

Brett Young and Taylor Mills' Decade-Long Path Down the Aisle — Inside Their Wedding Day

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Brett Young and Taylor Mills have officially begun their journey as husband and wife, but the couple's path to their wedding day wasn't always the easiest.

The newlyweds met more than a decade ago when Mills was a college student at Arizona State University. "It was early Facebook years and I saw a picture on her roommate's page with her in it," recalls Young. "I finally was able to finagle a group hang and it was pretty platonic."

Young, 37, moved to Orange County, California, but then received a text four months later from his future wife, 31. The pair began dating long distance until Mills moved out to Santa Monica after she graduated.

"About every other weekend I drove from Orange County to Arizona to see her," Young tells PEOPLE. After dating for six years, they called it quits on the relationship when Young moved to Nashville to pursue his country singing career.

"It was one of those things where we needed to be apart to grow up before we could come back together," says Young about their two-year break.

The couple says they both missed each other but focused on their own lives. Then, Young texted Mills out of the blue. “I didn’t have his phone number. When you [texted me], it took my breath away.”

When they reconciled, “all the good stuff was still there, but all the bad stuff that was born out of immaturity was gone,” says Young. “It was just really easy and obvious.”

Many of Young’s breakup and love songs off his first studio album Brett Young are inspired by Mills, who was taken aback the first time she heard his voice on the radio.

“I was driving to work. I didn’t even look down at my radio to see Brett Young and his name. I instantly heard his voice and I pulled over to the side of the road and felt like I was hyperventilating. It was really hard because it brought up a lot of emotion, but I was also so proud of him.”



Now those emotional songs are a “reminder that we went through that and came out on the other side,” says the singer. “We’re better for it. She’s a very good muse!”

Planning their wedding while Young toured with Thomas Rhett over the last year, the couple chose to write custom vows — and shed plenty of tears while reciting them in front of more than 200 of their closest friends and family at the Bighorn Golf Club in Palm Desert, California.

“That’s definitely the moment that was most difficult to get through and not sound like a big baby,” Young says about their emotional ceremony. “I cried writing my vows. When you’ve been together for 10 years, on and off, it’s really overwhelming to sit down and put into few words how you feel about somebody.”

The newlyweds chose not to have a first look (“I wanted the first time I saw her to be when she walked down the aisle,” says Young) and their ceremony was officiated by Young’s father Brad, a pastor, and Van Hazelitt, Young’s manager and groomsman.

“He’s done 1000 weddings,” says Young. “I’m his only son and he didn’t want to be the preacher for the entire wedding. He wanted to be actually attending his son’s wedding so my manager, who’s also one of my groomsmen and one of my close friends, slid in and did most of the ceremony. My dad didn’t come back until the official part. It was really special to have my dad but also to have Van.”

At the reception, the couple — who shared their first dance to a special rendition of “Forever Young” produced by Young’s longtime producer Dann Huff — celebrated their new union by partying with their guests and sharing dances to several surprise performances.

Young’s friends and fellow country singers Luke Combs and Lee Brice hit the stage before a six-piece band took over; his “idol” Gavin DeGraw also sang love song “More Than Anyone” at the fête (planned by Elite Events).

“We chose people in terms of performers that are really important to us and are close friends,” says Mills. Adds Young: “If everybody in the country music family could’ve been there, we would’ve asked them all to sing!”



Currently on their honeymoon, the newlyweds will jet back to their home base of Nashville soon, where Young will receive the ASCAP country songwriter-artist of the year honor ahead of the CMA Awards on Nov. 14, where he is nominated for new artist of the year.

In the midst of a busy touring schedule, the two are looking forward to starting a family sooner than later.

“We’ve been together for a long time and we do want kids soon,” says Young, who is heading out on his headlining “Here Tonight” run later this month before hitting the road with Kelsea Ballerini after his sophomore album, Ticket to L.A., drops on Dec. 7. “This is the beginning of our life together, and I’m excited to say husband and wife!”