

= Yellow ( Coldplay song ) =

" Yellow " is a song by British alternative rock band Coldplay . The band wrote the song and co @-@ produced it with British record producer Ken Nelson for their debut studio album , Parachutes ( 2000 ) . The song 's lyrics are a reference to the band 's lead singer Chris Martin 's unrequited love .

The song was recorded in March 2000 , and released in June that same year as the second single from Parachutes , following " Shiver " , and the lead single in the United States . The single reached number four in the UK Singles Chart , giving Coldplay their first top @-@ five hit in the United Kingdom . Helped by heavy rotation and usage in promotions , the song thrust the band into massive popularity . " Yellow " has since been covered by various recording artists worldwide , and remains one of the band 's most popular songs .

= = Background and inspiration = =

" Yellow " was written in a Rockfield studio in Wales called the Quadrangle , where Coldplay began working on their debut studio album , Parachutes . One night after finishing recording " Shiver " , the album 's lead single , the band took a break and went out of the studio . Outside , there were few lights on and the stars in the sky were visible and " just amazing " , according to the song 's co @-@ producer , Ken Nelson . He told the band to look at the stars , which they did . Vocalist Chris Martin was inspired by the sight and the song 's main melody , consisting of a chord pattern , popped into his head . At first , Martin did not take it seriously " as he relayed the tune to the rest of the band in his worst Neil Young impersonation voice " . Martin has said , " The song had the word ' stars ' and that seemed like a word you should sing in a Neil Young voice . " The melody " started off a lot slower " , according to drummer Will Champion , and it sounded like a Neil Young song . Not long after , despite not taking the song seriously , Martin 's idea worked out when he had developed the tempo of the verse . When guitarist Jonny Buckland started playing it and supplemented it with his ideas , they had created the riff , " and it sort of got a bit heavier " .

While composing the song 's lyrics , Martin could not find the right words . He was thinking of a specific word , which he deemed a missing key word in the lyrics , to fit the song 's concept . He looked around the studio and saw Stephanie , a friend that happened to be present in the studio at that time . Martin later titled the song " Yellow " as a reference to Stephanie 's yellow glow . The lyrics progressed from there with the band collaborating . Bassist Guy Berryman came up with the opening line " Look at the stars " . That night , having quickly composed the song , the band recorded it .

A much different origin of the song was told on The Howard Stern Show in November 2011 . Chris Martin explained to Stern that he was impersonating Neil Young while entertaining guests when he came across the first chord of the song , which stuck with him for a bit then in a Neil Young voice he sang " look at the stars " . Martin went on to further explain that the word " yellow " has absolutely no meaning whatsoever and while writing the rest of the song he tried his best to change yellow to something else since every lyric before yellow made no sense but in the end the word " L " just sounded right . Martin also told Stern that through the years depending on the attitude and manner of whoever interviews him , he would make up some story about a song or album titles just to move on to the next question . Martin applauded Stern saying " I like you , Howard , so that 's the first time I 've ever told anyone the truth behind ' Yellow ' . "

= = Recording and production = =

The band and Nelson produced the track . Nelson was acquainted with the band 's music through the former 's manager . Nelson 's manager gave him a copy of an EP and single by Coldplay , and showed interest in working with them after seeing the band perform live . " Yellow " was initially recorded upstairs in the project studio , basically a demo room in Liverpool 's Parr Street Studios . The track was later mixed in New York .

Nelson and the band encountered problems in producing some aspects of the song . According to Champion , " ... it was really difficult to record , because it worked at about five or six different tempos . It was a tough choice of choosing which tempo to play , because sometimes it sounded too rushed , and sometimes it sounded as if it was dragging ... " The band was trying to get the right tempo , according to Nelson , " because a beat either side of the tempo we picked didn 't have the same groove " . To improve the song , they recorded this part live and Buckland overdubbed his guitar . They recorded it two or three times until Nelson and the band were happy at the output . The backing vocals were recorded in the control room of Quadrangle .

Nelson used an analogue 2 @-@ inch type tape in recording most of the tracks in the album . As recording progressed , " Yellow " was one of a couple of songs that they " couldn 't quite get on analogue " . They recorded different versions but it did not satisfy their taste . So Nelson used Pro Tools " to get the feel of [ the track ] just right " ; once all takes were recorded into the computer , " we then put it down to the 2 @-@ inch , which I found was a great way to do it " , according to Nelson .

= = Composition = =

Martin has explained of the song : " ' Yellow ' refers to the mood of the band . Brightness and hope and devotion . " The references in some of the song 's lyrics , including the swimming and drawing a line , " are all metaphorical slants on the extent of his emotional devotion " . The drawing of a line refers to Martin 's habit of writing lists , and underlining those important things on the list . Martin has commented that the song is about devotion , referring to his unrequited love ( Martin was single at the time he wrote the song ) . Despite its lyrical theme , most people have considered " Yellow " as a happy song . The song is written in the key of B major with a tempo of 88 beats per minute and the vocal range spanning from F ? 4 to G ? 5 .

