

Led Zeppelin – Early Days: Best of Led Zeppelin, Vol. 1 [1999]

Written by bluesever

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Led Zeppelin-The Very Best Of CD1: Early Days (2003)



01. *Good Times Bad Times* [play](#) 02. *Babe I'm Gonna Leave You* 03. *Dazed And Confused* 04. *Communication Breakdown* 05. *Whole Lotta Love* 06. *What Is And What Should* 07. *Immigrant Song* [play](#) 08. *Since I've Been Loving You* 09. *Black Dog* 10. *Rock 'n' Roll* 11. *Battle Of Evermore* 12. *When The Levee Breaks* 13. *Stairway To Heaven*

Led Zeppelin: Robert Plant (vocals); Jimmy Page (guitar); John Paul Jones (keyboards, bass); John Bonham (drums).

As legend has it, Led Zeppelin never played the singles game. That's not entirely true -- "Whole Lotta Love" was a gold-selling, Top Five single, while "Immigrant Song," "Black Dog," and "D'yer Mak'er" all went Top 20. But since their reputation was built in part through album rock radio, and since they never released "Stairway to Heaven" as a single, the impression that they were above hits and singles grew and grew. Zeppelin fostered it by refusing to issue compilations for years, forcing every fan to become familiar with the group on an album-by-album basis. Things began to change a bit in 1990, when Jimmy Page assembled the four-disc Led Zeppelin box, the group's first official compilation; it eventually opened the door for the 1999 release of *Early Days: The Best of Led Zeppelin, Vol. 1*. *Early Days* focuses on the first four Zeppelin albums, taking four songs from the first, just two apiece from the second and third, and the entire first side of IV, along with "When the Levee Breaks."

And for the diehards, a video clip of Zeppelin performing "Communication Breakdown" on an English TV show is thrown onto the enhanced CD portion of the disc. It's basically the album longtime Zeppelin fans thought would never be released: a straight-up greatest-hits album. At one point, this may have been seen as sacrilege among devotees, but at this point, it's hard to imagine who would care about *Early Days* one way or another. Apart from the handful of casual fans who just want the radio staples on one disc -- while not caring that other classics are absent -- there really is no audience for this, since it doesn't recontextualize the catalog like the box sets. It's still pretty entertaining, yet *Early Days* feels unnecessary. Yet that cover photo is

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priceless. ~ *Stephen Thomas Erlewine, All Music Guide*

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