

**Billboard:** <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/country/9434033/caylee-hammack-playlist>

## **Her debut album, out today, weaves in her many country and rock influences**

Caylee Hammack's life has played out like a country song. She left her small Georgia hamlet after her boyfriend cheated on her and came to Nashville, where she briefly lived in her car. She played at a dive bar while struggling to make it and then her house burned down. And yet, she has thrived.

All of her experiences comes to fore on her Capitol Nashville debut, *If It Wasn't For You*, out today (Aug. 14). The collection also features one of her musical heroes, Reba McEntire, on the feisty "Redhead," and fellow newcomers Ashley McBryde and Tenille Townes on "Mean Something."

In celebration of her album release, Hammack curated a playlist for Billboard, which, of course, includes McEntire, McBryde and Townes, but also shows the breadth of her country and rock influences.

"When you move into a city shaped by the creators you grew up listening to, you deep dive into those artists/songwriters and you cling to the ones that speak to your heart through their music," she tells Billboard. "I have been shaped by every song I've binged and every record I've spun too many times to ever work again. There will always be certain artists and songwriters I will never tire of, the ones who have always seen me without ever meeting me at all. Here is a small smattering of different songs I remember hearing for the first time and feeling awe for either the songwriting, production, or melody usage. "

Listen to Hammack's playlist, and read why she has chosen each of the songs below.

"Fancy," Reba McEntire

"I sang a cover of this song in high school and put it on a burnt cd that made its rounds around my school. Some of my friends lovingly referred to me as 'Fancy' for a year or so after that."

"Velvet Red," Ashley McBryde

"This song reminds me of a modern day "Delta Dawn"-esque way of telling a story. The melody is haunting and the story is unique. Typical Ashley with her genius approach to songs."

"I Kept the Roses," Tenille Townes

"Tenille played this demo for me in my car one day right after a hard breakup. I cried when the first hook landed. I had thrown everything away from this boy...except the roses still hanging on my wall. I don't know if I'll ever take them down."

"She's in Love with the Boy," Trisha Yearwood

"I remember the joy I felt in my mom's maroon SUV as a kid, with the windows down, singing along to this song on the radio."

"Here You Come Again," Dolly Parton

"It was probably the hardest for me to narrow down to one Dolly song to put on this playlist. This beautiful mixture of sweetness, upbeat melody, and sad lyrics makes it a melancholy masterpiece in my opinion."

"Take It With Me," Tom Waits

"This is the song I listened to when I was flying around the country for my radio tour. I would start to play it as the top of the clouds came into view. It gave me peace in a sort of stressful time."

"Away Down the River," Alison Krauss

"One of the most beautiful portrayals of death and loss, with a twist of hope and airy lightness lent by Alison's vocals. The album, *Away Down the River*, is one of my favorites."

"One Big Love," Patty Griffin

"I found Patty Griffin later in my life and I hate it took so long for me to really dive into this creator. This is the song I feel like inspired Sheryl Crow big time and myself!"

"Someday," Sugar Ray

"This song feels like summertime in my childhood."

"Santeria," Sublime

"I don't know why I was so obsessed with this song when I was younger. I just was. I love weird stories. Anything I have not heard said before always caught my ear."

"Up on Cripple Creek," The Band

"My older brother and his friends introduced this song to me when I was maybe 5 or 6. I grew up in love with Levon Helm."

"The Man Who Sold The World," Nirvana

"Now, Nirvana was a staple of my teen angst years, but their MTV Unplugged interpretation of this Bowie classic really got me in the chest. To hear one of my favorite bands cover one of my favorite artists, wow."

"I Will Buy You A New Life," Everclear

"The music video of this song, the angsty melodies and bittersweet optimism of the chorus just makes me want to dance."

"The Distance," Cake

"Cake always pushed the envelope with musical interpretation and lyrical use to tell a story. I used to listen with my older brother to Cake, it brings me back."

“Queen of my Double Wide Trailer,” Sammy Kershaw  
“A staple from a childhood lived out in South Georgia.”

“Gone Country,” Alan Jackson

“This song is the epitome of tongue-in-cheek lyrical use. I remember singing along as a child to this song, never realizing the true meaning behind the verses. Then as an adult, I realized that it was actually a very risky song to put out, which made me love it even more.”

“Space Oddity,” David Bowie

“Tom Douglas once asked me if I could play Madison Square Garden and any song could be mine to play on that stage, which song would I choose? My answer was quick: ‘Space Oddity.’ This song inspired part of the sonic background of “Small Town Hypocrite.” His use of tangible pieces of sound and lyric that teleports us to the inside of a spaceship is some of the most immersive lyrics and production I have ever heard used before.

“Operator,” Jim Croce

“Simply one of my favorite songs of all time. I would give anything to write a song of this caliber of meaning and depth.”