= = Release = =

" Yellow " and " Shiver " were initially released as EPs in the spring of 2000 along with the songs " Help Is Round the Corner " and " No More Keeping My Feet on the Ground " , the third taken from the band 's first EP , Safety . In the United States , the song was released as the lead single from the album . In October 2000 , the track was sent to US college and alternative radio outlets . The band released a limited @-@ edition CD of " Trouble " , the third single from Parachutes , which features a remix of " Yellow " . It was pressed to 1 @,@ 000 copies , and was issued only to fans and journalists . The single , accompanied by its TV reception through its music video , received massive radio airplay , particularly at BBC Radio 1 . The reaction was chiefly positive and even the newly revitalized BBC Radio 2 played the track repeatedly . This heavy rotation continued for months after its release , eventually ending as 2000 's most @-@ aired song . A month after the album was released in the United States via record label Nettwerk , " Yellow " was used as the theme song for ABC autumn television promotions . The song was also used as the theme music for The Cancer Council Australia 's " Daffodil Day " , in recognition of that organization 's official flower 's yellow hue .

= = Critical reception = =

The song was well @-@ received by music critics . Matt Diehl of Rolling Stone magazine has noted " Yellow " is " unrepentantly romantic " , adding that " the band creates a hypnotic slo @-@ mo otherworld where spirit rules supreme " . " Yellow " won Best Single at the 2001 NME Carling Awards . It was nominated at the 2002 Grammy Awards for Best Rock Song and Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal . Billboard said that " every time that electric @-@ guitar riff barges in , you 're hooked all over again . " In August 2009 the song was listed at # 263 on Pitchfork Media 's " Top 500 songs of the 2000s " . In October 2011 , NME placed it at number 139 on its list " 150 Best Tracks of the Past 15 Years " .

= = Chart performance = =

" Yellow " played well in Europe , and was popular . In the United Kingdom , its midweek sales suggested that the single would reach the Top 10 of the chart . Although the band supposed " Yellow " would decline inside the Top 20 , they would have considered its performance a triumph since the album 's lead single , " Shiver " , had only reached the 35th position . Since " Yellow " ' s second week sales were stronger , it eventually reached number four , giving the band their first Top 10 single in the United Kingdom . The popularity of the song in British clubs , pubs and sporting events bolstered the album to debut at number one on the UK Albums Chart . As of February 2015 , the song has sold 530 @, @ 000 copies in the UK .

" Yellow " achieved popularity in the United States , and was Coldplay 's first American hit . The single charted on eight different Billboard singles charts ; it also topped various US modern @-@ rock radio playlists in the spring of 2001 . The single performed as it did in Europe and has helped Parachutes be certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America during the single 's stay on the chart . As of October 2014 , the song has sold over 2 million copies in the US .

After Coldplay 's appearance at Sound Relief in Australia , In the charting week starting 22 March 2009 , the single made a return to the Australian ARIA Top 50 , after almost eight years since its last appearance in the Top 50 . It re @-@ entered the chart at number 48 .

= = Music video = =

The music video for " Yellow " was filmed at Studland Bay in the county of Dorset , South West England . The video is minimalistic , featuring only Martin singing the song as he walks along the beach . He is seen wearing a set of waterproofs with his hair wet , suggesting that it had just rained . The video is one continuous shot with no cuts . The entire sequence is in slow motion .

It was conceived and produced by Coldplay . Originally , it had been intended for the whole band to appear in the video , in a sunny setting . Champion 's mother 's funeral was held on the day of the shooting , so it was decided that only Martin would appear in the video , which was also the immediate explanation of his mood during this part . The weather also opposed the original plan , with harsh winds and rain instead of the sunny day that had been envisioned . It had also been originally intended for there to be moving stars in the sky , as if in a time @-@ lapse . The directors agreed that the moving stars would distract the focus of the video from Martin . The plan of time advancing was kept . The video begins with the beach being somewhat dark until sunlight arrives nearly at the video 's midway point .

The video was directed by British directing duo James Frost & Alex of The Artists Company . It was shot at 50 frames per second , twice the regular speed . At the shoot , Chris Martin had to sing the song at double speed so that the audio and visual content would be in sync , a common yet difficult practice of music videos . The final product is slowed to 25 frames per second , giving the slow motion effect of the video . The transition of the video from night to day was achieved during the telecine process . During the transfer from film to videotape , an operator manually adjusted the amount of lighting for blue in the beginning , red in the middle , and yellow at the end of the video .

= = Live performances = =

Coldplay have performed the song throughout their career , and it is a firm audience favourite . The band had their debut performance on television on the show Later ... with Jools Holland . They performed Parachutes 's lead single , " Shiver " , and the new song , " Yellow " ; but it was the latter that had an immediate studio audience impact . They have also performed at the Glastonbury Festival , one of the prominent festivals in Europe . During their second appearance in July 2000 , Coldplay performed " Yellow " and " effortlessly " captured over 10 @, @ 000 spectators . Coldplay 's popularity at this time was still growing and " Yellow " has helped cultivate it ; Martin has said it was the best day of their year . During most concert performances , large yellow balloons are dropped on

the audience . The first known sighting of yellow balloons was on 24 September 2002 at the UIC Pavilion in Chicago . Chris Martin noticed the balloons in the air with a surprised look . In more recent years , the balloons are filled with confetti , and at the end of the song Chris Martin pops one with his guitar and confetti flies everywhere .

