

= SexyBack =

" SexyBack " is a song recorded by American singer @-@ songwriter Justin Timberlake for his second studio album , FutureSex / LoveSounds (2006) . It was released on July 18 , 2006 , to US mainstream and rhythmic radio stations by Jive Records as the lead single from the album . The song was written and produced by Nate Hills , Tim Mosley , and Timberlake himself . Discussing " SexyBack " , Timberlake revealed that he went " left " , singing the song in a rock style , not an R & B style . He described the song as musicians David Bowie and David Byrne " covering " James Brown 's 1970 song " Sex Machine " . The track features Timbaland on backing vocals , while Timberlake 's voice is distorted . The instrumentation used in the song includes a pounding bass beat , electronic chords , and drum machine sounds .

" SexyBack " became Timberlake 's first number @-@ one single on the Billboard Hot 100 , staying seven weeks at the top spot . It also topped several of Billboard magazine 's other charts , including the Billboard Pop 100 , Hot Dance Airplay , and Hot Digital Songs charts , and entered the top ten on most singles charts . Internationally , it became Timberlake 's first single to reach number one in the United Kingdom . In Australia , the track was Timberlake 's second number @-@ one single , spending two consecutive weeks at the top . " SexyBack " was certified three @-@ times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and three @-@ times platinum by Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) . " SexyBack " is one of the best selling singles of all time .

The track won Best Dance Recording at the 2007 Grammy Awards . In addition , the song won Timberlake the People 's Choice Award for Favorite R & B song and the Male Artist of the Year at the 2007 MTV Video Music Awards . The music video was filmed in June 2006 ; Timberlake decided to work with director Michael Haussman based on the latter 's work on Madonna 's 1994 music video " Take a Bow " .

= = Production = =

Timberlake began working on his second studio album , FutureSex / LoveSounds , in December 2005 . Within three weeks , " SexyBack " was one of several songs that were recorded for the album , having been recorded in less than a day . Timberlake told The Weekend Mail in 2006 that it was the " second or third song " he did with Timbaland in a list of 10 songs they recorded for the album . The song was written and produced by Justin Timberlake , Timbaland , and Nate " Danja " Hills , and mixed by Jimmy Douglass , using Pro Tools . Mixing took place in April 2006 , using a Neve VR @-@ series console .

Hills played the Akai MPC3000 and other virtual synths on his Macintosh computer , while Timbaland performed instruments on the Ensoniq ASR @-@ 10 sampling keyboard . Bill Pettaway played the guitar , which his part was recorded in two minutes , while Darryl Pearson was the bassist . Both the guitar and bass were digitally imported in Pro Tools during mixing , and only a section of the guitar recording was copied and pasted throughout the song .

= = Music = =

Timberlake described " SexyBack " as " an experiment gone right from the sort of synthesizer influence to the distorted vocals " , adding that it was " one of the songs that the more you listen to it its just hook after hook after hook . Its just one of those ' flow off the top of your head ' tracks , in terms of melody . We wanted to keep it loose and not too rehearsed , it 's one of those very experimental records though . " Timberlake revealed that he went " left " , regarding going more rock , not in how he developed the song , but in the way he sang the song . " I wanted to sing the song like a rock and roll singer , not an R & B singer . That 's the approach . " The day before recording , Timberlake and Timbaland had listened to David Bowie 's " Rebel Rebel " and the Rapture 's " House of Jealous Lovers " . Timberlake wanted to achieve the songs ' " raw energy " . Timberlake said that he modeled himself on Bowie and Prince , and described the song as Bowie and David

Byrne " covering " James Brown 's 1970 song " Sex Machine " . Timberlake said that the song " doesn 't qualify as rock or straight funk " and that he was happy with the description " club funk " . He was " keen for a new musical direction " following the release of his first album , Justified . " I listened to the radio for a few months and thought , ' All this sounds like shit , what do I want to hear ? ' . That 's really all I did . Everything 's [sic] got so repetitive , everything sounds the same . I had to create something unique otherwise there 's no point putting it out . "

" SexyBack " is an " urgent , pulsing track , a cocktail of soaring , distorted vocals and heavy , electronic chords threaded together with rap " , according to Camilla Long from The Observer . The song is composed in the key of A Phrygian dominant mode ? and is set in time signature of common time with a tempo of 117 beats per minute . The song features a pounding bass beat and electronic sounds , and does not include Timberlake 's " famous falsetto " . The song 's musicscape includes two @-@ note dirty electronic riffs , " leapfrogging keyboards " , beat box sound , and incorporates the " same leaky faucet " sounds of musician Obie Trice 's 2004 song " The Setup " . In addition , the track features Timbaland on backing vocals .

