

List of best-selling albums in the United States



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This is a **list of the best-selling albums in the United States** based on <u>RIAA</u> certification and <u>Nielsen SoundScan</u> sales tracking. The criteria are that the album must have been published (including self-publishing by the artist), and the album must have shipped at least 10 million units in the United States, achieving, in RIAA terminology, a diamond certification.

Groupings are based on different benchmarks; the highest being for sales of at least 20 million copies, and the lowest being for multi-disc albums certified at least 10 times platinum and single-disc albums that have been certified at least 10 times platinum but with sales figures lower than 10,000,000. Albums are listed in order of shipments, or sales figures when available, by greatest to least.

As a result of the RIAA's methodology of counting each disc in a multi-disc set as one unit toward certification, most double albums on the list—such as Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and Outkast's *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*—have been certified with a number double the number of copies sold. Such albums have the shipments of copies, not discs, indicated. Conversely, the certification level for double albums that fit onto one compact disc such as the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack reflect the actual number of copies sold. Some notable double LPs that would appear on this list if counted as two units are Elton John's *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* (8× Platinum) and Peter Frampton's *Frampton Comes Alive!* (8× Platinum).

The albums in this list are ordered first by number of copies shipped or sold, then by platinum awards received, and finally by artist name and album title.

Albums with two references for their estimated actual sales include sales through <u>BMG Music Club</u>. Albums with three references for their estimated actual sales include sales through BMG Music Club and Columbia House.

Over 20 million copies

Year	Artist Album		Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification ^{[1][2]}
1982	Michael Jackson	Thriller	Epic	$(27,700,000^{\ddagger})^{[3]}$	33× Platinum
1971	Led Zeppelin	Led Zeppelin IV	Atlantic	23,000,000	23× Platinum
1973	Pink Floyd	The Dark Side of the Moon	Harvest/Capitol	$(20,502,000^{\frac{1}{2}})^{[4]}$	15× Platinum (as of 1998)

Over 15 million copies

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification ^[1]
1976	Eagles	Their Greatest Hits (1971–1975)	Asylum	$(18,593,000^{\pm})^{[5][6]}$	29× Platinum
1980	AC/DC	Back in Black	Atlantic	$(18,430,000^{\ddagger})^{[6][7]}$	22× Platinum
1997	Shania Twain	Come On Over	Mercury Nashville	(17,661,500) ^{[6][8]}	20× Platinum
1977	Fleetwood Mac	Rumours	Warner Bros.	(17,258,464 [‡]) ^{[6][9]}	20× Platinum

Year	Artist	tist Album		Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1976	Boston	Boston	Epic Records	17,000,000	17× Platinum
1974	Elton John	Greatest Hits	Polydor	17,000,000	17× Platinum
1991	Metallica	Metallica	Elektra	(16,400,000) ^[10]	16× Platinum
1976	Eagles	Hotel California	Asylum	16,000,000	16× Platinum
1995	Alanis Morissette	Jagged Little Pill	Maverick	(15,350,000) ^{[6][11]}	16× Platinum
1977	Soundtrack / Bee Gees	Saturday Night Fever	RSO	15,000,000	15× Platinum

Over 10 million copies

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1994	Hootie & the Blowfish	Cracked Rear View	Atlantic	(14,580,000)[6][12][13]	16× Platinum
1987	Guns N' Roses	Appetite for Destruction	Geffen	(14,490,000 [‡]) ^{[6][14]}	18× Platinum
1978	Soundtrack / John Travolta / Olivia Newton- John / Various artists	Grease	RSO	(14,000,000 [‡]) ^[15]	8× Platinum (as of 1984)
1969	The Beatles	Abbey Road	Apple	$(14,000,000^{\ddagger})^{[16]}$	12× Platinum (as of 2001)
1972	Simon & Garfunkel	Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits	Columbia	14,000,000	14× Platinum
1999	Backstreet Boys	Millennium	Jive	(13,890,000)[6][17]	13× Platinum
1984	Bob Marley & The Wailers	Legend	<u>Island</u>	(13,660,000 [‡]) ^[18]	15× Platinum
1984	Bruce Springsteen	Born in the U.S.A.	Columbia	(13,463,000 [‡]) ^[19]	15× Platinum
1992	Soundtrack / Whitney Houston	The Bodyguard	<u>Arista</u>	(13,450,000)[6][20]	17× Platinum
1979	Pink Floyd	The Wall	Columbia/Harvest/EMI	$(13,381,000^{\ddagger})^{[21]}$	23× Platinum (as of 1999)

