

= If It 's Over =

" If It 's Over " is a song written by American singer @-@ songwriters Mariah Carey and Carole King , with the former and Walter Afanasieff helming its production . It was originally released on September 17 , 1991 on Carey 's second studio effort , Emotions . Lyrically , the song tells of a romance that has withered , and finds the protagonist asking her lover " if it 's over , let me go . " Several months after the release of Emotions , Carey performed the song during her appearance on the television show MTV Unplugged , as the second number on her setlist .

Following the release of the extended play (EP) MTV Unplugged , the song 's live version was used as the second single for the EP in the third quarter of 1992 . The live single version omits the second verse and chorus , as the songs were shortened for the show . It received a very limited release , being featured as an airplay only single in certain territories . Its only peak was in the Netherlands , where it reached number eighty . Carey performed " If It 's Over " live during the 34th annual Grammy Awards and on Saturday Night Live .

= = Background and recording = =

During promotion for Carey 's self @-@ titled debut album (1990) , she appeared on The Arsenio Hall Show to perform her first single , " Vision of Love " . During the very much talked about performance , singer @-@ songwriter Carole King had been watching Carey perform , taking interest in her and her material . One year later , during the recording sessions for Carey 's second studio album , Emotions (1991) , King contacted Carey , asking if she would be interested in covering " (You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman " , a song she had written alongside Gerry Goffin for Aretha Franklin . Carey declined , feeling uneasy about covering a song one of her musical influences executed so perfectly . Still determined to work with Carey , King flew out to New York City for one day , in hopes of writing and composing a ballad of some sort . Throughout the day , the two songwriters exchanged musical ideas and melodies on the piano until " If It 's Over " came into conception . In an interview following the collaboration , King said the following regarding Carey : " I love her voice . She 's very expressive . She gives a lot of meaning to what she sings . "

= = Composition = =

" If It 's Over " is a downtempo ballad , which incorporates several genres and influences into its sound and instrumentation . Of them are R & B , soul and jazz , as well as drawing inspiration from 1950s and 1960s music and style . The song was written by Carey and Carole King , with both helming the song 's production as well . Instrumentally , " If It 's Over " features several musical melodies including baritone , tenor , alto and soprano saxophone notes , as well as the piano , trumpet , horn and bass . In the song , Carey makes brief use of the whistle register , prior to the last belted crescendo . According to author Chris Nickson , the song 's instrumentation and basis was crucial to Carey 's performance throughout the song . Additionally , he described its content and instrumentation :

" As a song full of gospel and soulful influences , it allowed Mariah to really tear loose and show what she could do ? which in reality was far more than the vocal gymnastics that seemed to comprise her reputation so far . From a deep rumble to a high wail , she covered five octaves wonderfully , as the power of the tune built . The backing vocals ? which once again had those churchy harmonies ? filled out the spare melody , as did the stately horns , which entered towards the end . The song was truly a vocal showcase for Mariah . "

= = Live performances = =

Carey performed " If It 's Over " on the 17th season of Saturday Night Live , alongside " Can 't Let Go " . During the performance , Carey appeared on stage wearing a black leather sports jacket , as well as matching black pants and boots . Walter Afanasieff played the piano , while Trey Lorenz ,

Patrique McMillan and Melonie Daniels provided the live background vocals . Additionally , five additional musicians were provided ; Lew Delgado , baritone saxophone ; Lenny Pickett , tenor saxophone ; George Young , alto saxophone ; Earl Gardner , trumpet ; and Steve Turre , trombone . Additionally , Carey performed " If It 's Over " at the 34th annual Grammy Awards , held on February 26 , 1992 . As the curtain was drawn , Carey walked on stage wearing a red and black evening gown , while sporting a golden @-@ curly hairstyle . Behind a large red curtain held behind her , several back up singers were placed standing on a concealed elevated platform . On March 16 , 1992 , Carey performed the song live as part of a seven piece set @-@ list for MTV Unplugged . The show aired on MTV several times , and was eventually released as an EP titled , MTV Unplugged .

= = = Release = = =

Following the release of " I 'll Be There " as the lead single from MTV Unplugged a month prior to the EP 's public arrival , Carey 's live version of " If It 's Over " from MTV Unplugged was released as an airplay @-@ only single in a few countries . Following its release , promotion for Carey 's second studio effort Emotions was halted .

= = Reception = =

Upon release , " If It 's Over " garnered generally positive critical appreciation from contemporary music critics . Bill Lamb from About.com commented that the song " stands with Carey 's best , " and complimented its gospel infusion . Allmusic 's Ashley S. Battel wrote " it will take you on a musical journey , " while describing the song 's vocals and instrumentation . Jan DeKnock from The Chicago Tribune compared it to " the style of the great soul ballads of the `60s . " Rob Tannenbaum from Rolling Stone gave " If It 's Over " a mixed review , comparing it to the work of Aretha Franklin , but called it " translates into such excesses as the falsetto whoops . " " If It 's Over " only managed to chart at number 80 in the Netherlands , lasting five weeks in the chart .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Recording

Recorded and mixed at Right Track Recording , NYC .

Personnel

Lyrics ? Mariah Carey

Music ? Mariah Carey , Carole King

Production ? Mariah Carey , Walter Afanasieff

Keyboards and Synthesizers , Hammond B @-@ 6 Organ , Synclavier Strings and Tambourine ?
Walter Afanasieff

Guitar ? Cornell Dupree

Bass ? Will Lee

Trumpet ? Earl Gardner

Trombone ? Keith O 'Quinn

Tenor Saxophones ? George Young , Larry Feldman

Baritone Saxophone ? Lewis Delgatto

Drums ? Steve Smith

Akai Programming ? Ren Klyce

Macintosh programming ? Gary Cirmelli

Recording and mixing ? Dana Jon Chapelle

Assistant engineer ? Bruce Calder

Vocal arrangement ? Mariah Carey

Background vocals ? Mariah Carey , Trey Lorenz , Patrique McMillan , Cindy Mizelle

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Emotions .

= = Charts = =