

- John Leslie “Wes” Montgomery was born March 6, 1923 in Indianapolis (in the Haughville neighborhood) to Thomas and Eufala (Frances) Montgomery.¹
- Montgomery’s father played in a folk music quartet and a 1926 *Indianapolis Recorder* article advertised the band’s rehearsal in the Montgomery home.²
- In 1932, Montgomery’s parents separated and he moved to Columbus, Ohio, with his father and two brothers.³ By 1942, Montgomery returned to Indianapolis and moved in with his mother and step-father (Frances and Lavester Arrington).⁴
- Monk Montgomery purchased Wes his first instrument, a four-string tenor guitar, circa 1935; Montgomery purchased a six-string guitar and amp circa 1943.⁵
- Montgomery married Serene Miles in 1943.⁶
- He began playing at Indianapolis clubs circa late 1943 / 1944, including the 440 Club on Indiana Avenue.⁷
- Montgomery’s sound was influenced by jazz guitarist Charlie Christian.⁸
- Montgomery was self-taught and invented his own picking style, using his thumbs instead of a guitar pick.⁹ He didn’t read music.¹⁰
- His experimentation with octaves made his sound distinct.¹¹
- During the 1940s, Montgomery played with Indianapolis bands: the Four Steps in Rhythm¹² and Four Kings and a Jack.¹³
- By 1947, Montgomery lived (with his family and the Arringtons) at 1217 Cornell Street, Indianapolis.¹⁴
- Beginning in 1948, he toured with composer Lionel Hampton for (two?) years, before leading his own group, the Montgomery Quartet. One of their first concerts was at the Phyllis Wheatly YWCA in 1950.¹⁵
- During the 1950s, he performed regularly in Indianapolis with his brothers Monk and Buddy. He played with them off and on throughout his career.¹⁶
 - In 1950, he played with his brothers in the Montgomery Combo...¹⁷
 - ...At the whites only Turf Club,¹⁸ 1444 Gallery,¹⁹ Henri’s Lounge,²⁰ Sunset Ballroom,²¹ George’s Bar and Orchid Room,²² and Hub-Bub Lounge...²³
 - ... and for community-based performances at Camp Atterbury,²⁴ the Senate Ave YMCA,²⁵ Wheatley YWCA,²⁶ Central State Hospital,²⁷ Shortridge High School.²⁸
- Wes Montgomery was voted the best guitar player in the city according to a poll by the *Indianapolis Recorder* in 1953,²⁹ and subsequent years.³⁰
- Riverside Records producer Orrin Keep signed Montgomery to the label on the recommendation of Julian ‘Cannonball’ Adderly, who heard him play in the Missile Room near the Madame CJ Walker Theater in 1959.³¹

- In 1959, the Mastersounds released their first album – Montgomery on guitar, Melvin Rhyne (organ) and Paul Parker (drums).
- In 1960, the Wes Montgomery Trio released their debut record on Riverside in 1960.³²
- Montgomery toured major U.S. cities for next five years³³ and then, in 1964/5, toured Europe.³⁴
- In 1964, Montgomery left Riverside Records and signed to Verve Records. On this label he experimented with more mainstream, accessible pop arrangements.³⁵
- He regularly returned to Indianapolis during the 1960s, playing Hub Bub Lounge,³⁶ Murat Theater,³⁷ Circle Theater,³⁸ Prince Hall Lodge,³⁹ and Clowes Hall.⁴⁰
- Nominated for six Grammy Awards.⁴¹ Note: award actually National Academy of Recording Artists Award.
 - His 1965 album *Bumpin'* (Verve) was nominated for two Grammy awards.⁴²
 - In 1967 he won a Grammy for *Going Out of My Head*, recorded 1966 and released on Verve Records.⁴³
- He left Verve for A & M in 1967⁴⁴ and achieved mainstream success with *A Day In The Life*, a “jazz-pop crossover” album.⁴⁵
- Died June 15, 1968 in Indianapolis.⁴⁶
- At the time of his death, he had three albums on the Billboard Magazine charts, including *A Day in the Life*, which had been No. 1 for 37 consecutive weeks.⁴⁷
- In 1970, Montgomery posthumously won a Grammy for *Willow Weep for Me* (recorded 1965 and 1969, released Verve Records).⁴⁸
- Critics agree that Montgomery was one of the most important jazz guitarists of all time.⁴⁹

Christiansen, Corey. *Essential Jazz Lines: In the Style of Wes Montgomery-Guitar Edition*. Mel Bay Publications, 2015.

