

# 60 Years of German Album-Charts: The Sampler

Already in the very first German album-chart we find three of these hit compilations (3,6,25)

- 1. — My fair Lady  
Karin Hübner, Paul Hubschmid u. a., Philips – SO 8644 L
- 2. — Porgy and Bess  
Original Sound Track, Philips – R 07 522 L
- 3. — Die große Starparade 1962/1  
Verschiedene Interpreten, Polydor – LPHM 46 613
- 4. — Tanzparty bei Paul Kuhn Folge 1-3  
Paul Kuhn, Electrola – E 83 194 / E 83 298 / E 83 313
- 5. — Freddy auf hoher See  
Freddy, Polydor – 46 750
- 6. — Die Spitzenreiter 1961  
Verschiedene Interpreten, Polydor – 47 013
- 7. — In der Bar nebenan  
Fritz Schulz-Reichel, Polydor – 46 608
- 8. — Tschairowsky Concerto No. 1  
Van Cliburn, RCA – LM-2252
- 9. — Drei Lilien, drei Lilien  
Musikkorps der Bundeswehr, Decca – BLK 16 141-P
- 10. — Überleben Sie mal!  
Münchner Lach- und Schießgesellschaft, Polydor – LPHM 46 587
- 11. — My fair Lady  
Rex Harrison, Julie Andrews, Philips – B 07 245 L
- 12. — Eine unvergessene Stimme  
Peter Anders, Polydor – 46 757 LPHM
- 13. — Somebody loves me  
Roy Conniff, Philips – B 47 110 L

- 14. — Play Bach, Folge 1, 2 und 3  
Jacques Soussier, Decca – BLK 16 167-P / BLK 16 182-P / BLK 16 215-P
- 15. — Bravo, Ray Conniff  
Ray Conniff, Philips – B 47 029 L
- 16. — Weltmeisterschafts-Tanzturnier  
Max Greger, Polydor – 46 542
- 17. — Blue Hawaii  
Elvis Presley, RCA – LPM 2426
- 18. — Alte Kameraden  
Musikkorps der Bundeswehr, Telefunken – TW 30 205
- 19. — Carmen (Querschnitt)  
Dir. Ferenc Fricsay, DGG – 19 191 LPEM
- 20. — Helmut Qualtinger als der Herr Karl  
Helmut Qualtinger, Electrola – Lebendiges Wort LW 1
- 21. — Time out  
Das Dave-Brubeck-Quartett, Fonlana – 682 065 TL
- 22. — Das teuerste Programm der Welt  
Extra-Produktion Electrola – E 83 227 (WCLP 688)
- 23. — Unser Hans Albers  
Hans Albers, Decca – BLK 16 181-P
- 24. — Dein ist mein ganzes Herz  
Sándor Kónya, Polydor – LPHM 46 758
- 25. — Schlagerparade der 14 Besten, Folge 1 und 2  
Verschiedene Interpreten, Decca – BLK 16 209-P / BLK 16 218-P



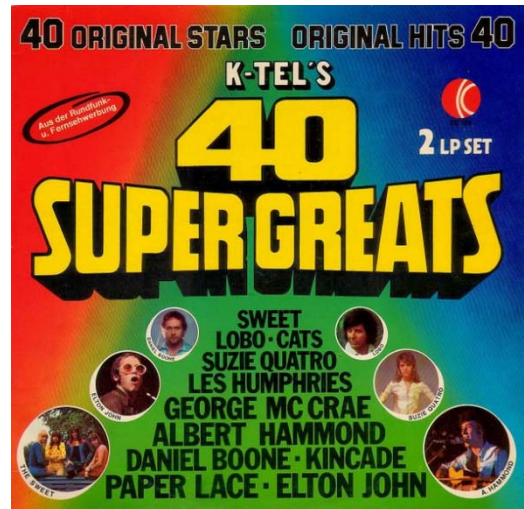
It is noticeable that two titles of this series were combined at # 25.

These kinds of long-playing records (I'll just stick with the term sampler - it's just shorter) played a more or less significant role in the development of the charts up until today. They were a good opportunity for the (thrifty) music lover to get some of the most successful titles of recent months for relatively little money. In the beginning, a record usually presented artists who belonged to one and the same record company. At first, the number of samplers was so small that they were listed in the normal hit parade.

This changed in the 1970s, when record companies appeared that were almost exclusively concerned with the release of samplers. These records were heavily promoted on TV, with K-Tel and Arcade Records in particular making a name for themselves. They then also combined performers from various record companies on one disc.

In the mid-1970s, these products were so dominant in the market that at times 8 samplers were in the German Album Top 10.

Of course, the established record companies were not happy about this development. They preferred to see their artists' new records placed high in the charts - preferably at No. 1, of course, because a good chart listing was (and still is) a good sales argument and is often used in advertising.



