



# 52 HIT SONG IDEAS

by Clay Mills and  
Marty Dodson

# SongTown Co-Founders

***Community. Coaching. Connection.***

SongTown.com is a unique community of creative souls led by top-selling songwriters Marty Dodson and Clay Mills, offering online classes, webinar hangouts, and mentoring worldwide with top music professionals. We'd love to help you grow your art and chase your dreams!

## Marty Dodson

Marty Dodson was born in Apple Valley, California, and moved around for several years until his family settled in Nashville, TN. Growing up, he was intimidated by the sheer number of people coming to Nashville to become singers or songwriters. So, he went to college and earned a degree in psychology. After working ten years as a youth minister, Marty decided to change careers. Trouble was, he didn't know what he wanted to be when he grew up. He fumbled around for several years, doing odd jobs and trying to decide on a direction for his life. Finally, a book he read helped him realize that what he REALLY wanted to be was a songwriter. He had run into Gordon Payne, a member of the Crickets, while working one of his odd jobs. Gordon helped him re-write one of his songs and demo it in a Nashville studio. Marty was hooked. He threw caution to the wind, quit the other jobs and began writing full-time. Six #1 songs and more than 90 cuts later, Marty has become one of the top writers in Nashville.



## Clay Mills

Clay Mills, a ten-time ASCAP award-winning songwriter and producer, grew up surrounded by music in the blues-rich Mississippi Delta. Over the course of his songwriting career, Mills has penned the #1 hits "Don't Think I Don't Think About It" (Darius Rucker), "Beautiful Mess" (Diamond Rio), and "Fall" (Kimberley Locke), while collecting Grammy nominations for "Beautiful Mess" and "Heaven, Heartache, and the Power of Love" (Trisha Yearwood). Clay began performing in rock and country bands in his early teens. At 19, he moved to New York City where he wrote and programmed tracks for rap and hip-hop artists. In the late '90s, he was introduced to Nashville producer Mark Bright and soon after signed a publishing deal. Clay has had over 75 major artist cuts, including three #1 hits, six Top 5 singles and 12 Top 40 singles. His songs have been recorded by a diverse range of artists including Babyface, Lady Antebellum, Easton Corbin, Reba, Bill Gaither, Lonestar, Clay Walker and Joe Nichols.



# How to Use This Book...

This book is designed to be used as a 52-week writing exercise, or simply as inspiration anytime you want to kickstart your creativity. Using it as a once-a-week writing assignment will not only make you a stronger writer on many subjects, but also give you a well-rounded song catalog of time-proven classic song themes.

On many of the pages, we've listed classic and contemporary song examples to help you get started in the right direction. We've left space on each page for you to type in your own song titles and ideas. Simply choose a program that recognizes this PDF's interactivity and click in the toolbar to add your own text. Or you could start your own companion "hook book" or songwriting journal today.

## 9 Tips to Get Started...

**#1** Give yourself an assignment each week to develop a unique song idea from that week's prompt. Save them in your idea file for upcoming co-writes.

**#2** Use the book when you get stuck. Open it randomly and brainstorm every idea you can think of based on that concept.

**#3** Simply brainstorm on one idea until you fill the empty space on the page, then move on to the next idea.

**#4** Write as many songs as you can each week based on that week's prompt.

**#5** Listen to the sample songs listed and THEN brainstorm 5 titles based on the prompt.

**#6** Talk over the prompt with a co-writer and BOTH work on brainstorming ideas based on that concept.

**#7** Go crazy! Don't edit yourself. Get outside your box and write down EVERYTHING you think of, without judgement or editing.

**#8** Use the prompts to help yourself come up with other concepts or prompts for songs!

**#9** Have fun! That's what matters most!

Write On!

Clay & Marty

# Week 1

Watch your favorite movie and listen for key lines or phrases spoken by the actors.

**“You Had Me From Hello”** was a hit for singer Kenny Chesney. Kenny got the idea for the song after hearing the line spoken by actor Tom Cruise in the the popular movie *Jerry McGuire*. **“While You Loved Me”** was a line in a Humphrey Bogart movie and became a hit for Rascal Flatts.



# Week 2

Write a song using a color in the title.

**“Purple Rain”** — Prince

**“Yellow”** — Coldplay



# Week 3

Write a song using the word GOODBYE in the title.