¹ R. L. Polk & Co.'s *Indianapolis City Directory, 1917* (Indianapolis: Hollenbeck Press, 1917), 1704-05, Archive.org; “Result of Examination of Drafted Men in the State,” *Indianapolis News*, August 15, 1917, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Indiana State Board of Health, “John Leslie Montgomery,” Certificate of Birth, March 6, 1923, Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana, Registered Number 14614-1337, Ancestry.com; “Births,” *Indianapolis Star*, March 13, 1923, 14, Newspapers.com.

John Leslie Montgomery was born to Tom and Frances Montgomery March 6, 1923 at their home on North Pershing in Indianapolis. For more on the early history of the Montgomery family, see: Paul Mullins, “The Landscapes of Wes Montgomery,” *Invisible Indianapolis*, May 7, 2018, <https://invisibleindianapolis.wordpress.com/2018/05/07/the-landscapes-of-wes-montgomery/>.

² “National Malleable Works New Items,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, January 30, 1926, 7, [Hoosier States Chronicles](#).

The *Indianapolis Recorder* reported in 1926, “The Blackburn Quartette met at the home of Tom Montgomery, Saturday night for rehearsal. The quartet is making a specialty of folk songs.”

³ *Polk’s Columbus Ohio Directory, 1932* (Columbus, OH: R. L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1932), 828, Ancestry.com; *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940*, Ward 13, Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio, April 18, 1940, Sheet No. 6A, Lines 9-11, Ancestry.com.

⁴ Selective Service System, “John Leslie Montgomery,” Registration Card, Order #12829, Local Board No. 5, Marion County, Indiana, WWI Registration Cards, Records of the Selective Service System, Ancestry.com; Nancy Wilson, “Wes Montgomery: ‘The Unmistakable Jazz Guitar,’” September 26, 2007, NPR’s Jazz Profiles, <https://www.npr.org/2007/09/26/14687657/wes-montgomery-the-unmistakable-jazz-guitar>.

In a 1982 telephone interview, Monk Montgomery mentioned that Monk, Wes, and June moved to Columbus with their father. In a 2007 NPR interview, Serene Montgomery also mentioned the move. Both interviews are excerpted in the NPR Jazz Profiles episode on Wes Montgomery.

⁵ C. Adderly, W. Montgomery in Concert at Clowes Hall, Nov. 24,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 11, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Kenny Mathieson, “Wes Montgomery,” in Charles Alexander, *Masters of the Jazz Guitar: The Stories of Players and Their Music* (London: Balafon Books, 1991), 68; Nancy Wilson, “Wes Montgomery: ‘The Unmistakable Jazz Guitar,’” September 26, 2007, NPR’s Jazz Profiles, <https://www.npr.org/2007/09/26/14687657/wes-montgomery-the-unmistakable-jazz-guitar>.

According to the *Indianapolis Recorder*, “Montgomery was not involved with music until the age 19,” circa 1942, when he began teaching himself to play guitar. Other sources make this similar claim and Montgomery sometimes encouraged it himself as it added mystique to his image as a self-taught genius. However, it was at nineteen or twenty when he started playing a six string guitar. According to an interview with his brother Monk Montgomery, Monk bought Wes his first instrument, a four string tenor guitar from pawn shop for \$13 when Wes was only 12 years old. In another interview, Wes’s wife Serene confirmed that Wes grew up playing guitar with his brothers, so he was quite accomplished by the time he took up the six-string.