When the LP Hit Parade was changed to a bi-monthly publication in January 1977, there was another big change at the same time: the samplers disappeared from the "normal" sales Hit Parade and were listed in a separate list. This "banishment" from the main charts, however, did not only affect samplers, on which the hits of a wide variety of artists could be found. Best-of collections by individual artists were also relegated to the compilation charts if their LP was promoted on TV.

**These seven albums fell victim to this regulation and are no longer to be found in the main list as of January 1977:**

|                |                                   |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Glenn Miller   | Seine 20 grössten Hits            |
| Udo Jürgens    | 40 x Udo - Seine grössten Erfolge |
| Elvis Presley  | Seine 40 grössten Erfolge         |
| Fischer-Chöre  | Die 20 größten Erfolge            |
| Fats Domino    | Seine 20 größten Hits             |
| The Beach Boys | 20 grössten Hits                  |
| Fischer Chöre  | Die schönsten Volkslieder         |

In September 1977, the survey of the hit parades was transferred from "Der Musikmarkt" to Media Control. The separation introduced in January of the same year was reversed and the samplers were again included in the main list.

One year later, the LP Hit Parade was published weekly. At the same time, however, a compilation hit parade was introduced again, but this time it really only concerned the records on which "Various

Artists" were represented. From 1980 onwards, the position that the record would occupy in the "One-Artist-Hitparade" was also printed in this list.

The division into the main charts and compilation charts is still valid today, although the criteria for which title is included in the additional list have changed over time. Roughly speaking, records with 3 or more artists on them are considered samplers. But what would rules be without the famous exceptions? The best example of a classic sampler is the titles from the "Bravo Hits" series. In April 1992, the first episode was released with a total of 16 relatively current hits. As early as episode 2, the series switched to double CDs and the buyer got 30 to 40 current titles at a reasonable price. Today - after exactly 30 years - we have arrived at episode 117. In addition to this regular Bravo hit series, there were numerous spin-offs, which often dealt with a specific theme. You can also find other series that appeared similar to Bravo hits, but none came close to the success of the market leader.



Exceptions to the "various artists" rule always occur when the compilation relates to a specific theme, for example as a soundtrack to a film (such as *Pretty Woman*).



Also concept or project albums such as "Sing meinen Song - Das Tauschkonzert". In this series, a number of well-known artists meet and interpret the songs of the others present. The collection, which has been published annually since 2014, has now reached episode 9, and a special edition is always added in time for the Christmas season.

As already mentioned, the rules have changed several times over the years, but they are precisely defined. If anyone is interested in the current wording, please feel free to contact me.

## How do the other countries (UK and USA) deal with samplers?

The topic of the USA is quickly dealt with: The albums are normally included in the US Top 200. However, there have never been many of these albums in the charts in all that time, so you don't have to worry too much. It was different in the British charts. Here, especially in the 1980s, numerous samplers came onto the market and into the top positions of the charts. The market leader here is the (still today) very successful series "NOW That's what I call Music". One can draw many parallels to our Bravo series. It has now reached episode 111 and has spawned several spin-offs.

In the UK, they waited until 1989 before setting up a compilation chart, as they had done in Germany more than 10 years earlier. However, the approach was so rigorous that all records with more than one artist were included in this list. Thus, soundtracks like *Pretty Woman* or *Bodyguard* also fell under this regulation and were never listed in the main charts.

It was not quite clear how soundtracks interpreted by the original cast of a film were to be treated. These include the two *Mamma Mia* films and "The Greatest Showman". Initially, the tracks were

featured in the compilation charts. Then, at the beginning of 2018, they suddenly became eligible for the main charts, only to return to the special list at the end of 2019. Bemerkenswert ist, dass „The Greatest Showman“ sowohl 2018 als auch 2019 die erfolgreichste Produktion war und insgesamt 28 Wochen auf Platz 1 stand. Wohlge-merkt auf der EINS der ganz normalen Album-Hitparade.

### What does the future of samplers look like?

In Germany, unfortunately, we are not given any concrete sales figures, so that a reliable development cannot be derived. From the reports for the UK and the USA, which keep their figures more transparent, a trend can be discerned. The importance of pure samplers has declined considerably. Whereas a few years ago people were still happy about being able to buy 40 top hits on a double CD at an acceptable price, today anyone can put it together themselves via Spotify.

Of course, I've noticed this about myself too. I used to buy all the Bravo CDs, "Just-the-Best" or whatever they were all called. In England and the USA, I then ordered the corresponding CDs from the NOW series via Amazon. All that is no longer necessary today. However, this means that my personal contribution to the well-being of the music industry has greatly diminished in recent years. For a Spotify subscription of €9.99 per month, I get everything I need.

To my relief, however, I can say that my contribution to record sales from around 1970 to 2015 makes up for the current saving several times over. 😊

