



## THE LIST

## 5 Country Songs for Memorial Day: Lee Brice, Toby Keith, Chris Young, and More

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By Cindy Watts

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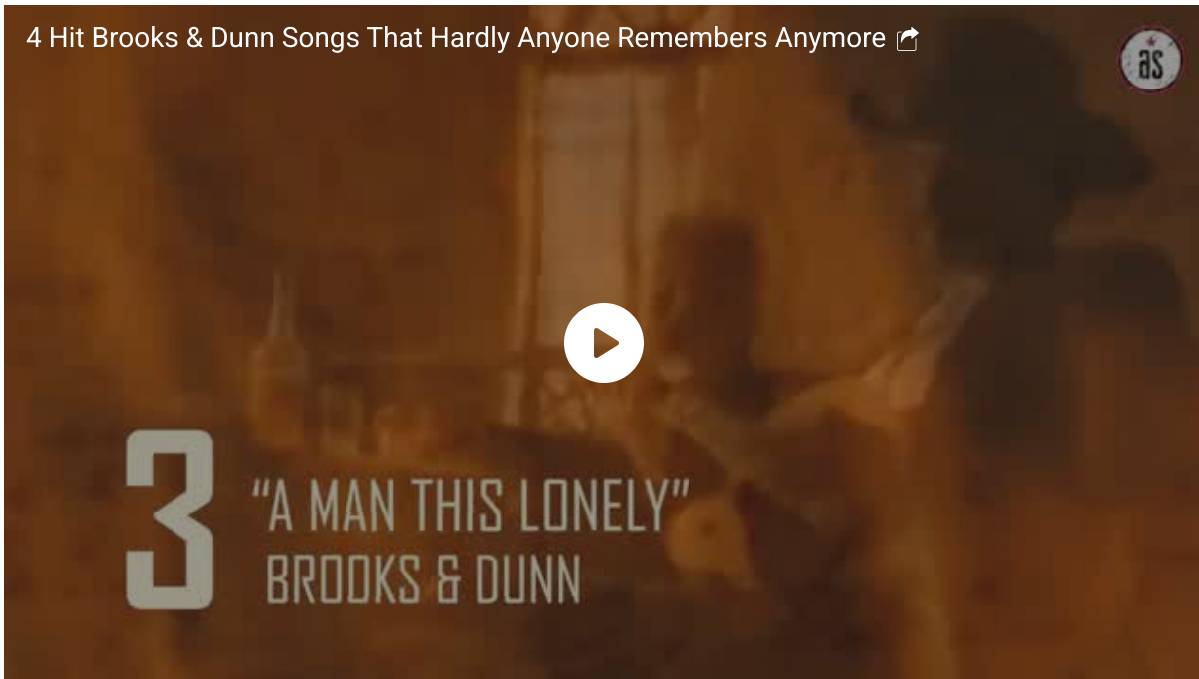
Memorial Day is Monday, May 26, and a day of remembrance in the United States to honor the men and women who have died while serving in the U.S. military. Memorial Day is always the last Monday in May.

Country music singers and their fans love nothing more than supporting military service members. In honor of fallen American soldiers this Memorial Day, here are five country songs that celebrate the service, the soldiers, and their families who pledge to risk everything to keep the United States and its citizens safe.

### Videos by American Songwriter

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4 Hit Brooks &amp; Dunn Songs That Hardly Anyone Remembers Anymore



## Lee Brice, “I Drive Your Truck”



### I Drive Your Truck

Preview Lee Brice

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Written by Jessi Alexander, Connie Harrington, and Jimmy Yeary, “I Drive Your Truck” is an ACM and CMA winning Song of the Year about the singer driving his brother’s truck after his brother was killed in action. Harrington heard an interview on Here and Now with a father, whose son, a Medal of Honor recipient Jared Monti, was killed in Afghanistan while trying to save a fellow soldier. In the interview, the father said he drives his son’s truck to feel close to his son.

