

= 3 (Britney Spears song) =

" 3 " is a song recorded by American singer Britney Spears for her second greatest hits album , The Singles Collection (2009) . It was written and produced by Max Martin and Shellback , with additional writing from Tiffany Amber . The song was released on October 2 , 2009 by Jive Records , as the only single from The Singles Collection . " 3 " is an uptempo electropop song that features a heavy bassline and synthesizers , and lyrics that talk about threesomes , while referencing American folk @-@ singing trio Peter , Paul and Mary during the chorus as sexual slang .

" 3 " received positive appreciation from contemporary music critics , with some reviewers calling it a classic Spears song . The song achieved commercial success by topping the charts in the United States and Canada , as well as reaching the top ten in many countries around the world , including Australia , Finland , Norway , Sweden and the United Kingdom . In the United States , the song debuted at number one in the Billboard Hot 100 , becoming the first to debut at the top position in over three years and the first non @-@ American Idol artist in eleven years to do so . " 3 " was also the fifteenth song in the history of Billboard to debut at number one .

An accompanying music video for " 3 " , directed by Diane Martel , features Spears and her dancers in front of different black and white backgrounds . Martel described it as sexy and playful , while contemporary critics gave it positive reviews , complimenting its simplicity . A director 's cut was leaked on December 15 , 2009 . Spears has performed " 3 " during the Femme Fatale Tour (2011) and her Las Vegas residency Britney : Piece Of Me (2013 @-@ 2015) .

= = Background = =

On July 12 , 2009 , Spears confirmed through her Twitter account that she had begun recording new material , stating she was going into the studio with Swedish songwriter and producer Max Martin , while she was in Stockholm during the European leg of The Circus Starring Britney Spears . They had previously collaborated on earlier hits including " ... Baby One More Time " , " Oops ! ... I Did It Again " , " Stronger " and " If U Seek Amy " . " 3 " was written and produced by Martin and Shellback , while additional writing was done by Tiffany Amber . Spears recorded her vocals for the song with the producers at Maratone Studios . John Hanes was responsible for Spears ' vocal editing on " 3 " , which was later mixed by Serban Ghenea at MixStar Studios in Virginia Beach , Virginia . On September 23 , 2009 , Jive Records officially announced the release of a greatest hits titled The Singles Collection through Spears 's official website , in celebration of Spears 's ten @-@ year anniversary in the music industry , also announcing the release of " 3 " as the lead single from the album . The artwork for the single was unveiled through Spears ' official website on September 28 , 2009 . " 3 " was sent to radio stations on September 29 , 2009 , while being digitally released on October 2 , 2009 .

= = Composition = =

" 3 " is an uptempo electropop song , which opens with synths and vocal effects . The song has a basic sequence of Fm ? E ? ? B ? m ? Fm as its chord progression . During the middle eight , the song slows down with synthetic strings and bass beats , and the section ends with a beat similar to a four @-@ on @-@ the floor , a rhythm pattern popularized in 1970s disco music . Throughout the song , Spears ' vocals are autotuned that , according to the Daily Mail , gives the song " a futuristic , contemporary feel " .

The song 's lyrics are about threesomes . Unlike " If U Seek Amy " , the song has no double entendre and it 's more straightforward lyrically . The innuendo in the lyrics such as " Merrier the more , triple fun that way " have been compared to the songs in Prince 's 1980s studio album Dirty Mind . The chorus has been compared to a playground chant and closes with an extended moan . During the second part of the chorus , there is a reference to the folk group Peter , Paul & Mary , that in the song is used as sexual slang for a threesome . Todd Martens of the Los Angeles Times called the reference " the cut 's biggest oddity " .

= = Critical reception = =

" 3 " received positive reviews from contemporary music critics . Monica Herrera of Billboard commented that the song " builds to a climax of wildly pulsing bass that summons fans to the dancefloor " and added that " [it] will be another notch in this pop provocateur 's belt " . On its online edition , Rolling Stone 's writer Daniel Kreps praised the song for its up @-@ tempo melody and racy lyrics , while comparing it to Flo Rida 's recent work , saying that " 3 " " is more of a surefire dance @-@ floor stomper than anything Brit loaded onto Blackout or Circus " . On the printed issue , the magazine gave the song four stars and called it an " instant Britney classic " . Clark Collis of Entertainment Weekly called it " a fembot voice , near @-@ seizure @-@ inducing dance @-@ floor frenzy " . While crediting the production for " elevating the song above typical dance products " , the Los Angeles Times said that Spears sounded " sweetly generic " .

