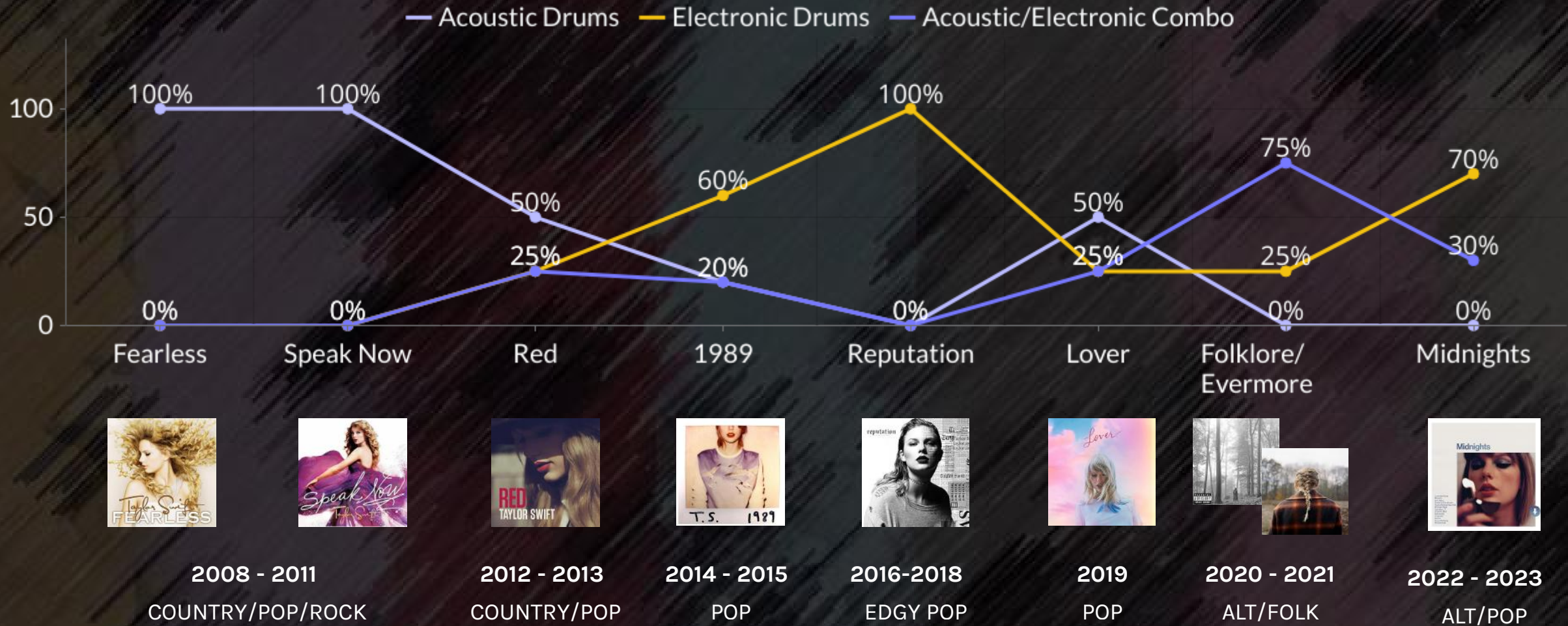
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From Acoustic to Electronic Drums

Also a staple of Swift's early body of work are acoustic drums, which define the beat on *Fearless* and *Speak Now*. However, their use faded from *Red* through *Reputation*, while electronic drums emerged to fit her pop-centric approach. From then on it was a mixed bag, with acoustic, electronic, and acoustic/electronic combo drums being present in an assortment of her top 10s.