**“Goodbye To Love”** — Ozzie Osbourne

**“Goodbye To You”** — Michelle Branch



# Week 4

Write a song about how hard it is to be a single mother.

**“I’m A Survivor”** — Reba



# Week 5

Last night you had a dream: you've lost the person you love and he or she is not in your life anymore. You wake up relieved that they are lying by your side...Write a song telling this person how you feel at that very moment.

**“One More Day”** — Diamond Rio



# Week 6

Write a song about resisting a temptation.

**“Fighting Temptation”** — Beyonce



# Week 7

Many great songs have been written about roses. Write your own!

**“Roses Are Red”** — The Mac Band

**“Every Rose Has Its Thorns”** — Poison

**“Run For The Roses”** — Dan Fogelberg



# Week 8

Write a song with repeated words in the title.

**“Don’t Think I Don’t Think About it”** — Darius Rucker

**“Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da”** — The Beatles



# Week 9

Write a song about searching your whole life and finally meeting the love of your life.

**“I Finally Found You”** — Enrique Iglesias



# Week 10

Great writers can write about a place they've never been to and still make the listener feel as if they are actually there. Choose a place you've always want to visit. Use the Internet to read about this place. Look at pictures. Then write the song!

Example: Singer Gordon Lightfoot was never aboard the ship “**The Edmund Fitzgerald**” on lake Gitche Gume, but through the magic of his song, we feel as if we are right there when it sinks!



# Week 11

Write a song about giving all you have in a relationship to the point of having nothing left to give.

**“I Got Nothing Left”** — Celine Dion

**“I Gave You Everything”** — Code Red



# Week 12

Write a song about a street you can't drive down anymore.



# Week 13

Love is all about feeling safe with someone. Write a song promising to make someone else feel safe, or longing for someone to make you feel safe.

**“Someone To Watch Over Me”** — Sting

**“I’ll Be Your Shelter”** — Taylor Dayne



# Week 14

Write a song about your favorite season.

**“Summer of ‘69”** — Bryan Adams

**“Summer Nights”** — From *Grease*



# Week 15

Write a song that people might make out to.

**“Must Be Doin’ Somethin’ Right”** — Billy Currington

**“Sexual Healing”** — Marvin Gaye



# Week 16

Write a song using an oxymoron (figure of speech that combines contradictory terms).

“**Beautiful Mess**” — Diamond Rio

“**Bittersweet**” — Kayne West



# Week 17

Take a common phrase and change a keyword to come up with a twist title.

Phrase #1: Yes, I admit I've got a "drinking problem."

New Title: "**I've Got a Thinking Problem**" — David Ball

Phrase #2: Take it "one day" at a time.

New Title: "**One Night At A Time**" — George Strait



# Week 18

Write a song as a conversation.

**“The Chair”** — George Strait



# Week 19

Write a song about the moon. Nothing is sexier or more romantic than moonlight.

**“Moondance”** — Van Morrison



# Week 20

Write a song with the word TEQUILA in the title.

**“Tequila Makes Her Clothes Fall Off”** — Joe Nichols

**“You and Tequila”** — Kenny Chesney

**“Tequila On Ice”** — Darryl Worley



# Week 21

Write a song about a new beginning.



# Week 22

Write a song from a perspective that is not your own. If you are very conservative, write from a liberal viewpoint. If you are very liberal, write from a conservative viewpoint. See how far you can get into the mind space of someone very different than yourself.



# Week 23

Write a song about boots.

**“These Boots Are Made For Walking”** — Nancy Sinatra

**“Boot Scootin’ Boogie”** — Brooks and Dunn



# Week 24

Write a song about the miracle of a child being born.

**“Isn’t She Lovely”** — Stevie Wonder

**“All American Girl”** — Carrie Underwood



# Week 25

Write a song about what women are looking for.

**“What A Girl Wants”** — Christina Aguilera



# Week 26

Write a song about a relationship that you know is going nowhere, but you can't stop seeing the person.



# Week 27

Write a song about rumors going around town.

**“Rumor Has It”** — Adele



# Week 28

Many big songs have used the word BRICK in the title. Write your own brick song!

**“Another Brick In The Wall”** — Pink Floyd

**“Brick House”** — The Commodores



# Week 29

Write a song about suspicion. This happens in every relationship to some degree, and writers have used it to fuel some classic tunes.