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1987	Soundtrack	Dirty Dancing	RCA	(13,232,000 [‡]) ^{[6][22]}	11× Platinum (as of 1994)
1999	Santana	Supernatural	Arista	(13,110,000) ^{[6][20]}	15× Platinum
1984	Prince and the Revolution	Purple Rain	Warner Bros.	(13,107,000 [‡]) ^[23]	13× Platinum
2000	The Beatles	1	Apple/EMI/Capitol	(12,800,000)[24]	11× Platinum (as of 2010)
2000	NSYNC	No Strings Attached	Jive	(12,680,000)[6][20]	11× Platinum (as of 2001)
2000	Eminem	The Marshall Mathers LP	Aftermath	(12,540,000) ^{[6][17]}	10× Platinum (as of 2011)
1999	Britney Spears	Baby One More Time	<u>Jive</u>	(12,200,000)[6][17]	14× Platinum
1986	Bon Jovi	Slippery When Wet	Mercury Records	(12,106,000 [‡]) ^[25]	12× Platinum
1990	Garth Brooks	No Fences	Capitol Nashville	$(12,001,000^{\ddagger})^{[26]}$	17× Platinum
1987	Def Leppard	Hysteria	Mercury Records	12,000,000	12× Platinum
1992	Kenny G	Breathless	Arista	12,000,000	12× Platinum
1980	Kenny Rogers	Greatest Hits	Liberty	12,000,000	12× Platinum
1969	Led Zeppelin	<u>Led Zeppelin</u> <u>II</u>	Atlantic	12,000,000	12× Platinum
1985	Phil Collins	No Jacket Required	Atlantic	12,000,000	12× Platinum
1997	Backstreet Boys	Backstreet Boys	<u>Jive</u>	(11,920,000)[6][17]	14× Platinum
2011	Adele	21	Columbia/XL	(11,800,000)[27]	14× Platinum
1996	Celine Dion	Falling into You	Epic Records	(11,799,000)[6][28]	11× Platinum
1999	Creed	Human Clay	Wind-up Records	(11,700,000) ^[29]	11× Platinum
1988	Journey	Greatest Hits	Columbia	$(11,600,000^{\ddagger})^{[30]}$	15× Platinum
1967	The Beatles	Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band	Capitol	(11,500,000 [‡]) ^[31]	11× Platinum
1985	Billy Joel	Greatest Hits Volume I & Volume II	<u>Columbia</u>	11,500,000	23× Platinum

