

# my top ten songs of the decade

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Hopefully this list is different from the ones you're used to, because I'm musically-ignorant and didn't give pop, hip hop, or obscure indie tracks a fair shake.

## 10. [The New Year](#) - Death Cab for Cutie (2003)

This was a gateway drug to the band for me. The studio cut layers modern-rock overdrive with alternative echo-effected progressions. Live, they play it hard and scare all the soft-rock enthusiasts who heard Soul Meets Body on adult contemporary back into their Priuses. Bonus: if you listen to Transatlanticism on repeat, the noise at the end of A Lack of Color blends into the beginning of The New Year, which is a nice touch.

## 9. [The Fight](#) - Days Away (2005)

The entire album was incredible, so I picked The Fight as a mix between my other favorites, Stay the Same (for its echo-y slow melodies) and Ideas (for the quicker beat and more crunchy chords). The ba-ba-ba chorus backing is great, and the strained-relationship lyrics aren't too dumb. I was also debating putting Good Old War on this list, but both bands shared members so I'll count this as their honorable mention.

## 8. [It's Far Better To Learn](#) - Saosin (2006)

Not much to say, I'll let the lead guitar and drum work speak for themselves. Cove's vocals are killer. This song pumps me up.

## 7. [Pachuca Sunrise](#) - Minus the Bear (2005)

Never mind that all three versions of this song released this decade rocked for their own reasons. The video is gorgeous, the riff is astounding, and the beat is catchy. By far the best part is how the ending slowly unravels from the chorus and fades away, each component of the song dropping out on its own.

## 6. [12:51](#) - The Strokes (2003)

Sure, the power chords are easy and the progression is simple, but this song shows how The Strokes are together greater than the sum of their parts. Quick guitar lines during the verses, the bass beat, and the palm-muted rhythm chords all mesh together into sonic harmony. The chorus, with its saccharine riff layered over rapid-fire shredding (effected so it coos like a synth), staccato drumming, and handclaps is just golden.

## 5. [Am I Wry? No](#) - Mew (2003)

The way it builds from the beginning to 1:25 is impressive. The breakdown that comes out of nowhere at 3:09 is awesome.

## 4. [Governor](#) - Cassino (2007)

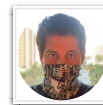
If Jack Johnson traded his boardshorts for some flannel, I think he would sound like Cassino. This is easy mellow music done right; it builds slowly with percussion and choral backup. When performed live, the band adds a harmonica to this tune, and I hope to experience that in the next decade.

## 3. [Kids](#) - MGMT (2008)

So what if it's currently overplayed. Touches like the trumpet fanfare at the end of the bridge and simple loud beat make it a replayable classic. Hearing the hook slide back in under the chorus just feels right, each time it happens.

## 2. [After Hours](#) - We Are Scientists (2008)

Check out the acoustic backings in the intro and the end of the bridge, the two-note harmonics before each chorus, intermittent chimes, or even the subtle string section at the end. This is of course in addition to the bass line that alternates between melodic and driving, and the quick riff / uptempo drum beat combo. Why aren't they bigger?



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Notes by Brian Sutorius

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## 1. Q&A - Cartel (2005)

Over ten minutes of experimental pop punk, and although it's two tracks on the album, I count it as one song. It knocks you out if you've listened to the album in order, because it recycles lyrics and melodies from previous songs while sounding new. Will Pugh's voice is stellar, even when it's auto-tuned at the end. I spent more time listening to this song than any other song this decade.

Amy Karasavas

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**Danna Gutman** I'm so musically ignorant I only know one of these songs by title (#3). I'll have to click the links at some point.

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**Matt Manuszak** this list is like a giant pop punk orgasm...well done sir

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**Ed Cormany** i'm plugging this list into grooveshark right now. then making a pandora station from it.

and totally agreed on Q&A. i actually just listened to it last night. never gets old. i also recently cited it as an example of what autotuning can possibly be... [See More](#)

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**Matt Manuszak** if only to play devil's advocate...a few for your consideration also...U2- Beautiful Day, Arcade Fire- Wake Up, Bruce Springsteen- The Rising, White Stripes- Seven Nation Army, Phoenix- 1901, Radiohead- a buncha shit from In Rainbows, Weezer- Island in... [See More](#)

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**Katie Corcoran** Great list! Regarding your #10...I thought I was the only who noticed how LoC blends into TNY! I'm not alone in my playing that album over and over again. I might just do that...right now.

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**Tina Jaxling** Cartel and July for Kings..... thanks for introducing me to the best bands, B.

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