Lyrics include: People got their ways of copin', oh, and I've got mine| I drive your truck| I roll every window down| And I burn up| Every back road in this town| I find a field, I tear it up| 'Til all the pain's a cloud of dust| Yeah, sometimes| I drive your truck

## Toby Keith, "American Soldier"



### American Soldier

Preview [Toby Keith](#)

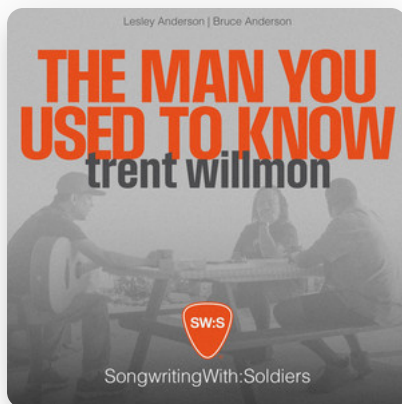
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**Toby Keith**, "American Soldier": Keith co-wrote "American Soldier" with Chuck Cannon, and the song, inspired by troops he met on USO tours, became a four-week No. 1 hit.

“American Soldier” details an Army Reservist who is getting dressed for deployment. The video shows clips of soldiers in different wars throughout U.S. history, exemplifying the traits of an American soldier: loyalty, fearlessness, and bravery. His family arrives at a U.S. military base as the soldier is flown to training camp.

Lyrics include: Oh, and I don’t want to die for you| But if dyin’s asked of me| I’ll bear that cross with honor| ‘Cause freedom don’t come free| I’m an American soldier

## SongwritingWith:Soldiers/Trent Willmon, “The Man You Used To Know”



### The Man You Used to Know

Preview Trent Willmon, SongwritingWith:Soldiers

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Written by veteran Bruce Anderson, his wife of 37 years Lesley Anderson, and songwriter and producer Trent Willmon, “The Man You Used To Know” is about Bruce Anderson struggling to reacclimate after multiple tours in the Middle East.

SongwritingWith:Soldiers hosts retreats filled with programming for the veterans to help them cope with their experiences and relax back into civilian life. Writing songs is part of the retreat. “The Man You Used To Know” is part of SW:S first public release.

“It’s a safe place for them to come and take a relaxed weekend,” said SW:S Jay Clementi. “They’re going to get taken care of. They’ll write three songs with four professional songwriters. When they’re not writing songs, they’ll be doing strength workshops, journaling, and meditation. There’s a lot going on besides songwriting that will help open them up in the songwriting process.”

While SongwritingWith:Soldiers has existed since 2012, this is the first time the organization has released songs to the public.

“We just got to talking, and before you knew it, he was writing down the words I was saying,” Bruce said of Willmon. “He put my words to song, and it was amazing. I couldn’t imagine my story would end up being a song of that magnitude.”

Bruce says the song is about what the title says, trying to get back to the man he used to be. He was deployed multiple times during his military career. Every time he came home, he felt like he left a piece of himself behind.

“It seemed like I was always trying to get back to the person she used to know,” Bruce said.

## Chris Young, “The Dashboard”



## The Dashboard

Preview [Chris Young](#)

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Monty Criswell wrote “The Dashboard,” and [Young](#) recorded it for his 2009 album *The Man I Want to Be*. In the song, the narrator’s brother is a Marine who is about to be deployed overseas. His brother loves his raggedy truck as it carries many memories. The soldier tells his brother he can have the truck if he doesn’t return and asks him to tape his picture to the dashboard. When the soldier returned, his brother had fixed the truck completely – except the dashboard. Young doesn’t have a brother in the military, but his sister did serve in the Marines.

Lyrics include: He said, “If I don’t come back| You can have this Ford| Just tape a picture of me, on the Dashboard| I had the engine overhauled| A paint-job and brand new chrome| I had her washed and waxed, sittin’ in the drive the day that he came home

## Trey Calloway, “She Misses Being Mrs.”



## She Misses Being Mrs.

Preview [Trey Calloway](#)

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Calloway co-wrote this song with Aaron Loy with Jim Hawkins to honor service members who didn't return home from war and how the loss impacts their loved ones.

"'She Misses Being Mrs.' tells the story of a military widow longing for her fallen husband," Calloway said. "It's releasing ahead of Memorial Day as a tribute to military families and their loved ones who've made the ultimate sacrifice. I hope the song is relatable and helps all listeners who've experienced deep loss by acknowledging their pain in simple moments when they feel alone in their grief. We want them to know our thoughts and prayers are with them."

Lyrics include: He always dreamed of being a soldier| Said when he got back| They'd spend days growing older| His second tour| They came under fire| Not every hero comes home

*(Photo by Mike Theiler/USO via Getty Images)*

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