In his review of The Singles Collection , Stephen Thomas Erlewine of Allmusic selected " 3 " as one of the " track picks " and commented , " [it is] much better than any of the three new cuts on My Prerogative " . Bill Lamb of About.com said that although the lyrics are controversial , " the bottom line is this is another irresistibly catchy pop confection that beats out most everything else on pop radio today " . He praised the chorus and the middle section and called the track " classic Britney " . The song was also compared to Madonna 's " Celebration " , since they " musically present nothing particularly new , but they do manage to encapsulate many of the elements that make the singer a star " . A.J. Mayers of MTV picked it as the eighth best song of 2009 .

= = Chart performance = =

On October 8 , 2009 , " 3 " entered at number fourteen on the U.S. Billboard Bubbling Under Hot 100 and at number thirty @-@ eight on the U.S. Billboard Pop Songs , becoming Spears ' twenty @-@ fourth career entry in the latter chart , most among all artists . The following week , the song debuted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 , becoming Spears ' third number @-@ one single in the United States and breaking many of the chart records . It made Spears the first artist in over three years to debut at the top position and the only non @-@ American Idol artist in eleven years to do so . It was the fifteenth song in the chart history to debut at the top position and also the shortest title for a song reaching the top of the Billboard Hot 100 . The song also charted at number one on the Billboard Digital Songs , selling 255 @,@ 000 downloads in its first week and having the highest one week total of any song , since The Black Eyed Peas ' " Boom Boom Pow " back in April 2009 . As of October 2015 , " 3 " has sold 2 @.@ 4 million digital downloads in the United States according to Nielsen SoundScan . It is her fourth best @-@ selling digital single in the country . In Canada , the song debuted at number eighty @-@ six on the Canadian Hot 100 on October 17 , 2009 and rose up to number one the following week , making it the biggest jump to number one in the history of the chart . It was certified two times platinum by the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) for sales over 80 @,@ 000 copies .

" 3 " debuted at number fifty on the Australian Singles Chart on October 12 , 2009 , with only two days of digital sales . It peaked at number six on the week of October 26 , 2009 . " 3 " has been certified platinum by the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) with sales of over 70 @,@ 000 copies . On October 12 , 2009 , the song debuted at number sixteen in New Zealand , making it her highest chart debut since " Womanizer " . On its fifth week on the chart , " 3 " reached its peak position at number twelve . On the UK Singles Chart , " 3 " debuted at number seven on November 16 , 2009 , becoming Spears ' twentieth top ten hit on the chart . According to The Official Charts Company , the song has sold 145 @,@ 000 copies there . " 3 " achieved similar success throughout Europe reaching the top ten in Belgium (Wallonia) , Czech Republic , Finland , Norway , Sweden as well as the top twenty in Austria , Belgium (Flanders) and Denmark .

= = Music video = =

The music video was filmed on October 5 and October 6 , 2009 in Los Angeles , California . It was directed by Diane Martel and choreographed by Tone & Rich . Fashion stylist GK Reid worked closely with Spears to design the fashion . On October 15 , 2009 , images of the video were released . A countdown , including images and video previews , was announced on her official website and the release date was revealed to be on October 30 , 2009 . When asked about the video , Diane Martel said ,

" I think it 's her next sexy video . It 's a very simple video for her ? I don 't think you 've seen her this much under a magnifying glass . Everything 's really strong and playful . We collaborated on the wardrobe and had meetings about hair and makeup people , we talked a lot on the phone and met Tone and Rich ? two of the best choreographers . [..] [Spears] ' so sweet and funny and so normal and down to earth . It 's really fun as a director to see her in front of the camera . She 's so creative with this stuff . The video is very simple , it 's very , very minimal . So it 's her , her , her . And she 's totally engaging every second . She really knows how to work with a camera and move . I was really impressed , and I have worked almost with every female artist in the business " .

