

## I MADE YOU A MIXTAPE

## Andrew W.K.

In *I Made You A Mixtape*, we ask our favorite musicians, actors, writers, directors, or whatever to strut their musical savvy: We pick a theme, they make us a mix.

**The mixer:** When he burst onto the scene with 2002's *I Get Wet*, Andrew W.K. was just a long-haired dude who sang fun songs about parties. Now, 10 years later and fresh off *I Get Wet*'s deluxe 10th-anniversary reissue, it's clear that W.K.'s more than that. He's become a worldwide lifestyle guru, motivational speaker, and relentlessly positive force of nature. Because of his penchant toward parties, though, *The A.V. Club* asked W.K. to make us a mix full of songs guaranteed to get a room up and dancing.



## "It's Time To Party," Andrew W.K.

**Andrew W.K.:** That's the first song off my first album. Which, thinking about it now, with the last almost 11 years of nonstop partying, it all literally did start with that song and that album. And it hasn't stopped since! So even though the song is only about a minute and a half long, it's been 11 years long in a way. I feel like that song speaks for itself and hopefully makes it very, very clear—if not undeniable—that the party has begun.

**The A.V. Club:** Did you think when you first recorded this song that partying was going to be your whole career?

**AWK:** That was my dream! I certainly did not expect it to come true quite as intensely as it has and in the ways that it has. Every now and then you have those glimpses of clarity about your destiny and your fate, but often, especially when you're working very hard on making your dream come true, it can be delightfully surprising to see how it unfolds, and it certainly has unfolded in a way that I'm just endlessly grateful for. I really wanted to have more fun in my life, and I figured that starting to party and starting an endless, lifelong party would be a really good way to be more cheerful.

## "Tutti Frutti," Little Richard

**AWK:** This guy invented that spirit of joy in music, as far as I can tell. I mean, there's Johann Sebastian Bach, he has certainly a joyful power that comes through his melodies, and there's all different kinds of music out there, but when someone focuses purely on trying to either communicate or—even better—conjure up joy, like the physical sensation, it's really tremendous. And Little Richard, he's doing that. He's not singing about fun; he is actually manifesting fun out of nothing.

When I've put on that song when I DJ or host a party, the whole place goes bananas. Every time! All over the world. I'm sure they've heard the song before, but even if they're not familiar with Little Richard, that song, it's like a tool. That's how I think of these kinds of pieces of culture or entertainment. They cause something to happen. They're a direct route into this feeling—kind of like the way a hammer drives a nail into a board very effectively—these songs drive joy into your brain.

## "(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party!)," Beastie Boys

**AWK:** This is such an important song. For a long time during the era when they first released this song, partying wasn't necessarily that cool. Or at least having fun wasn't always considered very cool, and it seemed like a lot of

times—and recently as well—people thought that being very serious was cool or it made you seem cool. So I was very thankful to Beastie Boys, like everybody that loves them, for being able to come out so strong with so much excitement and such a celebratory, fun-loving attitude. And it's not that they're not serious, they just happen to be very serious about fun. And that song is one of the greatest songs of all time for very obvious reasons.

**AVC:** Fun is so serious you have to fight for it.

**AWK:** You do. You do, because those people that are so dry and so serious, they can be very stoic and very staunch, and there are times when you have to call upon real physical force. The beauty of it is they're not saying you have to fight against the downers or the haters; you fight *for* partying. You fight for what you love instead of against what you hate.

## "Celebration," Kool &amp; The Gang

**AVC:** To some people this song is cheesy.

**AWK:** It's just because it's been heard so much. And I sort of felt that way until I heard it really loud in a club, and not just on the radio or in an elevator somewhere. The verses, it kind of drops down, but that's just so they can build it back up for that [loudly] "Woo hoo!" Imagine when they first recorded this how excited they must have been to come up with this. And that "doo noo noo noo," that's just one of the greatest pieces of music. But because it's almost like "Happy Birthday" at this point, it's easy to forget its power. So I recommend *cranking* it. If you crank that and it's the right mood or the right time—that perfect prime—that's why I put it second to last on this list, sort of thinking when you need that little boost you would not think necessarily that this song would do it. But it's that perfect prime, ecstatic, euphoric feeling where you've been dancing for three hours and you're just sort of hitting that runner's wall—or that dancer's wall—where all the endorphins are kicking in and you're just lost in this glow of the "life is good" feeling.

**AVC:** As a DJ, how do you know when it's the right time to play something like "Celebration"?

**AWK:** Here in New York, a club is open till 4. So I would say at 3, I would start thinking about it. Another good one that could work for that would be "Good Times" by Chic. By 3:30, if people are dancing, then you've earned the right to play that song. And it can definitely be a risk. But the odds are it will take it into this complete next level, because everybody knows the song, and that's what's special about those kinds of songs. The risk is everyone knows it too well. But if it's the right vibe, it's this real sense of unity and that we're all in this together. Sort of like an awareness moment, where you can look around and realize, "Wow. I'm alive and having the best time I've ever had."

## "Party Hard," Andrew W.K.

**AWK:** Thirteen's a very lucky number, so I wanted to put this track and bookend it with the first song. This song to me is like my whole life. It was a gift that was given to me from unknown sources, and it inspires me to make the most of the opportunities I've been granted. It's just incredible, this life I've gotten to lead here. And this song is the theme song of my life. — *Marah Eakin*

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