

## Bio

Born: November 10, 1968.

Chris Cagle was born in Louisiana, the son of an Exxon supervisor. He moved to the outskirts of Houston, Texas when he was four. Still important to Chris today is the Texas culture that he became immersed in after the move. At the age of six Chris began taking guitar lessons, only to give up after a year because it was too difficult for his small hands to master the large instrument. Fortunately, he continued singing; his first public performance was at an elementary school talent show. He and two other fourth graders performed in leather jackets, which they had bought with money earned by mowing yards, and sang "Greased Lightning." The crowd went wild, and the experience left Chris hungry for more.

During his high school years he took piano lessons and resumed playing guitar after receiving an Ovation acoustic guitar for Christmas during his senior year. He loved rock and country music; the first song he learned to play was Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird." But he lived in a strict Southern Baptist home, and wasn't allowed to play rock music in the house. He found a way around that by making some musical modifications to keep his mother happy. According to Chris, "the way I learned to write was I would play Journey's 'Stone In Love,' but I would make up lyrics taken from the Bible."

Chris says he learned the discipline he applies to his career today on the high school football field. "I spent my entire freshman year in high school on the bench. I decided, however, that by the time I was a senior, I would be on the field playing instead of on the sidelines watching," he says. Encouraged by his father, Chris spent mornings, weekends and summers in the gym. By his senior year, he earned All-District honors as a free safety. "I had to learn technique because I wasn't going to brute strength it," he says. "Teaching me how to be smarter than stronger is exactly what has helped me out in music."

After graduating high school, Chris went to the University of Texas-Arlington. Not long after he was skipping his finance courses to audit music classes. His nights were spent performing in Texas clubs. At 19, he realized he was wasting his time at school and left Texas to pursue music full-time. He moved to Nashville in 1994, and would spend the next five years performing a variety of odd jobs, including waiting tables and tending bar to being a golf caddy. He

spend his free time perfecting his songwriting skills. His writing vastly improved after meeting legendary writer Harlan Howard, who taught Chris how to write a true country song. Howard was so impressed with his student's efforts that he was the first to publish one of Chris' songs. Chris then landed a full publishing deal, and had songs recorded by country singer David Kersh. The first of these was "I Breathe In, I Breathe Out," co-wrote with Jon Robbin, and later a hit single for Chris (more on that below.)

A few years later, while Chris was working at a restaurant, he began talking to a woman about music, and eventually he played her some of his songs. He didn't know that the woman worked at Virgin Records Nashville. She brought his music to the head of the label, and Chris was immediately signed to the small label. In late summer 2000 he released his first single and video for Virgin Records, "My Love Goes On and On." The song flew to the top 20, the video to the top 10, and had everyone wanting to hear more from this exciting newcomer. His debut album, *Play It Loud*, was released that September, but the road ahead was shaky: his record label was shutting down. Situations like that usually leave new artists on the street without a label. Fortunately, Virgin's parent company, Capitol Nashville, quickly brought him into their fold. The second single from his album, "Laredo," was released in January 2001, gaining popularity for the song and Chris as it climbed to the top 10. When CMT premiered its "Most Wanted Live" show in May 2001, "Laredo" made the top 10 requests for 65 consecutive shows, and entered the show's "hall of fame." More and more people joined the legions of "Cagleheads," the name adopted by Chris Cagle fans.

Chris' debut album had done *okay* on the charts, but not as well as it could have due to the shutdown of Virgin records. With "Laredo" such a big hit, Capitol Nashville decided to re-issue the CD with new packaging, enhanced features that include interview footage and the video for "Laredo," plus two additional tracks that had become popular at Chris's shows: "Are You Ever Gonna Love Me" and "I Breathe In, I Breathe Out", the latter becoming his third single, released in September 2001, along with another popular video.

When he performs, Chris blazes across the stage treating his fans to an exciting, high-energy show of his 'new traditional' country music. Whether he's singing a tender ballad or a boot-stompin' country rocker, Chris Cagle puts his all into the song. "I tried to put as much emotion and passion into the record

as possible because that's who I am," Chris says. "I love deeply and I hurt deeper. I want to create music that people can love to, hurt to, dance to, and always want to listen to."

When he's not making music, Chris enjoys spending time at his home on three acres in Pegram, Tennessee. "I have grown to be simple at heart," he says, "and find my freedom in life by knowing my boundaries."

On September 10, 2001, Chris married his wife, Elizabeth.

Things got better and better for Chris in 2002. His debut album was certified GOLD in March, and he had his first number 1 single in April with "I Breathe In, I Breathe Out."

On June 12, 2002, Chris received his first award--which was voted by the fans! The video for "I Breathe In, I Breathe Out" was voted the CMT Flameworthy Breakthrough Video of the Year.

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