

## JAMES SMITH BIO

Born and raised in London to a market trader father and a taxi driver mother, musician James Smith is your typical East End lad. He has a penchant for Working Mens Clubs, West Ham FC and Hackney record shops. His upbringing was a nomadic one - at least around East London. He was born in Newham but for a fraction of the time his family lived with his Nan in a council block in Upton Park which overlooked the West Ham Stadium - something which was perfect for him as a self-proclaimed Hammers fan. Afterwards he moved to Barking before winding up in Essex.

Throughout his school years he always had an infatuation with older music, citing legends like Johnny Cash and Bob Dylan as major influences but it actually was Elvis who he says he was obsessed with (he even had a copy of his birth certificate). It was his dedication to the The King that led him to learn guitar at the age of 10. Once he'd reached his teens years his infatuation with Elvis had simmered and he turned his attentions to the likes of Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney, where he fell in love with the art of songwriting. For a young kid in his pre and early teen years, his old-school, his music taste was an unusual one with his school friends mostly championing chart music. He admits that he wouldn't get a good reception when he played "Boy Named Sue" by Johnny Cash at parties.

At 14, his mum secretly sent off an application for him to hit ITV show Britain's Got Talent. She gave him his audition confirmation as a Christmas present. Despite being admittedly terrified at the prospect of potentially performing in front of millions he'd seen what TV talent shows had done for the likes of One Direction and Jennifer Hudson and so decided to commit himself to the experience deep-diving into the world of TV talent competitions. After capturing the eye of the British public James worked his way through the competition and finished as one of the shows finalists. He says that the experience forced him to grow up quickly and helped him to realise what he wanted from his career and the type of artist that he wanted to be.

After signing a deal with Virgin Records at age 16, James used his money from the deal to enrol at Arts Education School in West London with dreams of breaking into the entertainment industry. It was while he doing both writing sessions & auditioning for acting schools, such as RADA and LAMDA that he realised he had to make the difficult decision to solely focus on trying to make it as a musician after graduating from the college. The post-school isolation during that time period provided the perfect headspace to write good music, and he admits to writing hundreds of songs during that time period.

7 days a week James works on his own material, producing for his musical contemporaries and engineering sessions on the weekend. He's also working on producing for his musical contemporaries which he says is a lot less pressure than creating his own music. So far, he's had a string of successful releases. His 2017 debut EP "Little Love" has amassed over 7M streams while his most recent releases have enjoyed similar success. 2018's "T-shirts" has had more than 15M listeners and his new single "Tell Me That You Love Me" seems to be following the same trajectory with over 20M streams. His approach to music is an interesting one and he often chooses to self-produce the majority of his musical output. His work often takes inspiration and samples from old records that he finds in his local vinyl store. He says that the "vintage sound" heard on the records is almost unachievable today. The result in his own work is a sound that is nostalgic yet contemporary with a distinctive vocal. His next project will be a full-length album which is he hoping will be released next year.