

# ERIC PASLAY

Country artist Eric Paslay delivers a powerful punch as a renowned Platinum-selling, GRAMMY nominated hit songwriter, artist and performer. He's celebrated five No. 1 hits, including his smash lead single from his critically acclaimed self-titled debut album, "Friday Night." The Temple, Texas native has earned numerous songwriter award nominations including Grammy's Best Country Song, ACM's Song of the Year twice and the CMA Song of the Year for "Even If It Breaks Your Heart." Eric was also honored with Grammy nomination as an artist in 2016 for Best Country Duo/Group Performance for "The Driver" - a collaboration with friends Charles Kelley and Dierks Bentley. And in 2022, Eric continues to see success as a songwriter, having co-penned Keith Urban's latest hit "Wild Hearts."

A true artist's artist, *USA Today* called Paslay "flat out-brilliant" and *American Songwriter* named him an influencer of country music.

"I don't make music to be famous or be cool," he says. "God didn't give me the gift of somehow writing these songs and a decent enough voice to sing them to not share them. And through the music I was influenced by, my music pushes the limits in a creative way."

Paslay's highly regarded in Nashville's rich songwriting community for his creativity. When he plays in town, there's invariably a cadre of artists and writers dotting the audience. Part of that is admiration for his music and voice, and part is appreciation for his friendship. Paslay had four #1 singles as a songwriter for other artists – the Eli Young Band's Grammy-nominated "Even If It Breaks Your Heart," Love and Theft's "Angel Eyes," Rascal Flatts' "Rewind" and Jake Owen's "Barefoot Blue Jean Night" – before he nabbed his first #1 hit as an artist with "Friday Night." Ironically, he wrote "Rewind" the same day that "Barefoot" was named ASCAP's most-performed song of the year. Four of Eric's No. 1's also ranked among the "Top 100 Songs of the Decade" by Country Aircheck, with the "Barefoot" coming in at #1.

Paslay's self-titled debut album established him as an artist of enormous potential, yielding three hits. The infectious #1 hit "Friday Night" earned gold certification, "Song About A Girl" bounced with happy hooks and references to the Beatles and Carl Perkins, and "She Don't Love You" provided an aching portrait of an emotionally-damaged woman and the man who brought her down. The song was honored at the 2015 Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) Awards as one of the "10 Songs I Wished I'd Written" and placed #6 on *Popdust's* all-genre Top 20 countdown for the year.

While the songs he wrote for his fellow acts were rewarding in their own way, the opportunity to play his music for an audience that was already familiar with them was an even greater experience.

"'She Don't Love You' was my first ballad to release as a single. To hear everyone sing that back, that has been a cool thing to see," he says. "But a lot of times, people come up to me on the road and they tell me what their favorite song is and it wasn't one on the radio, and that's always cool, too."

Cool because it means Paslay is connecting, which was the point when he chose music in the first place. Born in Abilene, Texas, and growing up in Temple, Texas, he was motivated by two pursuits: music and

baseball. He sang and played guitar with a youth group that met on Wednesday nights, and he played first base in high school. Until his senior year, that is. Many of the team's games were on Wednesdays, and he had to pick which meant more – the guitar, or the ballpark.

“That was probably one of the hardest decisions in high school,” he reflects. “I’m grateful I chose music, but I still dream about – you know, the glory days.”

Those days were essential in building his patience. Baseball is a game of inches – one slight change in the speed of a pitch or the spot where a bat meets the ball can be the difference between a lineout and a game-winning home run. Music isn't that much different.

Paslay attended Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee in the mid-2000s, and he took an internship 30 miles away at Cal IV Entertainment, a music publishing house on Nashville's Music Row. It wasn't always glamorous, but it was still inviting. Paslay garnered a recording deal with EMI.

Once his debut album hit the marketplace – and the radio – life changed significantly. Paslay became something of a road warrior as a special guest performing on many high profile tours including Tim & Faith and Garth Brooks' tour as well as his own concerts across North America and in the UK. Eric has also played shows as part of the CMA Songwriter Series.

While Eric's schedule is hectic with touring, songwriting appointments and studio time, he can stay on top of his health thanks to Dexcom's continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) system. At age 10, Eric was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes and uses Dexcom's G5 Mobile CGM System to monitor his blood level. “When I'm on the road with a crazy schedule, it's hard to keep a regular routine, let alone watch what I'm eating and stay on top of my blood glucose levels,” said Paslay. “What's really amazing about the Dexcom CGM is that I'm no longer surprised while I'm on stage—I can see my levels go up and down and take action. Even my tour manager and my wife can track my levels with the Follow app. I can't say enough good things about the impact CGM has made on my personal and professional life.”

Eric is a spokesperson for Habitat for Humanity, along with President Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter, Garth Brooks & Trish Yearwood, and the Scott Brothers, and partnered with them for their award-winning “Home Is The Key” campaign.

He recently signed an exclusive songwriting agreement with Big Machine Music and his latest album, a compilation of reimagined versions of Eric's biggest hits as a writer and artist, *Even If It Breaks Your Barefoot Friday Night*, is available now.

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