Timberlake 's voice in the song is processed , slowed down to where his voice is unrecognizable , with muffled vocals . The song also features Timberlake 's " low register distorted vocals " . Timberlake revealed that the vocals in the song were influenced by Prince .

= = Lyrics = =

Douglas explained the title of the song , and how it affected the concept :

" Justin [Timberlake] goes in the chorus ' Go head be gone with it ' , I called the song ' Be Gone With It ' , just to label it . So they 're developing this song and they 're going nuts and loving it , and as they play it , and I 'm like : ' I don 't think this hook is strong enough . ' But then , at the very last minute , Justin very , very cleverly decided to call it ' Sexyback ' , and that changed the whole dimension of the song . The first thing you hear when you listen to the song is ' I 'm bringing sexy back ' , and after that you don 't care or don 't notice that there is no hook . And then there 's the unique thing of Timbaland acting as a narrator , saying things like ' take it to the bridge ' , or ' yeah ' . Every time Justin leaves a space , he fills it in . It 's two guys interacting . "

Timberlake said that the chorus was " very James Brown @-@ ish , call out and repeat , like ' Sex Machine ' . " He wrote the track " from top to bottom . ' I 'm bringing sexy back , yeah ! I 'm bringing . . . ' It 's a very physical song , meant to provoke ... sexual dance . ' Sex Machine ' is the closest reference . " Timberlake said that the lyric , " bringing sexy back " , was one of the first lines he came up with . In addition , he admitted that the song was not going to be titled " SexyBack " , saying , " We weren 't originally going to call it ' SexyBack ' . I definitely didn 't think it would become the most worn @-@ out phrase of 2006 . It just sounded like a nice opening to the song . "

Adam Graham of The Detroit News noted that Timberlake sings about whips and chains , while Bill Lamb of About.com said the song has a " bit of s & m tease about shackles and whips " . Furthermore , The Georgia Straight 's Martin Turenne said that Timberlake is " shackled to the bedpost , invites the crack of his mistress 's whip . " Ben Williams of New York magazine wrote that Timberlake had been working on his pickup lines , with " You see these shackles baby I 'm your slave / I 'll let you whip me if I misbehave . " Jason Bracelin of the Las Vegas Review @-@ Journal reported that Timberlake sings about " threatening to steal your girl . " Charlie Brooker for The Guardian , in regards to the lyric , " them other fuckers don 't know how to act " , writing that Timberlake 's translation is of him telling everyone in the world that they are a " clueless fornicator " . Further in his report , Brooker opined that Timberlake " threatens us " by using " language so offensive " with the line , " You motherfuckers , watch how I attack " . In addition , Brooker noted that the line , " If that 's your girl you 'd better watch your back " , as Timberlake stating his intention to meddle in the private affairs of others . Barry Schwartz of Stylus noted that the song features " pillow talk " , in reference of the song 's " sex @-@ crazed lyrics " .

= = Critical reception = =

In the Billboard magazine review of the album , contributor Katy Kroll wrote that Timberlake " claims to be bringing ' sexy ' back to pop music , and indeed he is . You can almost feel beads of sweat rolling off the title track and ' SexyBack ' featuring Timbaland " . Chris Willman of Entertainment Weekly was complimentary towards Timbaland , producer of the song , writing that Timbaland offers " tougher , trickier rhythms , minimal live playing , a plethora of hip @-@ hop cameos , and a self @-@ consciously hard , edgy club sensibility " to " SexyBack " . Russell Baillie of The New Zealand Herald noted , " The producer 's angular synthesizer crunch is all over it ? at best on the single ' SexyBack ' where they dispense with a chorus , leaving the song sustained by its vocal fireworks , electrofunk and Timberlake 's repeated declaration that ' I 'm bringing sexy back . ' " PopMatters ' contributor Quentin B. Huff wrote that " SexyBack " was the " fraternal twin " to Nelly Furtado 's 2006 song " Promiscuous " . Andrew Murfett of The Age wrote that the song was a " raunchy club banger that slyly suppresses " Timberlake 's customary falsetto . He continues , " it 's introduced a new phrase into the pop cultural lexicon " . Glenn Gamboa of Newsday was complimentary towards the song , writing that it was " Timberlake at his best , mainstreaming a combination of the wild , edgy dance @-@ pop style of Basement Jaxx with Missy Elliott 's more experimental hip @-@ hop to create a boldly inventive sound that still pleases the masses . "