⁶ “Daily Vital Statistics,” *Indianapolis News*, February 22, 1943, 23, Newspapers.com; “Daily Vital Statistics,” *Indianapolis News*, October 11, 1943, 24, Newspapers.com.

⁷ Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Ralph J. Gleason, 1961, reprinted JazzProfiles, April 10, 2017, <https://jazzprofiles.blogspot.com/2017/04/wes-montgomery-1961-ralph-j-gleason.html>;

“C. Adderly, W. Montgomery in Concert at Clowes Hall, Nov. 24,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 11, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); David Leander Williams, *Indianapolis Jazz: The Masters, Legends and Legacy of Indiana Avenue* (Charleston, NC: The History Press, 2014), 88; Paul Mullins, “The Landscapes of Wes Montgomery,” *Invisible Indianapolis*, May 7, 2018, <https://invisibleindianapolis.wordpress.com/2018/05/07/the-landscapes-of-wes-montgomery/>.

Wes Montgomery told music critic Ralph J. Gleason in 1961: “I started in 1943, right after I got married. I bought an amplifier and a guitar around two or three months later. I used to play a tenor guitar, but it wasn’t playing you know. I didn’t really get down to business until I got the six-string, which was just like starting all over to me.”

According to the *Indianapolis Recorder*, “Montgomery . . . was finally booked into the 440 Club in 1944.” Williams quoted Flo Gavin, another Indiana Avenue musician, on Montgomery’s early performances at the 440 Club. Mullins quotes a 1961 interview with Montgomery in which the guitarist spoke about learning Charlie Christian solos around 1943 and then playing them out around the Avenue. He continued, “Then a cat heard me and hired me for the Club 440.”

⁸ Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Ralph J. Gleason, 1961, reprinted *JazzProfiles*, April 10, 2017, <https://jazzprofiles.blogspot.com/2017/04/wes-montgomery-1961-ralph-j-gleason.html>; “The Perfectionist,” *Newsweek* 59, No. 7 (February 12, 1962), 56; John Godspeed, “Montgomery Swings on Guitar,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 6, 1966, 98, [Newspapers.com](#); Aaron J. West, *Caught Between Jazz and Pop: The Contested Origins, Criticism, Performance Practice, and Reception of Smooth Jazz*, PhD Dissertation, University of North Texas (December 2008), 49, accessed https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark%3A/67531/metadc9722/m2/1/high_res_d/dissertation.pdf; Lewis Porter, “Wes [Jon Leslie] Montgomery,” *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>. [See also: footnote 7]

Music critic Lewis Porter and jazz historian Aaron West conclude that Montgomery was probably the most important jazz guitarist after Charlie Christian who served as Montgomery’s main influence. Montgomery learned Christian’s solos as a young player and like the older musician, Montgomery “invented perfectly shaped phrases with tremendous rhythmic drive.”

⁹ Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Ralph J. Gleason, 1961, reprinted *JazzProfiles*, April 10, 2017, <https://jazzprofiles.blogspot.com/2017/04/wes-montgomery-1961-ralph-j-gleason.html>; John Godspeed, “Montgomery Swings on Guitar,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 6, 1966, 98, [Newspapers.com](#); Walter Burrell, “Hollywood Happenings: Wes Montgomery,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1967, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Jim Rockwell, “People in Jazz,” WABX FM Detroit, 1968, accessed *Daily Motion*, <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4uqd62>; Aaron J. West, *Caught Between Jazz and Pop: The Contested Origins, Criticism, Performance Practice, and Reception of Smooth Jazz*, PhD Dissertation, University of North Texas (December 2008), 49, accessed https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark%3A/67531/metadc9722/m2/1/high_res_d/dissertation.pdf.

Wes Montgomery told music critic Ralph J. Gleason in 1961: "I didn't like the sound of a pick. I tried it for, I guess, about two months. I didn't even use my thumb at all. But after two months time, I still couldn't use the pick. So I said, 'Well, which are you going to do?' I liked the tone better with thumb, but I liked the technique with the pick. I couldn't have them both, so I just have to cool."

In an extensive 1967 interview for the *Indianapolis Recorder*, Montgomery explained that he developed his thumb picking style in order to be less noisy for his wife and neighbors. He said, "Instead of turning down the amplifier, I just put down the pick and strummed the guitar with my thumb. She [Serene Montgomery] said that was great and I've used my thumb ever since."

In 1968, Montgomery talked to Detroit jazz DJ and critic Jim Rockwell on WABX FM about being a self-taught guitarist.

According to jazz historian Aaron West, "Indeed, Montgomery's guitar style is characterized by perfect phrases, an almost joyous sense of rhythm, and a unique timber. Montgomery's timbre is the result of playing the guitar without a pick, plucking and strumming the strings with his thumb. Montgomery also developed a mastery of playing octaves with a high degree of accuracy and rhythmic drive."

¹⁰ Walter Burrell, "Hollywood Happenings: Wes Montgomery," *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1967, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Les Tomkins, *Crescendo Magazine*, July 1968, reprinted *Prepared Guitar*, October 9, 2014, <http://preparedguitar.blogspot.com/2014/10/interview-with-wes-montgomery-in.html>.

Indianapolis Recorder writer Walter Burrell reported, "Wes' hit – and – miss learning technique was due to the fact that he has never learned to read music – not one note." Montgomery (and critics) saw this as a strength. Montgomery told Burrell:

Strict musical education can actually hamper you innate musical freedom. On the other hand, not sounds or rhythms can be called wrong or impossible when you're being led by your ear, coupled with imagination. After all, it's the imagination which creates the style, while the ear keeps it in check, and makes it's [sic] sounding right.

¹¹ Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Ralph J. Gleason, 1961, reprinted JazzProfiles, April 10, 2017, <https://jazzprofiles.blogspot.com/2017/04/wes-montgomery-1961-ralph-j-gleason.html>; Eliot Tiegel, "Jazz Beat," *Billboard* 79, No. 33 (August 19, 1967), 12, [GoogleBooks](#); Nancy Wilson, "Wes Montgomery: 'The Unmistakeable Jazz Guitar,'" September 26, 2007, NPR's Jazz Profiles, <https://www.npr.org/2007/09/26/14687657/wes-montgomery-the-unmistakable-jazz-guitar>.

Wes Montgomery told music critic Ralph J. Gleason in 1961: "With the octaves, that was just a coincidence, going into octaves. It's such a challenge yet, you know, and there's a lot that can

be done with it and with chord versions like block chords on piano. But each of these things has a feeling of its own, and it takes so much time to develop all your technique.”

Jazz critic Eliot Tiegel wrote for *Billboard* in 1967: “Wes Montgomery, A&M’s new jazz guitarist, could easily qualify for the title of ‘Mr. Octave.’ Having developed a clever style of playing two notes simultaneously, Montgomery’s cleanly flowing guitar has propelled him onto the national best seller charts with programs of popular, rather than jazz-written melodies. The 44-year old musician from Indianapolis days that if he hadn’t experimented with octaves, he ‘probably wouldn’t be any different’ from his compatriots.”

Describing how his experimentation contradicted his lack of formal teaching, vocalist Nancy Wilson described him as a “forward thinking musician who pushed the boundaries of his instrument.”

¹² “Yes McClarney’s Has Done It Again,” Advertisement, *Indianapolis Times*, July 23, 1947, 7, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); “‘Four Steps’ Worth Visit,” *Indianapolis Times*, August 25, 1947, 9, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

¹³ “Local Talent Presents Colossal Show at Camp,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1944, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 25, 1944, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); “Service gram,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, March 25, 1944, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

¹⁴ *Polk’s Indianapolis City Directory, 1947* (Indianapolis: R. L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1947), 617, Archive.org; “Vital Statistics,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 27, 1947, 14, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Sanborn Map Company, Indianapolis Sanborn Map #372, 1950, Vol. 4, Indianapolis San born Map and Baist Atlas Collection, Indiana State Library, accessed Indiana Memory.

¹⁵ Leo Lesser, “The Avenue,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 8, 1950, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); “Billy Strayhdorn Rates Montgomery Quartet Tops,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, August 19, 1950, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); “BeBop Society’s ‘Jazz at Auditorium’ Billed for Sun., Sept. 3 at YWCA,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, August 26, 1950, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Bob Womack, “Musical Upbeat,” *Indianapolis Recorder*, June 6, 1953, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

From 1948 to 1950, Montgomery played with Lionel Hampton’s orchestra. In 1950 he began leading his own group, the Montgomery Quartet. Billy Strayhorn, arranger for Duke Ellington, had high praise for the new group, calling it the best in the city, according to the *Indianapolis Recorder*. The Montgomery Quartet had top billing at the Be Bop Society of Indianapolis’s fifth “Jazz at the Auditorium” concert at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. The *Indianapolis Recorder* reported, “The Montgomery Quartet of Wes Montgomery, Buddy Montgomery and Willis Kirk has been set in the leading role — and rightly so.”

¹⁶ Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Jim Rockwell, People in Jazz, WABX FM Detroit, 1968, accessed *Daily Motion*, <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4uqd62>;

Wes was often accompanied by his brothers Buddy on piano and Monk on bass.

¹⁷ "Phalanx, Gradale Members Attend 4th State Conclave," *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 28, 1951, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

The Wes Montgomery Combo performed at the Senate Avenue YMCA as part of the evening program following the meeting of the Intercollegiate Club of the Senate Ave YMCA. The group's members were: Wes Montgomery, guitar; Bill Montgomery, bass; Buddy Montgomery, piano; Sonny Johnson, drums; and Bill Cox, vocals.

¹⁸ "Know Your Entertainers," *Indianapolis Recorder*, December 29, 1956, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Bob Womack, "Musical Upbeat," *Indianapolis Recorder*, October 17, 1959, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Ron Woods, "Turf Club Owner Unmoved; Still Won't Serve Negroes," *Indianapolis Recorder*, March 12, 1960, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

The *Indianapolis Recorder* reported, "The fabulous Wes Montgomer Trio is currently at the Turf Club nitely." While the club featured Black performers, it did not allow Black patrons to attend those performances.

¹⁹ "1444 Gallery Spots Top Jazz Groups," *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 4, 1959, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Jazz Concert Nite at 1444 Gallery," *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 11, 1959, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "'Deb' Andrews, Montgomery in 'Jazz at Gallery' Series," *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 12, 1959, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁰ Bob Womack, "Musical Upbeat," *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 1, 1952, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Know Your Entertainers," *Indianapolis Recorder*, December 29, 1956, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²¹ Bob Womack, "Musical Upbeat," *Indianapolis Recorder*, December 6, 1952, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²² "George's Bar and Orchid Room," Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, January 3, 1953, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 19, 1958, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Jimmy 'Mr. Five by Five' Rushing Comes to George's Bar from Jazz Festival," *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 19, 1958, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²³ Bob Womack, "Wes Montgomery's Combo Featured Nicely at the Swank Hub Bub Lounge," *Indianapolis Recorder*, January 25, 1958, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Bob Womack, "Musical Upbeat," *Indianapolis Recorder*, February 15, 1958, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "The Hub Bub Lounge Weekly Schedule," Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, March 1, 1958, 12, [Hoosier](#)

[State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, October 27, 1962, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁴ "Local Talent Presents Colossal Show at Camp," *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1944, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁵ "Phalanx, Gradale Members Attend 4th State Conclave," *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 28, 1951, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁶ "BeBop Society's 'Jazz at Auditorium' Billed for Sun., Sept. 3 at YWCA," *Indianapolis Recorder*, August 26, 1950, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1950, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Jazz at the Auditorium Due Sunday Sept. 3 at Phyllis Wheatley YWCA," *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 2, 1950, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁷ "Central Hospital Patients to Hear First Jazz Concert There July 15," *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 5, 1952, 4, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Henry Butler, "Jazz Concert for Hospital," *Indianapolis Times*, July 10, 1952, 36, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁸ "The Mastersounds at Shortridge Mon. Nite, November 3 at 8 P.M.," *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 1, 1958, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

²⁹ "Weekly Standings Musicians' Poll," *Indianapolis Recorder*, May 2, 1953, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Weekly Standings Musicians' Poll," *Indianapolis Recorder*, May 9, 1953, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Weekly Standings Musicians' Poll," *Indianapolis Recorder*, June 20, 1953, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Recorder, Musicians, Singers Contest Winners Announced," *Indianapolis Recorder*, July 11, 1953, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "These Made Them Happy," *Indianapolis Recorder*, September 19, 1953, 1, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

³⁰ "Weekly Standings in Musicians' Poll," *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 16, 1955, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Annual Recorder Musicians and Entertainers' Poll Winners Selected by Recorder Theatrical Writers," *Indianapolis Recorder*, January 28, 1956, 11, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "2nd Annual Recorder Musicians and Entertainers," *Indianapolis Recorder*, February 16, 1957, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Guitarist Wes Montgomery Dies," *Indianapolis Star*, June 16, 1968, 1, [Newspapers.com](#);

³¹ "Wes Montgomery at Missile Room," *Indianapolis Recorder*, May 31, 1958, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, May 31, 1958, 11, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Appearing Nightly at Missile Room," *Indianapolis Recorder*, June 7, 1958, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "C. Adderley, W. Montgomery in Concert at Clowes Hall, Nov. 24," *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 11, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Wes Montgomery Interviewed by Jim Rockwell, People in Jazz, WABX FM Detroit, 1968, accessed *Daily Motion*, <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4uqd62>;

³² Jim Angelo, "For The Record," *San Bernardino County Sun*, March 5, 1960, 27, Newspapers.com;

³³ "'Mastersounds' to Play Here," (Salinas) *Californian*, April 6, 1959, 15, Newspapers.com; "Going Places," *Oakland Tribune*, November 11, 1961, 11, Newspapers.com; Nels Nelson, "Wes Doesn't String Along with Polls," *Philadelphia Daily News*, December 12, 1963, 36, Newspapers.com; "Goblet to Reopen Grove April 27," *Los Angeles Times*, April 4, 1965, 593, Newspapers.com.

³⁴ Not sure if this is the right Mastersounds: "From A Cavern Came A Wail," *New York Times*, reprinted Miami News, January 8, 1964, 8, Newspapers.com; Benny Green, "Fiddling at the Summit," (London) *Observer*, April 25, 1965, 24, Newspapers.com.

³⁵ "New York Beat," *Jet Magazine* 27, No. 1 (October 8, 1964), 63, [GoogleBooks](#); Bob Womack, "Believe Me . . . When I Tell You," *Indianapolis Recorder*, January 29, 1966, 11, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Wes Montgomery," *Indianapolis Recorder*, February 19, 1966, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Wes Montgomery Is A Unique Guitarist," *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 24, 1966, 13, Newspapers.com; Leonard Feather, "How to Reach the 'Rock' Set: String Along," *Los Angeles Times – Washington Post Service*, reprinted (Louisville) *Courier-Journal*, April 23, 1967, 114, Newspapers.com; Jack Curtis Dubrowsky, *Easy Listening and Film Scoring, 1948-78* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2021), 82, [Google Books](#).

Montgomery told musician and writer Leonard Feather: "It [Riverside] was an independent jazz company, and my records were strictly for jazz fans. I couldn't seem to get beyond a limited audience. After that company went out of business, I signed with a major label, Verve Records. Right away the artists-and-repertory man, Creed Taylor, decided I should do something different, using a big band. . . Then the album began to sell, and I asked myself, what can it be? The public hears a commercial sound here . . . the band put a little rhythm. . . it drove things into the listener's ear where a combo couldn't have made it."

³⁶ "Follow the Crowd," Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, October 27, 1962, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Local Taverns Offers Good Entertainment," *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 3, 1962, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "The Avenoo," *Indianapolis Recorder*, August 24, 1963, 12-13, Hoosier State Chronicles.

³⁷ "Jazz at Its Best," Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 15, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Jazz at Its Best," Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 29, 1967, 11, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

³⁸ Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 4, 1964, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Gloria Lynne, Wes Montgomery Head Jazz Show at Circle Theater," *Indianapolis Recorder*, April 4,

1964, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "Week's Events," *Indianapolis Star*, April 26, 1964, 110, Newspapers.com; "Songsational," *Indianapolis Recorder*, May 23, 1964, 5, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

³⁹ "Wes Montgomery," *Indianapolis Recorder*, March 30, 1963, 13, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); Advertisement, *Indianapolis Recorder*, March 30, 1963, 12, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

⁴⁰ "Closes Hall Nov. Schedule," *Indianapolis Recorder*, October 28, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#); "C. Adderley, W. Montgomery in Concert at Clowes Hall, Nov. 24," *Indianapolis Recorder*, November 11, 1967, 10, [Hoosier State Chronicles](#).

⁴¹ Recording Academy, Grammys, <https://www.grammy.com>. See footnotes 42 and 43 for primary.

At the 9th Annual Grammy Awards in 1967, Montgomery was nominated for the album *Bumpin'* in two categories, Best Instrumental Jazz Performance (Large Group Or Soloist With Large Group) and Best Original Jazz Composition. He won a Grammy for his album *Goin' Out of My Head* in the category of Best Instrumental Jazz Performance (Group or Soloist With Group).

At the 11th Annual Grammy Awards in 1969, Montgomery was nominated for his cover of the Beatles' song "Eleanor Rigby" in the Best Contemporary-Pop Performance (Instrumental) category and for his album *Down Here On The Ground* in the Best Instrumental Jazz Performance (Large Group Or Soloist With Large Group) category.

At the 12th Annual Grammy Awards in 1970, Montgomery posthumously won a Grammy for his album *Willow Weep for Me* in the Best Instrumental Jazz Performance (Small Group Or Soloist With Small Group) category.

⁴² Rhythm & Blues, *Billboard* 77, No. 43 (October 23, 1965), 45, [GoogleBooks](#). "Names in the News," *Indianapolis News*, April 2, 1966, 2, Newspapers.com; David Leander Williams, *Indianapolis Jazz: The Masters, Legends and Legacy of Indiana Avenue* (Charleston, NC: The History Press, 2014), 90; Recording Academy, Grammys, <https://www.grammy.com>.

⁴³ Phillip F. Elwood, "Four Guitarists in the Grooves," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 22, 1966, 27, Newspapers.com; Fremont Power, "Home Folks Lost When Wes Left," *Indianapolis News*, March 17, 1966, 32, Newspapers.com; Leonard Feather, "How to Reach the 'Rock' Set: String Along," *Los Angeles Times – Washington Post Service*, reprinted (Louisville) *Courier-Journal*, April 23, 1967, 114, Newspapers.com; "Verve Jazz Sale," Advertisement, *Los Angeles Times*, December 18, 1966, 489, Newspapers.com; Leonard Feather, "Strange Case of Jazz Guitarist," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1967, 606, Newspapers.com; Hazel Garland, "Video Vignettes," *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 20, 1967, 13, Newspapers.com; "NARAS Awards," *Billboard* 79, No 12 (May 25, 1967), 43, [GoogleBooks](#); Topy Malagaris, "The Sound," *Chicago Tribune*, November 22, 1967, 39, Newspapers.com.

In April 1966 musician and writer Leonard Feather reported that *Going Out of My Head* was “headed for an indefinite stay in Chartland.” Montgomery told Feather, “It’s sold up in the 80,000s in the first year, and it’s still moving.” Feather continued, “Montgomery, the in-group genius, the musicians’ musician, in not the No. 1 commercial jazz guitarist – and without any sacrifice of musical integrity.”

⁴⁴ Eliot Tiegel, “Jazz Beat,” *Billboard* 79, No. 33 (August 19, 1967), 12, [GoogleBooks](#).

⁴⁵ Brian Felix, “Wes Montgomery’s *A Day In The Life*: The Anatomy of a Jazz-Pop Crossover Album,” *Jazz Perspectives* 8, No. 3 (September 2015): 237-258, accessed Taylor & Francis Online, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17494060.2015.1083784>.

According to music historian Brian Felix: “Wes Montgomery was one of the few jazz musicians in the mid-1960s to achieve crossover success in the popular marketplace. Like other jazz artists at the time, the guitarist chose to pack his albums with interpretations of current pop hits. Unlike most of his contemporaries, however, Montgomery embraced a savvy producer, Creed Taylor, who molded the overall sound of his recordings for maximum impact in the pop marketplace. Their partnership did indeed yield several commercially successful albums during this time period, the most popular of which was the 1967 release *A Day In The Life . . . A Day In The Life* [represents] the creation of the new genre of “jazz-pop,” one that was viable in the popular marketplace at a time when traditional jazz was marginalized. Furthermore, Wes Montgomery’s *A Day In The Life* represents a seminal example of modern crossover jazz . . .”

⁴⁶ Indiana State Board of Health, “John L. Montgomery,” Coroner’s Certificate of Death, June 15, 1968, Local No. 3269, Death No. 68-022834, Indiana Archives and Records Administration, AncestryLibrary.com; “Guitarist Wes Montgomery Dies,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 16, 1968, 1, Newspapers.com; “2,400 Pay Last Respects to Wes Montgomery,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 19, 1968, 12, Newspapers.com; “Self-Taught Guitarist Wes Montgomery, 45, Dies at Peak of Career,” *Boston Globe*, June 16, 1968, 71, Newspapers.com; “Wes Montgomery, 45, Dead of Heart Attack,” *Billboard* 60, No. 48 (June 29, 1968): 6, [GoogleBooks](#); “Wes Montgomery, March 6, 1923 to June 15, 1968” photograph of grave, New Crown Cemetery and Mausoleum, Indianapolis, Indiana, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/2425/wes-montgomery>.

The *Indianapolis Star* reported that John Leslie Montgomery died Saturday June 15, 1968 at 45-years-old in Methodist Hospital after suffering a heart attack in his home at 641 West 44th Street. His death certificate confirms that information.

⁴⁷ “Self-Taught Guitarist Wes Montgomery, 45, Dies at Peak of Career,” *Boston Globe*, June 16, 1968, 71, Newspapers.com; “Heart Attack Kills US Best-Selling Jazz Guitarist Wes Montgomery,” *Sacramento Bee*, June 16, 1968, 13, Newspapers.com; “Guitarist Wes Montgomery Dies,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 16, 1968, 1, Newspapers.com; “Wes Montgomery, 45, Dead of Heart Attack,” *Billboard* 60, No. 48 (June 29, 1968): 6, [GoogleBooks](#).

The *Boston Globe* reported that Montgomery's album *A Day in the Life* had been No. 1 on *Billboard* magazine's chart of best-selling jazz albums for the 37th consecutive week. At the same time, his album *Down Here on the Ground* was No. 2 and *The Best of Wes Montgomery* was No. 5.

⁴⁸ "Nine Persons and a Moog Win Grammys," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 12, 1970, 30, Newspapers.com; "Moog's Sound Wins Grammy; Blood, Sweat & Tears Score," *Buffalo News*, March 12, 1970, 29, [Newspapers.com](#); "Aretha, 5th Dimension, Simon Grammy Winners," *Jet* 37, No. 26 (March 26, 1970), 62, [Google Books](#).

⁴⁹ Josef Woodward, "Wes Montgomery: The Softer Side of Genius," *Jazz Times*, March 5, 2020, <https://jazztimes.com/features/profiles/wes-montgomery-the-softer-side-of-genius/>