

## (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction (1965) The Rolling Stones

### LISTEN FOR

- Deals with dissatisfaction with daily life (and forbidden pleasure?)
- Opening guitar riff
- Constant snare beat
- Alternation of snarling (intro, verses) and darker (choruses) textures

### CREATION

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*Songwriters* Mick Jagger, Keith Richards

*Label, Record* Decca F12220 (UK), London 45-LON 9766 (U.S.)

*Musicians* Mick Jagger (lead, backing vocal), Keith Richards (electric guitars, backing vocal), Brian Jones (acoustic guitar), Charlie Watts (drums), Bill Wyman (bass guitar), Jack Nitzsche (piano, tambourine)

*Producer* Andrew Loog Oldham

*Engineer* David Hassinger

*Recording* RCA Studios (Hollywood); May 1965; mono

*Charts* Pop 1

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### MUSIC

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*Form* Contrasting verse-chorus

*Key* E major

*Meter* 4/4

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### LISTENING GUIDE

Time	Form	Lyric Cue	Listen For
0:00	Intro (8)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guitar riff, with prominent blues note and fuzztone.</li><li>• Instruments enter one at a time: electric guitar, bass, drums, acoustic guitar, tambourine.</li><li>• Snare drum punctuates each beat throughout.</li></ul>

## “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” (The Rolling Stones, 1965)

Time	Form	Lyric Cue	Listen For
0:15	Chorus (16)	“I can’t get no”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoother sound of vocals and guitar (without fuzztone) contrast with rough-edged intro.</li> <li>• Telescoping phrase lengths build tension (8 + 4 + 4 bars).</li> <li>• Timbre of vocals gradually take on buzzing timbre as the melodic line rises on “‘Cause I try.”</li> </ul>
0:42	Verse 1 (18)	“When I’m driving”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snarling texture of intro returns.</li> <li>• 10 bars explaining frustrating situation, followed by two 4-bar refrains (“I can’t get no” and “No, no, no”).</li> </ul>
1:16	Chorus (16)	“I can’t get no”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to the darker textures.</li> <li>• The choruses project less energy than the verses, which is the opposite of their usual role.</li> </ul>
1:42	Verse 2 (18)	“When I’m watching”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As before.</li> </ul>
2:15	Chorus (16)	“I can’t get no”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As before, but Jagger changes “satisfaction” to “girl reaction.”</li> </ul>
2:43	Verse 3 (18)	“When I’m riding”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As before.</li> </ul>
3:16	Coda (16)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence of R&amp;B, as Jagger improvises over the main riff, building intensity as the song fades out.</li> </ul>

## LYRICS

I can’t get no satisfaction  
 I can’t get no satisfaction  
 ‘Cause I try and I try and I try and I try  
 I can’t get no, I can’t get no

When I’m drivin’ in my car  
 And that man comes on the radio  
 And he’s tellin’ me more and more  
 About some useless information  
 Supposed to fire my imagination  
 I can’t get no, oh no no no  
 Hey hey hey, that’s what I say

I can’t get no satisfaction  
 I can’t get no satisfaction  
 ‘Cause I try and I try and I try and I try  
 I can’t get no, I can’t get no

When I’m watchin’ my TV

And that man comes on to tell me  
 How white my shirts can be  
 But he can’t be a man ‘cause he doesn’t  
 smoke

The same cigarettes as me  
 I can’t get no, oh no no no  
 Hey hey hey, that’s what I say

I can’t get no satisfaction  
 I can’t get no girl reaction  
 ‘Cause I try and I try and I try and I try  
 I can’t get no, I can’t get no

When I’m ridin’ round the world  
 And I’m doin’ this and I’m signing that  
 And I’m tryin’ to make some girl  
 Who tells me baby better come back later  
 next week  
 ‘Cause you see I’m on losing streak

## “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” (The Rolling Stones, 1965)

I can’t get no, oh no no no  
Hey hey hey, that’s what I say

I can’t get no satisfaction  
No satisfaction, no satisfaction, no  
satisfaction

I can’t get no, I can’t get no

## SOURCES

- John Covach and Andrew Flory, *What’s That Sound*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015), 178.
- Joseph Schloss, Larry Starr, and Christopher Waterman, *Rock: Music, Culture, and Business* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 125.
- Michael Hicks, “The Fuzz” [1999], reprinted in *A Popular Music Reader*, ed. Richard G. King (Boston: Pearson, 2013), 172.
- <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/rollingstones/icantgetnosatisfaction.html>.