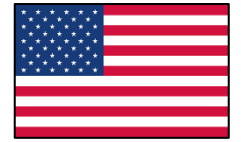


# THE SUPREMES

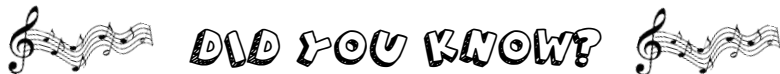


## Timeline

1959	1961	1962	1964-1965	1967	1970	1977
Four girls in Detroit form 'The Primettes'	They sign to Motown records under the new name 'The Supremes'	One member leaves and they become a trio	The Supremes get four songs to number 1 in the U.S. charts	They change their name to 'Diana Ross and the Supremes'	Diana Ross leaves and has a successful solo career	The Supremes have continued success and have their final concert in London

## Key Songs

Where Did Our Love Go?	1964 - The Supremes were called 'The No-Hit Supremes' by some at Motown but everything changed when this went to number 1.
Baby Love	1964 - Another number 1 single and one which gave them international success.
Come See About Me	1964 - This song took 'I Feel Fine' by The Beatles off the top spot to become The Supremes 3 <sup>rd</sup> number 1 hit single.
Stop! In the Name of Love	1965 - One of The Supremes most famous number 1 songs is this rousing song about jealousy and romance.
You Keep me Hangin' On	1966 - The song's guitar part originated from a morse code-like radio sound effect, typically used before a news announcement
You Can't Hurry Love	1966 - Yet another number 1 single and is about a mother's words of encouragement to a daughter.
Reflections	1967 - Released in the 'Summer of Love' and at the height of the Vietnam War, the song became a psychedelic success with similarities and comparisons to The Beatles.
Up the Ladder to the Roof	1970 - The group's first release after Diana Ross left and was replaced by Jean Terrell.
Automatically Sunshine	1972 - A new hit after Diana Ross left, written and produced by famous singer/songwriter Smokey Robinson.



Initially, the group did impress the Motown executives but were told they were too young. Their first records were not successful so they continued to do backing vocals and handclaps on other people's records. They did not give up until they finally got a record deal with Motown!

## The Importance of The Supremes

### Motown Records

The city of Detroit was known for its large car manufacturing industry, and so when Berry Gordy set up a new record label in 1959, he named it Motown (Motor-town). His idea was to create a place where black musicians could walk in unknown, record a song, and walk out a superstar. For many decades, Motown was the highest-earning African American business in the United States, recording artists such as Stevie Wonder, Jackson 5 and The Supremes. It also helped bring black music to white audiences after the end of segregation.

### Diana Ross

Diana Ross had an incredibly successful music and acting career after she left The Supremes. Songs such as 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough' and 'Upside Down' were huge hits. She even played on the Pyramid stage at Glastonbury in 2022 at the age of 78. She is the only female artist to have number 1 hits as a solo musician, in a duet, as a trio and as part of an ensemble. She has influenced other musicians such as Beyonce, Madonna and Jennifer Lopez.

## Key Events

### Civil Rights Era

The Supremes were at the height of their fame during the Civil Rights movement across the U.S.A. Diana Ross and The Supremes were invited onto the Tonight Show right after Martin Luther King's assassination (April 4<sup>th</sup> 1968). They performed "Somewhere" with special lyrics and Diana spoke of her sorrow.

### Fashionable Performances

The Supremes style was seen as purposefully 'over the top' with large beehive wigs, fake eyelashes and dresses covered in sequins or beads. There was even an exhibition of their outfits in the London V & A in 2008. Opera Winfrey stated, "Coloured people on TV! You never saw anything like it in the Sixties – three women of colour who were totally empowered, creative, imaginative... beautiful... posed."