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1976	James Taylor	Greatest Hits	Warner Bros.	(11,200,000 [‡]) ^[32]	11× Platinum
1997	Soundtrack	<u>Titanic</u>	Epic Records	(11,146,000) ^{[6][33]}	11× Platinum
2000	Linkin Park	Hybrid Theory	Warner Bros.	(11,126,000) ^{[6][29]}	11× Platinum
2002	Norah Jones	Come Away with Me	Blue Note	(11,100,000)[34]	10× Platinum (as of 2005)
1982	Eagles	Eagles Greatest Hits, Vol. 2	<u>Asylum</u>	11,000,000	11× Platinum
1973	Led Zeppelin	Houses of the Holy	Atlantic	11,000,000	11× Platinum
1997	Celine Dion	Let's Talk About Love	Epic Records	(10,711,000) ^{[6][28]}	10× Platinum
2002	Eminem	The Eminem Show	Aftermath	(10,700,000)[17]	10× Platinum
1991	Nirvana	Nevermind	DGC Records	(10,640,000) ^{[6][35]}	10× Platinum
1986	Beastie Boys	Licensed to III	Def Jam	$(10,630,000^{\ddagger})^{[6][36]}$	10× Platinum
1998	Kid Rock	Devil Without a Cause	Atlantic Records	(10,610,000)[6][37]	11× Platinum
1977	Meat Loaf	Bat Out of Hell	Epic Records	$(10,500,000^{\ddagger})^{[38]}$	14× Platinum
2000	Britney Spears	Oops! I Did It Again	Jive	(10,410,000)[6][17]	10× Platinum
1980	Aerosmith	Greatest Hits	Columbia	$(10,331,000^{\ddagger})^{[39]}$	11× Platinum
1998	NSYNC	*NSYNC	RCA	(10,300,000) ^{[6][40]}	10× Platinum
2004	Usher	Confessions	Arista	(10,300,000)[34]	10× Platinum
1998	Dixie Chicks	Wide Open Spaces	Monument	(10,121,000) ^{[6][41]}	12× Platinum
1985	Whitney Houston	Whitney Houston	Arista	(10,038,000 [‡]) ^[42]	13× Platinum
1991	Pearl Jam	Ten	Epic Records	(10,001,000)[43]	13× Platinum
1968	The Beatles	The Beatles	Capitol	(10,000,000 [‡]) ^[44]	19× Platinum
1977	Billy Joel	The Stranger	Columbia	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1971	Carole King	<u>Tapestry</u>	ODE	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1983	Def Leppard	Pyromania	Mercury Records	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1976	Doobie Brothers	Best of The Doobies	Warner Bros.	10,000,000	10× Platinum

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1985	The Doors	The Best of The Doors	Elektra	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1970	Elvis Presley	Elvis' Christmas Album (budget reissue of 1957 LP with altered track listing)	RCA Camden/Pickwick	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1989	Garth Brooks	Garth Brooks	Capitol	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1987	George Michael	<u>Faith</u>	Columbia	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1983	Lionel Richie	Can't Slow Down	Motown	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1990	MC Hammer	Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em	Capitol	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1987	Michael Jackson	<u>Bad</u>	Epic	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1967	Patsy Cline	Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits	Decca	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1981	REO Speedwagon	Hi Infidelity	Epic	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1984	Van Halen	1984 (MCMLXXXIV)	Warner Bros.	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1978	Van Halen	Van Halen	Warner Bros.	10,000,000	10× Platinum
1983	ZZ Top	Eliminator	Warner Bros.	10,000,000	10× Platinum

Fewer than 10 million copies

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification ^[1]
1994	Boyz II Men	<u>II</u>	Motown	(9,890,000) ^{[6][45]}	12× Platinum
1991	Garth Brooks	Ropin' the Wind	Capitol Nashville	(9,600,000) ^[17]	14× Platinum
1995	No Doubt	Tragic Kingdom	Trauma/Interscope Records	(9,520,000) ^{[6][46]}	10× Platinum
1996	Matchbox Twenty	Yourself or Someone Like You	Atlantic	(9,358,000) ^{[6][47]}	12× Platinum
1994	Green Day	Dookie	Reprise Records	(9,342,000)[6][48]	10× Platinum

