

Throwback: The Beastie Boys - Sure Shot



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Brooklyn natives Mike Diamond, Adam Yauch and Adam Horowitz started their music careers as punk rockers in 1979. After their experimentation with rap music at their shows and the reception of their 12-inch single [“Cooky Puss”](#) they decided to do it full time. Rick Rubin became their DJ/producer and they signed to his Def Jam label. Their 1986 debut *Licensed To Ill* was the first album from a white rap group and they were accepted by Black and white audiences so much that it became the best-selling rap album of the decade. *Licensed To Ill* was a meme that spread throughout pop culture influencing succeeding generations of rappers like Eminem and pop stars like Beck. And it is still the only rap album by a white group to receive the 5 mic rating from *The Source* magazine. *Paul’s Boutique* was their sophomore effort and it was considered a commercial disappointment because it did not have the same sales figures as *Licensed To Ill*. They were no longer working with Rick Rubin and had a new deal with Capitol Records. Despite the pressure from the company the album was recognized by the critics for the artistic savvy of sample-driven cuts like [“Shadrach,”](#) [“Shake Your Rump”](#) and [“Hey Ladies.”](#) Miles Davis loved the album and said he never tired of listening to it. *Check Your Head* expanded their palette to include jazz and proved to be another classic album that included such standouts as [“Pass The Mic,”](#) [“So What’Cha Want”](#) and [“Jimmy James.”](#) It was the first time they played their own instruments since their punk rock days. “Sure Shot” is from their fourth studio offering *Ill Communication*. Q-Tip joined them for [“Get It Together”](#) and [“Sabotage”](#) gave them their second no. 1 album on the Billboard charts. *Hello Nasty* took

their sound more into an alternative direction with [“Intergalactic”](#) being the biggest single. They took home two Grammys for the album in the rap and alternative music categories. *To The 5 Boroughs* would also debut at no.1 when it was released in 2004. The band took another musical direction on *The Mix-Up* by filling the album with instrumentals. This approach resulted in a Grammy for Best Pop Instrumental Album. *Hot Sauce Committee* from 2011 is their 8th studio release and it is noted for the collaborative track with Santigold, [“Don’t Play No Game I Can’t Win.”](#) And with the passing of MCA it is as Swan song from the longest living rap group.