

= Gambler (Madonna song) =

" Gambler " is a song by American singer Madonna from the soundtrack album to the 1985 film Vision Quest . The song was written solely by Madonna , while the production was handled by John " Jellybean " Benitez at her request . It was released as the second single from the film 's soundtrack album in September 1985 , by Geffen Records . " Gambler " was never released in the United States , at the request of Madonna 's own Sire Records . The music video of the song is an excerpt from the film .

Musically , " Gambler " is an upbeat synthpop and disco song , featuring instrumentation from drums , electronic handclaps and percussion , which is accompanied by a bass synth and keyboards . The lyrics talk about Madonna asserting her self @-@ independence . Critics gave a mixed review of the song , but it was commercially successful , reaching the top @-@ ten in the charts of Australia , Belgium , Ireland , Italy , Netherlands , Norway and the United Kingdom . Madonna has performed the song only once , on her 1985 The Virgin Tour , which was documented on the live video release Madonna Live : The Virgin Tour .

= = Background = =

After the recording of " Crazy for You " , the soundtrack single for the 1985 coming of age drama Vision Quest , Madonna approached John " Jellybean " Benitez to produce another of her self @-@ written songs called " Gambler " . Subsequently , the song was added to the soundtrack of the film , as music producer Phil Ramone felt that it would be appropriate for using in the beginning shots of the film . As the song was recorded on the Geffen label , a commercial issue of the single , in the United States was suppressed , at the request of Madonna 's Sire Records management . They feared that commercial availability of another Madonna single would have been detrimental to the other singles from the Like a Virgin album , and the already available , Geffen @-@ distributed , " Crazy for You " . Hence " Gambler " was never released , or sent for airplay in the United States . The UK 12 " single , contained the Extended Dance Mix , Instrumental Remix , and the song " Nature of the Beach " by Black ' n Blue . The 7 " single had the original version , and " Nature of the Beach " . The video for " Gambler " is similar to " Crazy for You " , with Madonna singing the song along with clips culled from Vision Quest . Madonna filmed her performance on November 22 , 1983 , at the Big Foot Tavern in Spokane , Washington . " Gambler " remained Madonna 's last single written entirely by herself for over two decades , until " Hey You " (2007) . According to Stylus Magazine , Madonna said that she got too lazy to write songs without help .

= = Composition = =

Musically , " Gambler " is an upbeat song that combines elements of synthpop and disco , composed in the style of the songs on Madonna 's self @-@ titled debut album . The song features instrumentation from drums , electronic handclaps and percussion , which is accompanied by a bass synths and keyboards . The song starts with an initial four @-@ chord chorus , and a brief three @-@ chord verse , eventually reaching a middle eight , where Madonna 's voice is in echoes . Near the end , the coda of the song uses a new musical sequence , with some whistling , and the line " You can 't stop me now " ending echoes .

According to the sheet music published at Musicnotes.com by Alfred Publishing , the song is set in the time signature of common time , with a tempo of 100 beats per minute . Madonna 's vocal range spans from B ? 3 to E5 . " Gambler " is composed in the key of D minor and has a basic sequence of Dm ? G ? Dm ? G ? Dm ? G ? Am as its chord progression . The lyrics have Madonna asserting her independence and daredevil attitude towards life , to a lover who , according to her , would not be able to understand or put up with her speed .

= = Critical response = =

Rikky Rooksby , author of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna , compared the song to the music of the band Blondie , and said : " The rapid movement through the various sections , can 't save the song from being fairly ordinary , but it passes quick enough . Bit like 24 @-@ hour flu , really . " Alex Henderson from Allmusic called the song " an ultra @-@ infectious gem that , unfortunately , isn 't on any of the Material Girl 's [Madonna 's] CDs " and felt that " ' Gambler ' is one of those songs that should have been a major hit but wasn 't , whereas ' Crazy for You ' soared to the top of the pop charts . " Alfred Soto of Stylus Magazine , described " Gambler " as a " disco @-@ punk , Flashdance edition " and called it " the most aggressive track of Madonna 's career . " Soto added , " ' Gambler ' is the only possible response to a slow dance in which you were left as unfulfilled as you were five minutes earlier . It deserves immortality beside ' Into the Groove ' [...] The music is keyed to her vocals ? insistent , strident , hip @-@ thrusting ; she slurs the line " You 're just jealous ' cuz you can 't be me " like it 's a shot of Rumplemintz ; meanwhile Animotion synths blow up her skirt . Robert Christgau gave a mixed review of the song . R. Serge Denisoff and William D. Romanowski , authors of Risky business : rock in film , felt that the song seemed " jammed into the movie with a plunger and little thought to appropriateness . " The Motion Picture Guide of 1986 included the song as one of the soundtrack 's standouts .

= = Chart performance = =

" Gambler " was released in October 1985 in the United Kingdom , and debuted at position 20 on the UK Singles Chart . After two weeks it peaked at number four , and was present for a total of 14 weeks . By the end of 1985 , Madonna achieved up another record with the song , becoming the first female artist to have eight UK top @-@ ten singles in one calendar year . The song was certified silver by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) for shipment of 250 @,@ 000 copies of the single . According to the Official Charts Company , the song has sold 295 @,@ 000 copies there . In Australia , " Gambler " debuted on the Kent Music Report at number 51 , and at number 17 in the top 50 , reaching a peak of number ten . In Germany , the song debuted at number 39 on the Media Control Charts , and reached a peak of number 25 after five weeks , being present on the chart for a total of 12 weeks . Across Europe , the song reached the top @-@ ten of the charts in Belgium , Ireland , Italy , Netherlands and Norway . It also reached peaks of number 23 in Switzerland and number 45 in New Zealand .

= = Live performance = =

Madonna has only performed this song live once , on The Virgin Tour in 1985 . It was the first song , of the second act of the show . Madonna wore a black , fringed micro @-@ top and similar skirt , with her belly @-@ button exposed , and a number of crucifixes in different sizes , hanging from different parts of her body . As the guitar intro of the song started , Madonna appeared on the side @-@ stage and started dancing energetically , while flashlights fell on her . While singing the song , she sometimes opened her jacket and sometimes straddled the steel structure present on the stage . The performance ended with Madonna jumping off the side stage , onto the main stage . It was included on the video release , titled Madonna Live : The Virgin Tour , which was shot in Detroit .

= = Track listing and formats = =

Germany / UK / Australia / Netherlands 7 " single

" Gambler " ? 3 : 54

" Nature of the Beach " (Black ' n Blue) ? 3 : 45

UK / Netherlands 12 " single

" Gambler " (Extended Dance Mix) ? 5 : 34

" Gambler " (Instrumental Remix) ? 3 : 55

" Nature of the Beach " (Black ' n Blue) ? 3 : 45

= = Credits and personnel = =

Madonna ? writer , vocals

John " Jellybean " Benitez ? producer

Stephen Bray ? arranger

Greg Fulginiti ? mastering

John Kalodner ? executive producer

Credits adapted from the soundtrack 's liner notes .

= = Charts = =