Kelefa Sanneh of The New York Times wrote : " ... ' SexyBack ' , a twitchy , emaciated track that shot to the top of the charts and also became an irritating catchphrase . (Suddenly everyone was bringing AdjectiveBack .) " Dagny Salas of North by Northwestern commented that Timberlake and Timbaland trade ridiculous lines , with " Get your sexy on / Go ahead , be gone with it " and " Dirty babe / You see these shackles / Baby I ? m your slave / I ? ll let you whip me if I misbehave . " Salas continued in her review that it was not a song that should be good , " but does that really matter when it ? s Good in the way that songs are during the summer [...] That kind of good makes songs like ' SexyBack ' completely irresistible . " Matt Burns of The Post wrote , " Take the polarizing summer single ' SexyBack ' , a repetitive song with little structure that doesn 't know when to stop , all centered on a ridiculous declaration . Somehow , it works . " The Diamondback 's Michael Greenwald reported that " SexyBack " was " lyrically , musically and vocally the weakest song " on the album . A writer of The State Journal @-@ Register was not impressed with the song and concluded , with " ' SexyBack ' is the most annoyingly dumb song to hit Billboard 's No. 1 since ' Hollaback Girl ' " . Guy Blackman of The Sunday Age wrote : " The distorted vocals and stilted production of first single ' Sexyback ' make Timberlake 's claim to be ' bringing sexy back ' ... seem almost laughable . " Entertainment Weekly put it on its end @-@ of @-@ the @-@ decade , " best @-@ of " list , saying , " Justin Timberlake We didn 't even know that sexy was missing until 2006 . We 're just happy Justin brought it back safe and sound . " Charlie Brooker , columnist for The Guardian , jokingly criticised Timberlake , saying " How DARE this dot @-@ eyed , crop @-@ haired , fun @-@ sized , guff @-@ tongued , pirouetting waif @-@ boy scamper on to the world 's airwaves and loudly proclaim to be the sole global administrator of all things sexy ? You 'd think it takes massive balls to do something like that , but given the shrill , squeaking vocals cheeping through his ghastly little gobhole , it 's safe to assume he 's got testes the size of capers . He 's practically a human dog whistle , the shrieking , high @-@ pitched , mosquito @-@ lunged ponce . "

Upon the song 's release , it received divided opinions , which pleased Timberlake . " This is such a departure from the first record , " said Timberlake . " More people might like it , less people might like it , but you can 't call me a chicken . "

= = Legacy and accolades = =

" SexyBack " helped introduce EDM sounds to top 40 radio , as it brought together variations of electronic dance music with Timberlake 's R & B sounds . VH1 listed it 3rd on their list of the " 100 Greatest Songs of the ? 00s , " while Los Angeles Times listed it as an honorable mention among " the most timeless tunes of the 2000s " , with an editor stating it " sounded wholly unfamiliar and unique . " Entertainment Weekly deemed it a " modern day classic . "

" SexyBack " won the People 's Choice Award for Favorite R & B song at the 2007 awards

ceremony . At the 49th Grammy Awards , " SexyBack " won a Grammy Award in the category of Best Dance Recording . At the 2007 MTV Video Music Awards , Timberlake won Male Artist of the Year for " SexyBack " , " Let Me Talk To You / My Love " , and " What Goes Around ... Comes Around " . Additionally , it won an ASCAP Pop Music Award in 2007 in the category Most Performed Songs .

= = Chart performance = =

" SexyBack " was commercially successful in the United States . The single debuted at number 90 on the Billboard Hot 100 in July 2006 . After climbing to number 31 , it propelled to number one the following week . " SexyBack " became Timberlake 's first number @-@ one hit on the Billboard Hot 100 from his Futuresex / Lovesounds album . The single spent seven consecutive weeks at the number @-@ one position on the Hot 100 . In addition to the Hot 100 , " SexyBack " also topped the following Billboard charts : Hot Dance Airplay , Hot Dance Club Play , Hot Dance Singles Sales , Pop 100 Airplay , Pop 100 , and Top 40 Mainstream charts . " SexyBack " was certified three @-@ times Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) . This song made the then @-@ seventh @-@ biggest jump to number one in the Billboard Hot 100 history , climbing thirty spots from number 31 landing it at the summit of the chart on September 9 , 2006 . According to Nielsen SoundScan , the song had its biggest selling week in September 2006 and sold 250 @,@ 000 as a digital download . As of June 2014 , the song has sold 4 @,@ 494 @,@ 000 copies .