Instrument Evolution by Album



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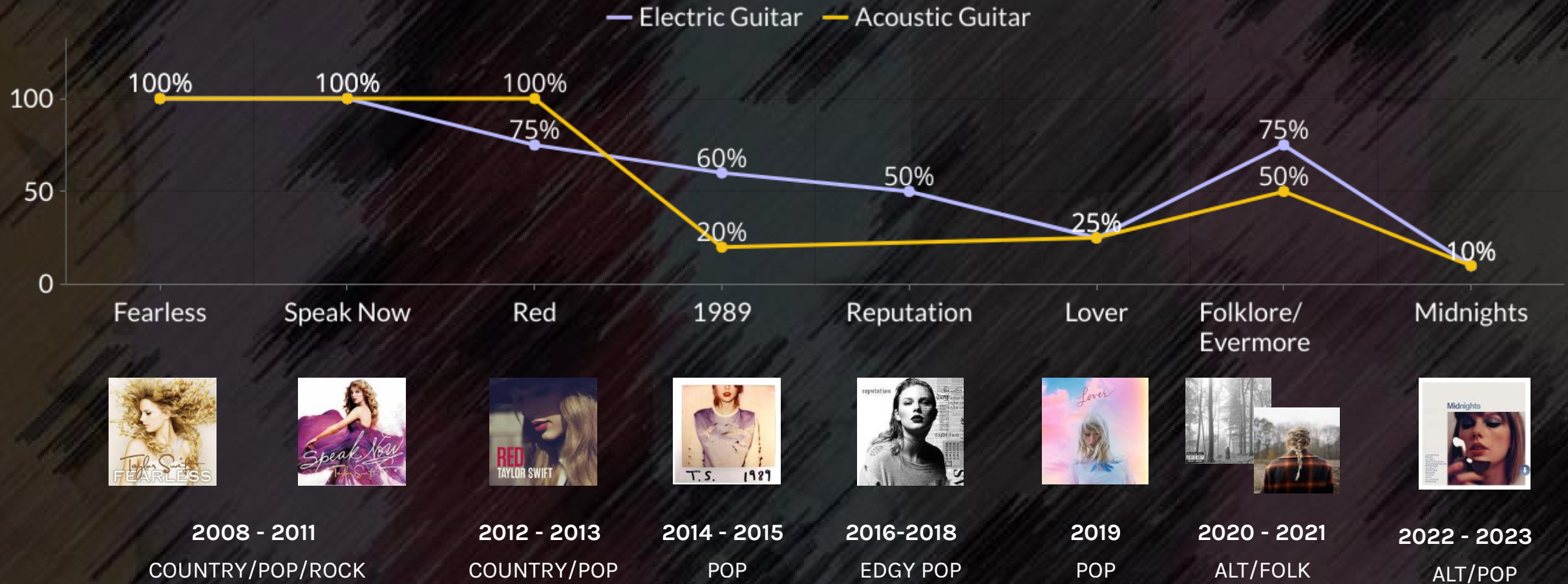
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The Shift Away From Guitars

Guitars - both electric and acoustic - are a defining element in Swift's early sound. After *Red*, their use started to diminish (acoustic more notably than electric), with the main exception being songs on the singer-songwriter and folk-leaning *folklore* and *evermore*.

Instrument Evolution by Album



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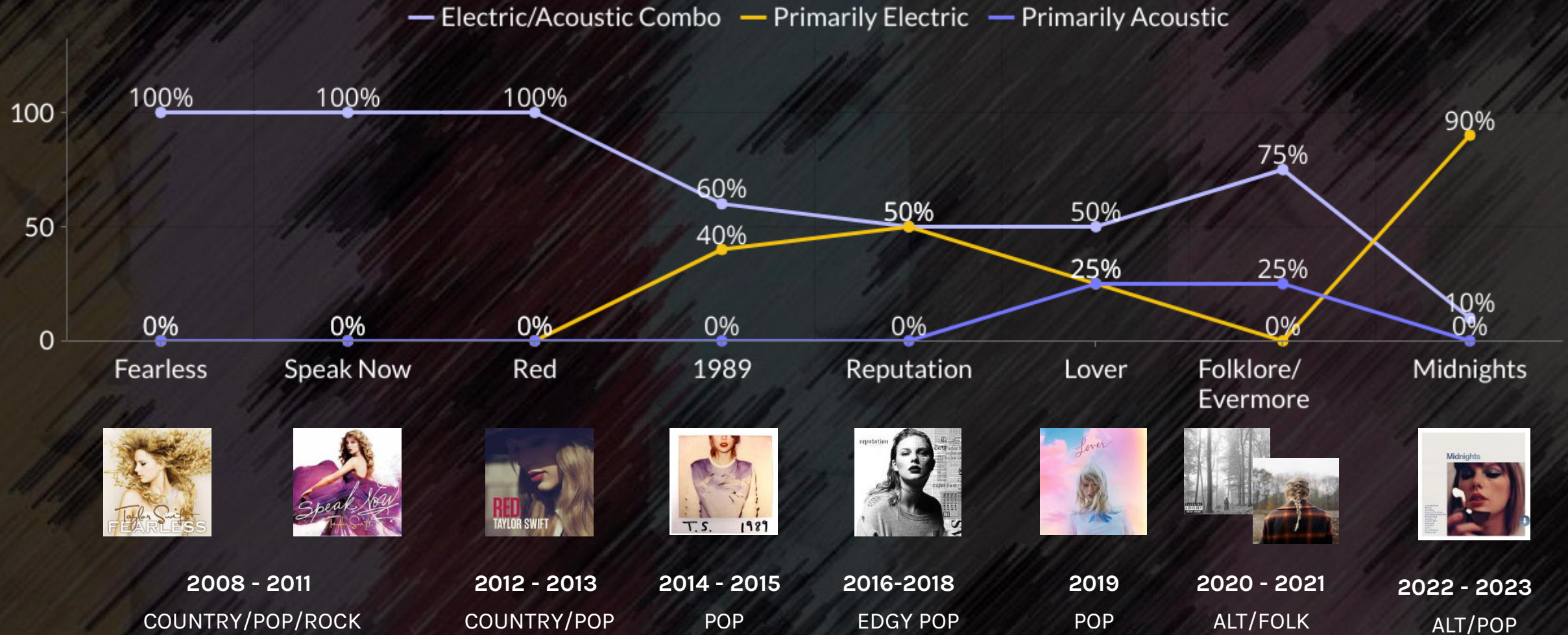
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Acoustic & Electronic Sounds

