

Run

DMC



Members

● Joseph Simmons aka Dj Run



Got his start as a DJ for Curtis Blow

Darryl McDaniels aka DMC



Focused more on athletics until the late 70's when he bought a turntable and started to DJ.

Jason Mizell aka Jam Master Jay



Known as one of the best DJs in New York, but also played several instruments in traditional Bands.

Formation of the Group

- Formed on Hollis, Queens New York in 1981.
- Simmons and McDaniels started hanging around Two-Fifths Park in Hollis in late 1970s, hoping to rap for the local DJs who performed and competed there.
- Eventually, Simmons and McDaniels rapped in front of Mizell at the park, and the three became friends.
- DJ Run had an older brother Russell Simmons who was managing Curtis Blow. He would be instrumental in helping Run DMC land their first recording contract.

Career

- In 1983 they signed with Profile Records
 - Their first single “It’s Like That” reached no. 15 on the R&B charts and helped pave the way for the band's self-titled debut album in 1984.
- Their music genre was Hip-Hop with a dash of Rap
- This was a departure from early hip hop that sounded more like disco.
- Curtis Blow – The Breaks
- Sugerhill Gang – Rapper’s Delight

- Notice the harder baselines and grittier sound in Run DMC’s music. It was also more socially conscious.

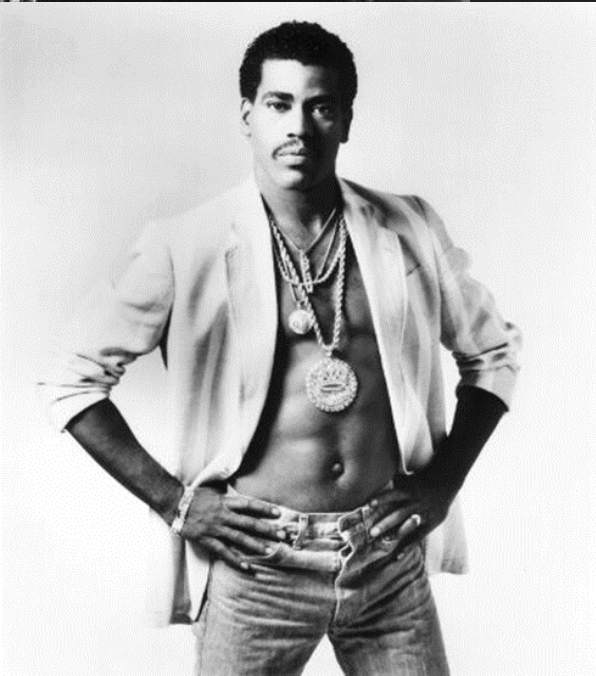
Beginning of their Influence

- Their landmark single "[Rock Box](#)" was a groundbreaking fusion of raw hip-hop and hard rock that would become a cornerstone of the group's sound and paved the way for the rap rock movement of the 1990s.



Cultural Icons

- Run-D.M.C. changed the entire aesthetic of hip hop music and culture. Old school rappers who tended to dress in the flashy attire that was commonly attributed to rock and disco acts of the era: tight leather, chest-baring shirts, gloves and hats with rhinestones and spikes, leather boots, etc.
- Run-D.M.C. discarded the more glam aspects of early hip hop's look (which ironically, was later readopted in 1990 by more "pop" rappers MC Hammer and Vanilla Ice) and incorporated a more 'street' sense of style such as Kangol hats, leather jackets, and unlaced Adidas shoes.



Subsequent Success

- The release of *King of Rock* in 1985 saw the group furthering their rap-rock fusion on songs like "Can You Rock It Like This" and the title track; while "Roots, Rap, Reggae" was one of the first rap/dancehall hybrids.
- The music video for the single "Rock Box" was the first ever rap video to air on MTV
- They later released their third album, titled *Raising Hell*, which became the group's most successful album and one of the best-selling rap albums of all-time. The album was certified double-platinum and peaked at number three on the charts.

“Walk This Way”

- Almost done with *Raising Hell* when Rick Rubin, their producer, suggested they do another rock/rap single. Simmons was against the idea because they did not want to be known for only this style of music.
- Became a full collaboration instead of just rapping over the sample.
- The song and video became one of the biggest hits of the 1980s, reaching number four on the Hot 100, and cemented Run-D.M.C.'s crossover status. It also resurrected Aerosmith's career.
- “Walk This Way” brought rap music into the mainstream to stay.

My Adidas

- The single "[My Adidas](#)" led to the group signing a \$1.6 million endorsement deal with athletic apparel brand Adidas. Adidas formed a long-term relationship with Run-D.M.C. and hip hop.
- First Rap act to sign a major endorsement deal.



Decline

- Run DMC would put out the following albums over the next 15 years.
 - *Tougher Than Leather* (1988)
 - *Back from Hell* (1990)
 - *Down with the King* (1993)
 - *Crown Royal* (2001)
- None of these albums would have the same success as *Raising Hell*.

End of Band

- Sadly on October 30, 2002, Jay was working at his studio in Queens, New York, when two men broke into the complex. Mizell was shot and killed during the invasion, at the age of 37. The murder has invited countless theories on who killed Jay and why, but the case remains unsolved.
- The death sadly brought the group to its end, but their fame did not end there
- Simmons went on with a solo career and in 2005 released his solo album, *Distortion*.

Later Lives of Run DMC

- **Simmons**
 - Had 3 children with his first wife, Valerie Vaughn, Vanessa, Angel, and Joseph
 - Remarried in 1994 to Justine Jones, who he had 2 boys, Daniel and Russell, with and adopted a daughter, Miley Justine. Sadly lost his daughter Victoria in 2006
- **McDaniels**
 - During Run DMC, he became very depressed and turned to alcohol
 - He considered suicide
 - Had a turn around when he heard the song “Angel” by Sarah McLachlan and started to do family history, he learned that he was adopted

Success/Significance

- First Rap/Hip Hop act to gain mainstream success
- They were quickly known for all their firsts:
 - First rap group to have their music video shown on MTV
 - First Hip-Hop group to be on the cover on *Rolling Stone*
- They were known as The Beatles of hip-hop
- In 2009, Run DMC joined the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- In 2016, Run-D.M.C. received rap's first Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.
- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, editor of AllMusic, has written: "More than any other hip-hop group, Run-D.M.C. are responsible for the sound and style of the [hip-hop] music."

ACTIVITY

For the activity, we will be getting into groups and writing a rap song about a product you like, i.e. *My Adidas*.