In the United Kingdom , " SexyBack " debuted at number 13 on the UK Singles Chart based solely on download sales one week prior to its physical release , and ascended to the top of the chart the following week , becoming Timberlake 's first UK number @-@ one single . On the Australian ARIA Charts , " SexyBack " debuted at number one and spent two consecutive weeks at the top becoming Timberlake 's second number one single there (after " Rock Your Body " reached the summit in 2003) , and has been certified two @-@ times Platinum by ARIA Charts . Also , in Canada and Austria , the single has peaked at number three and number five respectively , becoming his most successful single tied with his third released single " What Goes Around ... / ... Comes Around " in both nations . It has also been certified three @-@ times Platinum in Canada .

In Sweden , " SexyBack " peaked at number four , while in France it peaked at number eight becoming Timberlake 's first top ten hit from the album , and would later score two more top ten singles with " My Love " and " What Goes Around ... / ... Comes Around " . The song peaked at number one in Germany , Ireland , New Zealand and Norway , and at number two in Switzerland and Belgium .

= = Music video = =

The music video for " SexyBack " was directed by Michael Haussman and features Spanish actress Elena Anaya . The video was filmed in June 2006 and shot in a luxury building in Barcelona , Spain . In discussion of the video filmed in Barcelona , Timberlake said : " Obviously we went for the architecture , the exteriors , the interiors ? the vibe in Spain is different than anywhere else in the world . It 's so cool to shoot there , but the girls are also pretty hot , so that doesn 't hurt either " .

Timberlake decided to work with director Michael Haussman , following his work on Madonna 's 1994 music video for " Take a Bow " . " It 's one of my favorite videos Madonna 's ever done , " Timberlake said . " Even today , I still remember the visuals , the images , how he captured her . A lot of times , Madonna seems like she 's the person in control , and in that video , she seemed vulnerable . It was a cool thing to see . " The video was first shown on MTV 's Making the Video on July 25 , 2006 .

The video starts off with a cable car looking over a large city (Barcelona , from the West looking East) while a German newscast featuring Alexander von Roon plays on TV and switches to a luxurious @-@ looking hotel in Plaça de Catalunya with Elena Anaya taking off her sweater . It then cuts to Timberlake in a different room ; then to a club scene and Timberlake in front of a white background . The video alternates between those four viewpoints , with Timberlake and Anaya

seeming to be spies in the hotel room and strangers in the club . At a certain point , Timberlake goes over to Anaya 's room by jumping over to her balcony . Then when Anaya goes to check it out , Timberlake traps and passionately has sex with her . In the club , it ends with Timberlake kissing Anaya in a bathroom stall . In the hotel room scene , Timberlake leaves by the same way he entered and moments later jumps to the next balcony before an explosion ensues . It ends with the figure of Anaya sitting in a chair beside a small television in which a kiss is frozen on the screen .

= = Live performances = =

Timberlake performed " SexyBack " and " My Love " as a medley for the opening of the 2006 MTV Video Music Awards and again for the MTV Europe Music Awards 2006 , which he also hosted . In addition , he performed the song at the Victoria 's Secret Fashion Show . On August 25 , 2013 , Timberlake performed " SexyBack " in a medley with other of his songs at the 2013 MTV Video Music Awards .

" SexyBack " was featured on FutureSex / LoveShow (2007) , Legends of the Summer (2013) and The 20 / 20 Experience World Tour (2013 / 14) .

= = Cover versions = =

The indie rock band Rock Plaza Central gained attention for their radically different cover of " SexyBack " , with brass @-@ and @-@ banjo roots @-@ rock stylings . It was released as a promotional single and a bonus track on the Wal @-@ Mart version of the 2007 cover album Poison 'd ! by American rock band Poison . British soul singer Corinne Bailey Rae recorded a jazz / swing version whilst appearing on BBC Radio 1 's Live Lounge in 2007 . American pop rock band Maroon 5 covered the beginning of the song as part of a medley during their 2012 Overexposed Tour . Cartoon stars Weebl and Bob covered the song with their version " Pastry " including the refrain " I 'm bringing pastry back "

= = Track listings = =

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Release history = =