The majority of hits throughout Swift's career feature a combination of acoustic and electronic sounds. The most overt electronic-leaning songs can be heard on *1989*, *Reputation*, and *Midnights*, while acoustic-leaning hits are few and far between.

Instrument Evolution by Album



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TAYLOR SWIFT HITS DECONSTRUCTED

Take a deep dive into the songwriting and production techniques used to craft her biggest hits!

This 4.5-hour masterclass provides unprecedented insight into the songwriting techniques Swift and her A-list collaborators used to craft her Hot 100 top 10 hits.

- Learn the art of connecting deeply with audiences through songs that weave personal stories with universal emotions.
- Master the balance between emotional depth and catchy hooks that make her songs linger in hearts and charts alike.

You'll gain a treasure trove of tools, techniques, and insights that you can immediately use to elevate your craft!



www.HitSongsDeconstructed.com/TaylorSwift



KEY & TEMPO



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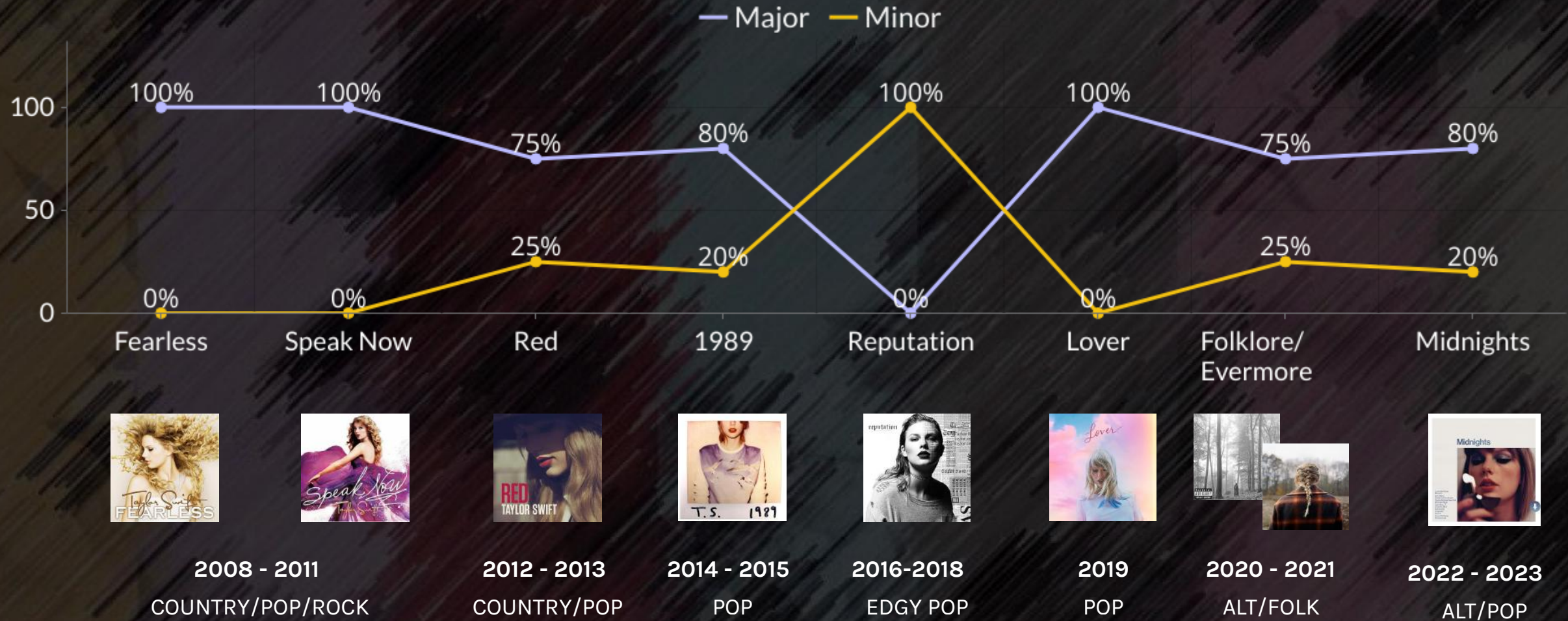
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Major Use of Major Keys

