

# [***Jason Aldean's Controversial Try That In A Small Town Takes Top Spot On Billboard Chart Pushing Country Music To Record-Breaking Heights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68VD-HPY1-DXVP-50HJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 751 words

**Byline:** Mary Whitfill Roeloffs, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Country music songs are in the top three spots on the Billboard Hot 100 for the first time ever.

**Body**

**Topline**

The rise of Jason Aldean's Try That in a Small Town a song with themes about gun ownership and vigilantism that was thrust into the national spotlight when Country Music Television pulled its music video has made way for country music songs to take the No. 1, 2 and 3 spots on the Hot 100for the first time in the chart s 65-year history.

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Jason Aldean performs on stage during day three of CMA Fest 2023 at Nissan Stadium on June 10, 2023 in Nashville, Tennessee. Photo by Terry Wyatt

WireImage,

</figcaption></figure>

**Key Facts**

Try That In A Small Town debutedat No. 2 on the**Billboard**Hot 100 last week and rose to the top spot this week for thechart dated August 5, rounding out a top-three chart of country hits with Last Night by Morgan Wallen at No. 2 and Luke Combs Fast Car a cover of the 1988 Tracy Chapman hit by the same name at No. 3.

The previous week s No. 1 song, Seven by South Korean singer and BTS member Jung Kook,dropsto No. 9 on the latest chart, which was previewed by**Billboard** on Monday before the full Hot 100 list which measures songs by performance on streaming services, radio plays and sales is updated on Wednesday.

Songs from the country genre have never held the top three spots at the same time,said, and Wallen and Combs made history of their own in June when their songs held the top two positions, the first time both spots were taken up by country songs since 1981.

Try That In A Small Town was first released in May but didn't make headlines or the**Billboard** chart until July when its music video, which includes footage of people protesting police alongside lyrics about gun ownership, was pulled from CMT.

The song explores the patriotic sentiments of rural areas and implies gun owners in small towns will take it upon themselves to retaliate against people who cuss out a cop, spit in his face or stomp on the flag."

The song has been criticized by reviewers, fellow musicians and a few politicians Tennessee state Rep. Justin Jones, a Democrat, called it a shameful vision of gun extremism and vigilantism that calls for racist violence.

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Recording artist Jason Aldean performs during the Route 91 Harvest country music festival at the Las Vegas Village on October 1, 2017 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Photo by Mindy Small

FilmMagic

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**Key Background**

The sentiments in Try That In A Small Town have drawn criticism from gun control advocates including Shannon Watts, founder of Moms Demand Action For Gun Sense In America who arequick to point outthat it was Aldean who was playing a concert in Las Vegas when one of the country's deadliest mass shootings killed 60 people and wounded at least 400 more. Aldean that year told the Associated Press it s too easy to get guns but has otherwise largely kept his political opinions out of public view for years,telling**Rolling Stone** in 2016 that talking ***politics*** is "a no-win." He s seemed to have loosed on his stance in the time since Aldeanpraisedthe lack of mask wearers in the crowd at a pandemic-era concert and his wife made headlines when she posted photosof their toddlers wearing anti-Joe Biden shirts in 2021 before launchingher ownbrand of shirts with statements like "Unapologetically Conservative," which have been modeled by her husband.

**Contra**

Aldean took to X, the platform still calledTwitterat the time, in the days following his music video's controversy to call criticisms of his song "meritless" and "dangerous." He said the song "refers to the feeling of a community that I had growing up, where we took care of our neighbors, regardless of differences of background or belief. Because they were our neighbors, and that was above any differences." He also struck back against critics calling the song or video racist, saying there is not a single lyric in the song that references race or points to it. The video used real footage from a Black Lives Matter protest before it was edited out, the**New York Times** reported.

**Big Number**

23 million. That's how many times the "Try That In A Small Town"music video has been viewed on YouTube since it was posted July 14.

**Further Reading**

Jason Aldean s Controversial Try That In A Small Town Debuts At No. 2 On Billboard Chart(**Forbes**)

Jason Aldean Sees Backlash For Music Video About Guns And Police Protesters(**Forbes**)

Jason Aldean's Defenders: Trump, DeSantis Among GOP Heavyweights Backing Singer Amid Controversy(**Forbes**)

Country Music Goes No. 1 And 2 On Music Charts First Time In 40 Years(**Forbes**)

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