

# Throwback: “Weird Al” Yankovic



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“Weird Al” Yankovic has been a master parodist of pop culture for almost 40 years. He caught his professional break in 1979 when California-based novelty DJ Dr. Demento played Yankovic’s spoof of The Knack’s “My Sharona” renamed [“My Bologna.”](#) Doug Fieger of The Knack loved the song and connected Yankovic with Capitol Records which lead to a short-term recording contract. By the early '80’s Yankovic was a mainstream star because of his first Michael Jackson spoof, [“Eat It.”](#) Audiences were able to connect with Yankovic’s parodies because of his well made videos and lighthearted manner that were fun instead of being a mean-spirited attack on the subject. Michael Jackson, like

many artists who gave Yankovic permission to use their work, found his work to be an honorable homage and confirmation of their pop status. Jackson even allowed Yankovic to use the subway set from *Moonwalker* to film the video for "Fat." The visuals won Yankovic a Grammy Award for Best Concept Music Video and Jackson loved the album. Through the years Yankovic has spoofed several pop stars most notably [Madonna](#), [Queen](#), [Nirvana](#), [Chamillionaire](#), [Coolio](#) and [Lady Gaga](#). He scored his first number one album with 2014's *Mandatory Fun* that's become very popular because of his take on Pharrell's "Happy" (["Tacky"](#)) and Lorde's "Royal" (["FOIL"](#)).