A live acoustic version performed on Jo Whiley 's The Lunchtime Social was included on the Acoustic EP . Another live version featuring only piano and vocals performed and broadcast in Los Angeles on KCRW 's Morning Becomes Eclectic was included on the Japanese Clocks EP . Most recently an acoustic piano version the song was recorded in the studio for Starbucks charity compilation album Every Mother Counts 2012 .

Coldplay performed the song at the Celebrating Steve event at the Apple campus on 16 October 2011 . Before the performance , Martin revealed that , when they first played it for Steve Jobs 10 years ago , Jobs said the song was " shit " and that " they would never make it " .

= = Covers and versions = =

" Yellow " has been covered by numerous singers worldwide , some in different languages and styles . A Chinese language version of " Yellow " was recorded by Chinese rock singer Zheng Jun in 2001 , six months after the original release of the single . Singaporean singer Tanya Chua covered the song . The cover band and comedy act Richard Cheese and Lounge Against the Machine covered this as a Lounge style version on his 2004 album I 'd Like a Virgin . The song has also been performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra . American musicians Petra Haden and Bill Frisell covered the song , featuring it in their album Petra Haden and Bill Frisell ; the cover appears in episode 3 @.@ 08 of the The O.C .. In 2006 , Tre Lux covered " Yellow " on the cover album A Strange Gathering . Fame Academy winner Alex Parks often performed " Yellow " and a cover appears on her debut album . English vocal troupe G4 covered the song for their second album , G4 & Friends , with " unique harmonies " . American singer @.@ writer Brooke White covered " Yellow " on her 2006 album Songs from the Attic . White 's manager directed her to cover American hard rock band Aerosmith 's 1973 single " Dream On " , but she wanted to do " Yellow " . Since they had contradicting ideas , they compromised and ended up producing cover versions of the two . In 2009 , Jem performed a cover of " Yellow " for Starbucks Entertainment 's Valentine 's Day compilation Sweetheart : Our Favorite Artists Sing Their Favorite Love Songs . Russian singer Grigory Leps has covered the song , featuring it in his 2006 album V Tsentre Zemli .

The song has also been covered in live performances by various artists . Sara Bareilles gave a rendition of her " all @.@ time favorite song " at the iHeartRadio event in January 2011 . The progressive bluegrass trio Nickel Creek has played " Yellow " in the middle of " The Lighthouse 's Tale " at their concerts . Boyce Avenue an acoustic rock band from Florida covered " Yellow " in their album entitled " Influential Sessions " . Galway @.@ based musicians Joe Joyce and Oisin Tierney have been known to cover " Yellow " as part of their performances , and American band The Almost has often covered " Yellow " at their live shows . American alternative rock band Brand New often covers part of the song live at the end of their song " The Boy Who Blocked His Own Shot " . The X Factor 2008 contestant Diana Vickers covered the song for ' Best of British week ' . During their 2010 tour , Limp Bizkit have also covered the song regularly live . U2 performed a snippet of " Yellow " during the introduction to their song " Moment of Surrender " live at Glastonbury Festival 2011 . Alex Turner of Arctic Monkeys also sung the first line of the song at Glastonbury Festival 2013 . Renard Queenston made a remix of the song under their alias Furries in a Blender . Country music singer Kacey Musgraves performed an acoustic cover version of the song for the 2015 Royal Variety Performance in London .

= = Impact and legacy = =

Brian Hiatt of Rolling Stone magazine has deemed the song a career @.@ making record . Roach has claimed in his book , Coldplay : Nobody Said It Was Easy , that although " Shiver " earned the band their debut UK Top 40 single , it was " Yellow " that has changed " everything " , and that it "

exemplifies so much of what had made Coldplay so popular ". In the US , after it was being used in promos of ABC , the band grew in popularity which continued in 2001 . According to Barry Walters in his review of Coldplay 's second album , A Rush of Blood to the Head , for Spin magazine , the band is still known in the United States for their " surprise smash ' Yellow ' " . A Billboard magazine review said , " After one single ( ' Yellow ' ) and its accompanying album ( Parachutes ... ) , Coldplay have already been anointed heir to the Brit @-@ rock throne . " The song has since been regarded as the centerpiece track on the album .

The song was featured in Richard Linklater 's film Boyhood .

= = Track listing = =

" Yellow " ? 4 : 31

" Help Is Round the Corner " ? 2 : 36

" No More Keeping My Feet on the Ground " ( From the Safety EP ) ? 4 : 31

= = Personnel = =

Chris Martin ? lead vocals , acoustic guitar , piano , mellotron

Jonny Buckland ? electric guitar , backing vocals

Guy Berryman ? bass guitar

Will Champion ? drums

= = Charts and certifications = =