

List of Greatest Ever Hip-Hop Albums

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Picking the greatest ever hip-hop album is a tall order and Entertainment Weekly admits its list marking 25 years since the birth of mainstream rap is subjective, with Eric B & Rakim at No. 1.

"Eric B. & Rakim's "Paid in Full" made hip-hop a true art form, doing for rap what Bob Dylan did for rock in the mid-"60s," the magazine said of the 1987 album which it praised for its technical intricacy and poetic metaphors.

Some of today's big names such as Outkast and Jay-Z may be disappointed not to make it into the top 10, although the former makes it to 11 with "Aquemini" and Jay-Z's "The Blueprint" is listed at 15. Eminem is at 17 for "The Marshall Mathers LP."

"It's not a record sales list," said Neil Drumming, one of the writers at Entertainment Weekly who picked the top 25.

"Most of the people you find on the list or not on the list, rappers in general, are going to reference Eric B. & Rakim as a seminal rap group," he said.

In second place the magazine picked the 1989 album "3 Feet High and Rising" by De La Soul, followed by "Ready to Die" by Notorious B.I.G. from 1994. Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. make up the rest of the top five.

"It's an endless source of debate even after it's published," Drumming said.

According to [Reuters](#) publication of the list on Friday marks the 25th anniversary of hip-hop as a mainstream phenomenon, which the magazine dates from 1979 when the Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight" landed on the R&B charts, making it hip-hop's first hit single.

"A lot of people didn't believe it would last, what people are acknowledging now is that it's not a fad," Drumming said.