The vast majority of Taylor Swift's top 10 body of work are in a major key. The minor exceptions - 2017's "Ready For It" and "Look What You Made Me Do" - have their minor tonalities complimenting their edgy vibes while putting them in-tune with Hot 100 top 10 trends. In 2017, the majority of pop songs were in a minor key, due in part to hip hop/rap's influence on them - a genre that favors minor tonalities. Both songs possess a hip hop/rap influence.

Evolution by Album: Major vs. Minor



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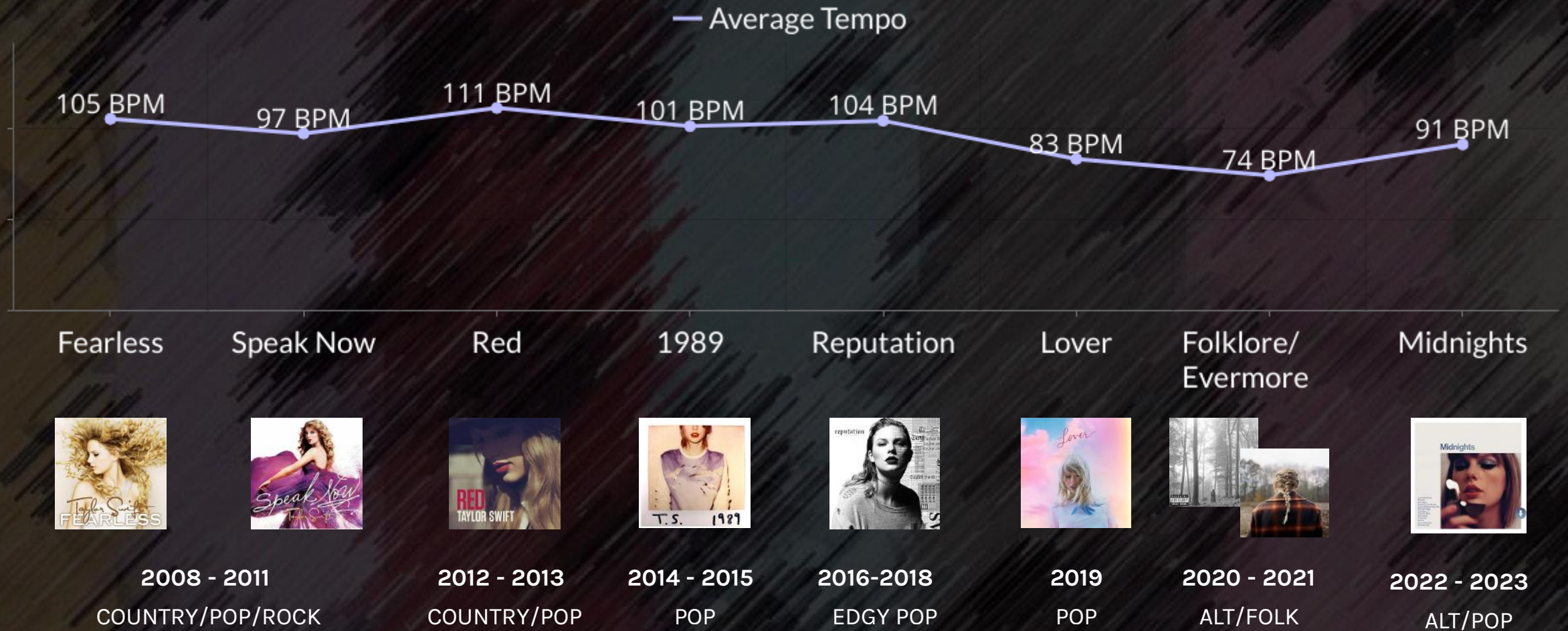
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Strategically Chosen Tempos

The average tempo of Taylor Swift's Hot 100 top 10 body of work ranges from 74 BPM (*folklore/evermore*) to 111 BPM (*Red*). Each song's tempo is strategically chosen to compliment their intended vibe, from the empowering "Shake It Off" (160 BPM) to the melancholic "Maroon" (54 BPM).

Evolution by Album: Tempo



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