**“Suspicious Minds”** — Elvis

**“Who Is He (And What Is He To You)”** — Bill Withers



# Week 30

Write a song using a day of the week.

**“Rainy Days and Mondays”** — The Carpenters

**“Saturdays Night’s Alright For Fighting”** — Elton John



# Week 31

Write a song about that person you've never been able to stop loving.

**"I'm Not Supposed To Love You Anymore"** — Brian White

**"I Can't Help It If I'm Still In Love With You"** — Hank Williams



# Week 32

Write a song about someone who only calls when he or she is drinking.

**“Last Call”** — Lee Ann Womack



# Week 33

Write a story song about a colorful character.

**“The Gambler”** — Kenny Rogers



# Week 34

Write a song about America's most sinful city: Vegas. And yes, "What Happens In Vegas, Stays In Vegas" is too cliché a title to write!

**"Waking Up In Vegas"** — Katy Perry

**"Leaving Las Vegas"** — Sheryl Crow



# Week 35

By nature, songwriters are dreamers. The world has been changed by dreamers who think they can do the impossible. The Wright Brothers thought they could fly, and so, they built an airplane. We are now sending rockets into space! Write a song encouraging people to dream big and overcome the odds!

**“The Impossible”** — Joe Nichols



# Week 36

Write a song with the word EVERYTHING in the title.

**“Everything is Everything”** — Lauryn Hill

**“Everything”** — Michael Buble



# Week 37

Go through some old photographs and find one that brings up a strong memory. Write a song about this.

**“In Color”** — Jamey Johnson

**“Photographs and Memories”** — Jim Croce



# Week 38

Write a song that plays off a fairytale theme.

“**White Horse**” — Taylor Swift

“**Stealing Cinderella**” — Chuck Wicks



# Week 39

Write a song about a secret love affair.

**“The Pina Colada Song”** — Rupert Holmes

**“(If Loving You Is Wrong) I Don’t Wanna Be Right”** — Luther Ingram



# Week 40

Write a song about the worst Christmas ever.

**“Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer”** — Elmo ‘n Patsy



# Week 41

Everyone needs a reason or purpose for living. Write a song telling the person you love that they are your reason to get up every morning.

**“Live For Loving You”** — Gloria Estefan



# Week 42

Write a song using famous song titles as part of the lyrics.

**“Songs About Rain”** — Gary Allan

**“My Life’s Been A Country Song”** — Chris Cagle



# Week 43

Angels have always held a fascination for songwriters because they are a powerful symbol. In fact, we could list a whole page of examples of big angel tunes. Write your own classic angel song!

**“She Talks To Angels”** — The Black Crowes

**“In The Arms Of An Angel”** — Sarah McLachlan



# Week 44

Write a song from the female perspective asking, “If we make love tonight, how will you feel about me tomorrow?”

**“After Tonight”** — Mariah Carey

**“Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow”** — Amy Winehouse



# Week 45

Write a song about one thing you do well.

**“Pretty Good At Drinking Beer”** — Billy Currington

**“What I Do”** — Billy Dean



# Week 46

You've had a fight with your lover. Write a song saying you'd like to make up.

**“We Can Work It Out”** — The Beatles



# Week 47

We all experience moments that make us feel so overwhelmingly good that we don't want them to end. Write a song about wanting to hold on to a moment!

**“History In The Making”** — Darius Rucker



# Week 48

Write a song about an event that changed your life.



# Week 49

Write a song describing the magical way a song can trigger a memory and transport you back in time.

**“The Song Remembers When”** — Trisha Yearwood

**“Tim McGraw”** — Taylor Swift



# Week 50

Sometimes you can love someone so much it feels like you are whole when you are with them, and if you were to lose them, you would feel only half of yourself was left. Write a song about it!

**“Biggest Part Of Me”** — Ambrosia

**“Make Me Whole”** — Amel Larrieux



# Week 51

Write a song with CANDY in the title. Many songs have been written about this—from pop to heavy metal. Seems we have a fascination with sweets!

**“Candy Perfume Girl”** — Madonna

**“Candy’s Room”** — Bruce Springsteen



# Week 52

Write a song with nonsense syllables. Many great songs have these!

**“De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da”** — The Police

**“Sussudio”** — Phil Collins



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~Write On!

Clay Mills and Marty Dodson

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