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
1990	Madonna	The Immaculate Collection	Sire	$(9,305,000^{\ddagger})^{[6][49]}$	10× Platinum
2015	Adele	25	Columbia/XL	(9,300,000) ^[27]	11× Platinum
1994	Bob Seger	Greatest Hits	Capitol	(9,062,000) ^[50]	10× Platinum
1987	<u>U2</u>	The Joshua Tree	Island	$(8,979,000^{\ddagger})^{[6][51]}$	10× Platinum
1995	Shania Twain	The Woman in Me	Mercury Nashville	(8,894,000) ^{[6][52]}	12× Platinum
1995	Jewel	Pieces of You	Atlantic	(8,800,000) ^{[6][53]}	12× Platinum
1994	TLC	CrazySexyCool	LaFace	(8,765,000) ^{[6][41]}	11× Platinum
2000	Nelly	Country Grammar	Universal	(8,581,000) ^[54]	10× Platinum
1995	Mariah Carey	Daydream	Columbia	(8,505,000) ^{[6][55]}	10× Platinum
1973	The Beatles	1967-1970	Capitol	8,500,000	17× Platinum
1984	Madonna	Like a Virgin	Sire	$(8,456,000^{\ddagger})^{[56]}$	10× Platinum
1978	Steve Miller Band	Greatest Hits 1974–78	Capitol	$(8,443,000^{\frac{1}{2}})^{[57]}$	14× Platinum
1999	Dixie Chicks	<u>Fly</u>	Monument Records	(8,396,000)[41]	10× Platinum
1976	Creedence Clearwater Revival	Chronicle, Vol. 1	Fantasy	$(8,357,000^{\pm})^{[58]}$	10× Platinum
1993	Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers	Greatest Hits	MCA	(8,200,000) ^[7]	12× Platinum
1993	Mariah Carey	Music Box	Columbia	(8,012,000) ^{[6][55]}	10× Platinum
1975	Led Zeppelin	Physical Graffiti	Swan Song	8,000,000	16× Platinum
2005	Nickelback	All the Right Reasons	Roadrunner	(7,960,000) ^[59]	10× Platinum
1994	Soundtrack	The Lion King	Walt Disney Records	(7,879,000) ^[60]	10× Platinum
1994	Garth Brooks	The Hits	Liberty Records	$(7,821,000)^{[61]}$	10× Platinum
1992	Eric Clapton	Unplugged	Reprise Records	(7,617,000) ^[62]	10× Platinum
1973	The Beatles	1962–1966	Capitol	7,500,000	15× Platinum
1997	The Notorious B.I.G.	Life After Death	Bad Boy Records/Arista	(6,320,000)[6][63]	10× Platinum (as of 2000)
1998	Garth Brooks	Double Live	Capitol Nashville	(6,017,000) ^[64]	21× Platinum
1971	The Rolling	Hot Rocks 1964-	London	6,000,000	12× Platinum

Year	Artist	Album	Label	Shipments (Sales)	Certification $^{[1]}$
	Stones	1971			
2003	Outkast	Speakerboxxx/The Love Below	LaFace, Arista	(5,702,000) ^[65]	11× Platinum
1997	Garth Brooks	Sevens	Capitol Records	(5,700,000) ^[66]	10× Platinum
2002	Shania Twain	Up!	Mercury Nashville	(5,409,000) ^[65]	11× Platinum
1998	2Pac	Greatest Hits	Interscope	(5,100,000) ^[67]	10× Platinum
1996	2Pac	All Eyez On Me	Death Row Records	5,000,000	10× Platinum
2007	Garth Brooks	The Ultimate Hits	Pearl Records	5,000,000	10× Platinum
1976	Stevie Wonder	Songs in the Key of Life	Motown	5,000,000	10× Platinum
1995	The Smashing Pumpkins	Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness	Virgin	(4,900,000) ^[68]	10× Platinum
1994	Soundtrack	Forrest Gump	Epic Records	(4,400,000) ^[69]	12× Platinum
1986	Bruce Springsteen	Live/1975–85	Columbia	4,333,333	13× Platinum
1990	Led Zeppelin	Led Zeppelin Boxed Set	Atlantic Records	$(1,800,000^{\pm})^{[70]}$	10× Platinum

Notes

When tracking began, Nielsen SoundScan only had about 40% coverage of album sales. [72] SoundScan initially did not track albums sold in supermarkets, and never tracked those sold through mail-order music clubs such as Columbia House or BMG Music Club. [73][74]

See also

- List of best-selling albums
- Lists of best-selling albums by country
- List of best-selling music artists
- List of best-selling singles
- Best-selling albums in the United States since Nielsen SoundScan tracking began
- Best-selling albums by year in the United States
- List of best-selling Latin albums in the United States

[†]Only includes sales tracked by <u>Nielsen SoundScan</u> since March 1, 1991 and BMG Music Club sales, where available. [71]

[‡]As calculated by adding highest RIAA certification up to 1991 and sales tracked by Nielsen SoundScan since 1991.

List of best-selling albums of the 21st century

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External links

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- RIAA "Top 100" Albums (https://www.riaa.com/goldandplatinum.php?content_selector=top-100-albums)
- Billboard Magazine (http://www.billboard.com),— a magazine that publishes weekly music rankings

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