

The Cassette Comeback

What used to be 'in' years ago, often makes a comeback years later. Things like clothing styles, make-up, and music often return. People think they are trendy again. That has happened to the tape cassette. It was popular in the 1970s and 1980s.

Now, in the 2020s it's coming back. It seems the tape has made its comeback because of Top 40 musicians. These artists are not only streaming their music. They are also releasing their music on CD, vinyl records, and cassettes!



History

Music was first listened to on records. That was in the early 1900s. Technology kept on changing though and in 1962 the tape cassette was invented. The first album was released in 1966. The cassette was smaller than a record and not as easy to break or scratch. The cassette tape stayed popular for many years. It was the most popular in 1989. In the 1990s, the CD came out. So people switched from the tape to the CD.

15 Playing tapes

A cassette tape works by using magnetic tape. To play the music, you put a tape into a tape player. The tape turns around two wheels, moving from left to right. When one side is finished, the tape is flipped over to play the other side. In 1979, the Walkman – a portable cassette player- came out. You could carry the Walkman in your hand and listen to music on headphones while you walked. This was amazing!

The comeback

The comeback started when, pop artists like Billie Eilish and Lady Gaga, released their music on tape. Not so long ago, Taylor Swift, released her newest album *Midnights* not only on LP and CD, but also on tape. Because popular artists are doing this, sales are going up. For example, the number of tapes sold in the USA went from 173,000 tapes in 2020, to 343,000 in 2021. Another reason for the comeback is also the price. It takes months to make records and it is also expensive. Cassettes are quick and cheap to produce – it takes only two weeks to make. So, artists use this cheaper form now to sell their music.

Nostalgic

If you want to be a part of the tape comeback, don't spend your money yet. First, look in the attic. Your parents and grandparents may have these things in boxes, waiting to be played again!

Sources: [bbc.co.uk/newsround](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround); [rollingstone.com](https://www.rollingstone.com);

Words to help you

to release = to bring out music for people to listen to
to flip = to turn over to the other side
to invent = to think of something new and build (or create) it