The video begins with Spears wearing a sparkly black dress at a dressing table , putting mascara and Circus Fantasy on . Then , it cuts to her holding her hair up and singing the first lines in front of a white background . There are also black and white scenes of her wearing a white leotard behind a foggy glass . She then appears wearing the leotard and glasses , while surrounded by four female dancers wearing black outfits , hanging from a raised barre . The word " sin " is censored and changed for the word " this " during the pre @-@ chorus . In the chorus , she dances in front of a white wall with barcode @-@ like light installations with six male dancers . There also scenes of her dancing provocatively with two male dancers . At the bridge , there are intercut close @-@ ups of her that end with a smirk . The video concludes with Spears dancing with the two male dancers and cuts to a close @-@ up of her looking into the camera .

Rolling Stone writer Daniel Kreps compared the video with the music video of " Single Ladies " and complimented the choreography saying Spears had not danced with so much conviction since the In the Zone era . Bradley Stern of MuuMuse likened the video 's choreography and dancer 's wardrobe to Janet Jackson 's " Feedback " video . Jocelyn Vena of MTV gave the video a positive review , stating that it 's a " sexy , fast @-@ paced clip " and that " there are a few moments in the video where Britney 's personality shines " adding that " she smiles at the song 's tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek lyrics , particularly when she finishes the song 's bridge . " Tanner Stransky of Entertainment Weekly complimented the video 's choice of wardrobe , but said that the video was " sparse " , adding " there 's not much to the single besides trite , ridiculous advocacy for a ménage à trois anyway , so why would the video go any deeper ? " . The Daily Mail said the video " features Britney writhing around in scantily @-@ clad outfits with male dancers in the best way she knows how " .

On December 15 , 2009 , a director 's cut version of the video for " 3 " leaked online . Kreps commented that the new version " offers up a slightly more NSFW edit of Martel 's dance @-@ heavy vid that seems to find a better cadence with the music , as opposed to the original version , which was essentially filmed and edited in the matter of days to coincide with The Singles Collection release " .

= = Live performances and cover version = =

On March 25 , 2011 , Spears performed a special show at Rain Nightclub in Las Vegas . The setlist of the show consisted on three songs from her seventh studio album , Femme Fatale , including " Hold It Against Me " , " Big Fat Bass " and " Till the World Ends " . During the performance of " Big Fat Bass " , Spears wore a latex bodysuit and elements of " 3 " , " Gimme More " and " I 'm a Slave 4 U " were also included . On March 27 , 2011 , " Big Fat Bass " was also performed at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium that aired on Good Morning America on March 29 , 2011 , and the same day , Spears performed the set at Jimmy Kimmel Live ! .

" 3 " was performed at 2011 's Femme Fatale Tour . After " Up ' n Down " , Spears put on a white fedora and trench coat and performed the song with her female dancers , dressed in a similar style . Shirley Halperin of The Hollywood Reporter named it one of the best performances of the show

along with " Piece of Me " and " Don 't Let Me Be the Last to Know " , stating that " ironically enough , [they] were the ones with fewest frills . " Rick Florino of Artistdirect said " ' 3' gave way to a massive sing @-@ a @-@ long " and added that it " [spoke] right to the noir @-@ ish connotations of the Femme Fatale tour . However , she built a one @-@ of @-@ a @-@ kind space where Kim Basinger 's elegant L.A. Confidential beauty becomes enveloped by edgy modern dance attitude . "

Spears is currently performing " 3 " as the third song on her Las Vegas residency , Britney : Piece of Me . After a brief talk with the audience , the singer starts a performance of the song , jumping into a triangular cage and was wheeled around by her dancers across the stage . Then , a parallel bar dropped out of the ceiling , and Spears done a choreography similar to its music video . For Billboard 's Keith Caulfield , the song " served as the sexiest jungle gym in Vegas , as Spears and her dancers undulated their way across and around the bar " . Girls ' Generation member Sunny performed a cover version of the song during the Girls ' Generation Tour that took place in 2011 and 2012 . A studio version was also released online alongside the live version featuring on the tour album .

= = Track listings = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Britney Spears ? lead and background vocals
Max Martin ? songwriting , production , keyboards
Shellback ? songwriting , production , keyboards , guitars
Serban Ghenea ? mixing
Tim Roberts ? assistant engineer
John Hanes ? vocal editing

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =