



Kurt Cobain's 1969 Fender Mustang

Date

1969

Primary Maker

Kurt Cobain

Medium

Wood; Metal; Plastic

Description

Kurt Cobain's 1969 Fender Mustang, left-handed guitar, serial number F 279651, in Competition Lake Placid blue finish, with matching headstock. Cobain purchased this left-handed Competition Mustang guitar from Lloyd Chaite of Voltage Guitars in Los Angeles circa 1990-1991. The guitar was used in the recording studio during *In Utero* recording sessions and is believed to also have been used during sessions for *Nevermind*, as well as numerous prominent live performances. However, it is most remembered as the guitar Cobain used in the music

video for Nirvana's lead single "Smells Like Teen Spirit" from the band's second studio album *Nevermind*, released on September 24th, 1991. Cobain's guitar tech, Earnie Bailey, confirms that Cobain had him replace the original bridge with a Stewart MacDonald Gotoh Tune-O-Matic, Cobain's favorite, before Nirvana played in Argentina in October of 1992. Bailey also replaced the original bridge pickup with a Duncan Hot Rails Humbucker in early 1992. The original single coil bridge pickup, tremolo bar and one of Cobain's guitar straps were retained. Bailey explained: "I rebuilt the bridge section in a way that would be repeated on his [Cobain's] *In Utero* era Sonic blue Mustangs. It involved replacing the bridge with a Tune-O-Matic style bridge, and flipping the tailpiece bar around backwards. From there, several washers were added to the posts that connected the tailpiece to allow it to be tightened down against the plate that it rested on. This modification solved several problems. It disabled the tremolo system and, in the process, increased tuning stability. Reversing the tailpiece itself allowed us to now re-string the guitar in a much easier process, stabilizing the tuning while changing the angle in which the string connected to the bridge which would reduce string breakage. By tightening the tailpiece down against the plate, it also redirects the string resonance from being absorbed by the tremolo spring and to the body." Kurt Cobain (1967-1994) was an American musician who served as the lead vocalist and guitarist for the band Nirvana. Cobain and Nirvana helped propel grunge into the mainstream, with their 1991 album *Nevermind* and its lead single "Smells Like Teen Spirit" capturing the angst of Generation X as they came of age near the turn of the century. Cobain was raised in Aberdeen,

Washington, and began playing guitar as a teenager. He played in local bands before forming what became Nirvana with bassist Krist Novoselic in 1987. Nirvana's first album *Bleach* (1989) was successful in the college radio sphere, and later had a resurgence as the band's popularity grew. In 1991, Nirvana released *Nevermind*, with new drummer Dave Grohl. The album was an unexpected hit, and the band instantly rose to fame. Its first single "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was in heavy rotation on radio stations and its music video was a mainstay on the burgeoning MTV station. Cobain was soon referred to as "the voice of a generation," owing to his lyrics, fashion, and impact on youth culture. Cobain resented this label and felt that those listening to Nirvana's music were not truly understanding his social and political views. In 1993, Nirvana released *In Utero*, which topped the U.S. and UK charts led by singles "Heart-Shaped Box" and "All Apologies." Cobain and Nirvana performed on *MTV Unplugged* that November, which was later released as a live album *MTV Unplugged in New York*. Cobain suffered from long-standing addiction and mental health struggles throughout his life. Cobain entered a rehabilitation facility in March 1994, but left soon after being admitted. He died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound at his Seattle, Washington home sometime between April 5-7, 1994. His lasting memory as one of the most influential musicians in the alternative and rock and roll music industry stands to date where his anti-establishment and self-reflective lyrics continue to inspire countless artists. Although grunge music had existed prior to Nirvana, it was Cobain's sudden popularity that brought alternative music to the masses. Cobain was posthumously inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2014 along with the other members of Nirvana.

3D Model [Kurt Cobain 1969 Fender Mustang](https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/kurt-cobain-1969-fender-mustang-bbd8bf0fa6b64beba1061dd607daf5bb?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=bbd8bf0fa6b64beba1061dd607daf5bb) by [Connections XR](https://sketchfab.com/connectionsxr?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=bbd8bf0fa6b64beba1061dd607daf5bb) on [Sketchfab](https://sketchfab.com?utm_medium=embed&utm_campaign=share-popup&utm_content=bbd8bf0fa6b64beba1061dd607daf5bb)