

Music Memory Recall Tool for Baby Boomers and Older Adults

How to use this tool: You can use this tool on yourself or with someone else. Pick one question. Answer the 5Ws. Provide some details as well (sound, place, physical feeling). Repeat a day later to lock it in.

Questions with 5W's:

The Band or Artist That Defined Your High School Years

Who: Who was the artist/band and who did you listen with?

What: What song or album did you wear out?

When: When did they matter most to you (grade/year)?

Where: Where did you usually hear them? Car radio, room, school dances, parties?

Why: Why did their sound or lyrics feel like "you" back then?

The First Album You Bought with Your Own Money

Who: Who sold it to you (local shop owner, big-box store)?

What: What was the album, format (vinyl, 8-track, cassette), and standout track?

When: When did you buy it (age, season, year)?

Where: Where did you save/play it (bedroom stereo, family living room)?

Why: Why did you choose that one over everything else?

A Concert You'll Never Forget

Who: Who performed and who went with you?

What: What moment blew you away (guitar solo, encore, stage effect)?

When: When was the show (if possible)?

Where: Where was the venue, and where were your seats?

Why: Why does this concert still stand out among all the shows you've seen?

The Song That Helped You Through a Tough Time

Who: Who was the artist or group?

What: What specific song or lyric spoke to you (don't worry if you paraphrase)?

When: When were you leaning on the song? (college, military service, a health scare)?

Where: Where did you listen (alone in your room, on late-night drives)?

Why: Why did it comfort, motivate, or steady you?

Road-Trip Anthems

Who: Who was in the car (friends, siblings, buddies)?

What: What tracks or artists kept you awake or singing.

When: When did that trip happen (year, season)?

Where: Where were you headed?

Why: Why did those songs match the mood of the journey?

The Radio DJ or Station That Shaped Your Taste

Who: Who was the DJ (name, voice, catchphrase)?

What: What show, countdown, or late-night program did you never miss?

When: When did you tune in (before school, nights)?

Where: Where was your radio (under the pillow, in the garage, in the car)?

Why: Why did that DJ/station feel like your personal guide to music?

A Motown Memory That Filled the Dance Floor

Who: Who was the artist/group?

What: What song made *everyone* move?

When: When did this usually happen (weddings, block parties, high school dances)?

Where: Where were you dancing (gym, VFW hall, living room)?

Why: Why did that groove, bass line, or harmony have an impact?

The Mixtape (or Playlist) You Made for yourself or Someone else

Who: Who did you make it for and who helped you pick the songs?

What: What tracks/artists made the cut, and what message were you sending?

When: When did you give it to them? Or When did you play the songs?

Where: Where did you record it (boom box, dual-cassette deck, early iTunes)?

Why: Why did curating those songs feel powerful