

# **I used to be FUN Songwriters Blueprint**

## **1. Basics of the song lyrics. Answer these:**

**Relatable Premise** = Getting older changes how we experience fun - once the wild one, now the worn-out one.

**Emotion** = Bittersweet nostalgia mixed with humor and self-awareness.

**Central Point/Core Idea (What's song about?)** = Life used to be full of youthful chaos and energy, but now it's quieter, more routine. But the fun still exists in different forms.

**What is the key emotion evoked?** Nostalgia with a wink of humor and acceptance.

**Unique because of** = It's not a sad song about aging; it's clever, self-deprecating, and funny while still emotional.

**Singer style/mood/attitude** = Reflective, conversational, witty - like John Mayer meets Ben Rector.

**Backing vocals** = Light harmonies for warmth in chorus; maybe group vocals in final chorus for communal feel.

**What's the juicy part that everybody can relate to?** We all change with age and sometimes we look back wondering what happened to that wild spark.

## **2. Point of view. Answer these:**

**Who is talking** = A man in his 40-50s.

**What is their character avatar** = Joggers, disheveled hair, coffee in hand, slightly out of shape but still holding onto some charm.

**What pronoun?** I

**Who are they talking to** = Himself (and maybe a partner or old friends).

**Their character avatar** = Reflection of his younger self, and partner/friends who knew that version.

**What pronoun? You**

**Why are they talking to them?** To acknowledge the contrast between past and present, and to remember there's still a spark inside.

**3. What is the musical/lyric hook that encapsulates the relatable premise? Write the lyric and sing the melody. The only part of the song you want to write out of pure inspiration is this step.**

- What is the Hook: "I used to be fun"
- What is the Melody: Mid-tempo, rhythmic phrasing, rise in pitch on "used to be," slight fall on "fun" for emphasis and finality.

**4a. Where will the hook be in the chorus? Beginning? Middle? End?**

Last line.

**Main Idea:** Repetition solidifies the punchline sentiment.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Running into the sun, first one in, last one done - visually expressive past life.

**Sensory/metaphor:** Echoes, scraped seats, creaking joints, "ran into the sun"

**4b. What will comprise the remainder of the chorus?**

Recalling the wild and loud lifestyle. Affirming he's not done yet, but it's different now. Rhythm builds like a memory returning, then drops into realization: "man, I used to be fun."

**5. What will I say in the 1st verse that will set up my chorus? (Only one main thought idea per section so you don't confuse listener with too much). You need to know the What and Why and When And How and Where and Who. Tell the Story in the verses. Use human senses - what can the character and listener see, hear, touch, taste and smell? Use details in verses - what is the central character wearing? Who else is in the song? What are other characters doing, wearing, saying, etc.?**

**Main Idea:** Past wild behavior vs. current domesticated routine.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Shotgunning beers on the Jeep, scraping snacks out of car seats, dreaming of more sleep.

**Sensory/metaphor:** Goldfish in the seat vs. rooftop beer shots.

**6. What will I say in the pre-chorus (if there is one) that will set up my chorus?**

**Main Idea:** He still feels that old fire but now his body isn't quite on board.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Creaking joints, devil in his bones.

**Sensory/metaphor:** Headphones vs. joints - youthful sounds vs. aging reality.

**7. What will I say in the 2nd verse that will further the story and set up and keep moving the chorus along? It has to be different than verse 1 – don't say the same thing or idea again. (Only one main thought idea per section so you don't confuse listener with too much).**

**Main Idea:** Dealing with the emotional weight of change, and missing the chaos a little.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Echoing rooms, kids moved out, silence more painful than arguments.

**Sensory/metaphor:** Silence cutting more than fights, tight jeans.

**8. If the bridge has lyrics, what will be said there? Must fit into relatable premise but offer a different twist/perspective but still make sense. The most emotional lyrics tend to come in the bridge where the story is being resolved, or where you're adding an extra twist in the tale to heighten the emotion. There are three things a bridge can do:**

- 1) Change time**
- 2 Change perspective**
- 3) Go universal/philosophical**

**Main Idea:** Fun hasn't disappeared, just evolved.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Dancing in the kitchen, singing like he's 21 again.

**Sensory/metaphor:** "Stars line up," "howlin' in the kitchen." Warmth and magic in ordinary moments.

**9. If there is a 3rd verse or ending, what will be said there? Is it really needed?**

**Main Idea:** none

**Details (imagery/senses):** none

**Sensory/metaphor:** none

**Ending / Final Chorus**

**Main Idea:** He's still got it - even if it looks different.

**Details (imagery/senses):** Reaffirmation with a communal vibe, maybe musical build-up.

**Sensory/metaphor:** "So much fun" as a lingering echo - past and present meet.

**Final Checklist – answer these questions:**

**DID YOU TELL THE WHOLE STORY?**

Yes. Past, present, and future outlook are all represented.

**DID YOU INVITE THE LISTENER IN?**

Absolutely. Humor and nostalgia are universally appealing.

**DID YOU FULFILL EXPECTATIONS?**

Yes, it wraps with emotional closure and hope.

**DID YOU SAY WHAT YOU MEANT TO SAY?**

Yes, he's not done yet, just wiser.

**DOES THE SONG FEEL COMPLETE?**

Yes. Story arc, growth, and resolution achieved.