



TEEN LIFE THE

Baggy trousers, Oasis and smiley faces – the highs and lows of being a teen in the 90s.



Name: Steve McCabe
Born: 26th January 1978
Lived in: Leeds, UK

CLUB: What images come to mind when you think of your teenage years?

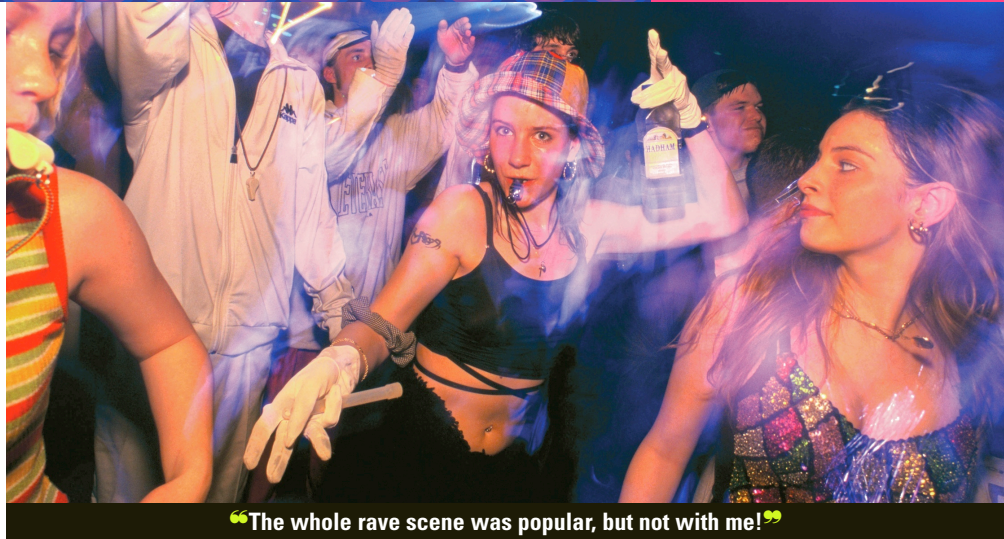
Steve: 1996 is easily my favourite year in memory. I was 18. It was a fantastic summer: great music, England did brilliantly in the Euro 96¹ tournament, and I got serious* with my girlfriend – who is now my wife!

CLUB: When did you leave school and get a job?

Steve: I left school at 16 (something I regret now). My parents didn't mind as long as I got a reasonable job, so I studied to become a carpenter.

CLUB: Were you a rebellious teenager?

Steve: I wasn't rebellious at the age of 13, but I certainly was at 16. I gradually started to do the opposite of what I was asked to do, both at school



“The whole rave scene was popular, but not with me!”

and home. I do feel guilty towards my parents because they only ever wanted the best for me.

CLUB: What were you interested in as a teenager?

Steve: I was interested in football, as I still am. And I really liked the music of the 90s, especially the Britpop Indie² bands, like Blur and Oasis. I was blown away the first time I saw Oasis play the song *Supersonic* live on a TV show. I remember it like it was yesterday.

I even grew my hair over my ears like Noel and Liam Gallagher and curled it over my cheekbones! I'm ashamed to admit that I liked the TV show *Neighbours* as a teen and that my favourite Spice Girl was Posh Spice!



“I even grew my hair over my ears like Liam Gallagher.”

CLUB: What were your most upsetting/embarrassing moments?

Steve: My parents split up for about a year. This was easily my most upsetting moment, and I also felt embarrassed about it – I didn't want my friends to know. Other than that it was the usual stuff – realising that the girl I fancied* like mad* fancied my mate like mad!

CLUB: What were the fashions of the time?

Steve: Baggy clothes were definitely the trend. I used to wear baggy tracksuits and jeans which would have fitted my dad! Anything with an acid face³ on it was cool – so were trainers with luminous* laces. When I was 16 a lot of my friends loved dance music – the whole rave scene was really popular. But not with me! I thought dance music was rubbish!

CLUB: Do you think life is very different for teenagers today?

Steve: Life was quite simple compared to the issues of today. It wasn't cool to carry a knife or any other kind of weapon – different races mixed more easily. I think there is much more tension for teenagers today.



1990s

1990s Teen



CLUB's guide to teen life in the 1990s



The Event Prime Minister Tony Blair

Tony Blair became England's second-youngest PM ever in 1997. Though he was the first Labour Party PM in 18 years, he used the term New Labour and moved his left-wing party to the centre: he changed traditional ties with trade unions and supported private ownership of industry and competitive free trade markets.

The TV show The Simpsons

The Simpsons arrived on British TV in 1990. It was controversial and very funny. Soon everyone was using the phrases 'Eat my Shorts' and 'Don't have a cow, man', even if they didn't really know what they meant.



The Fashion Grunge

The Grunge look was inspired by Kurt Cobain who was lead singer and guitarist for the band Nirvana. The look was considered 'anti-fashion'. Followers wore clothes from thrift* stores, dark colours, Doc Marten boots and had long, unwashed hair.



The Band Spice Girls

In July 1996 the Spice Girls took the world by storm*. They went to No.1 for seven weeks with their debut single, *Wannabe*, and everyone had a favourite Spice Girl.

Which one was your favourite?



The Game Tomb Raider

It was many boys' dream come true – an adventure computer game starring a gorgeous female hero! Lara Croft was the name of that hero and the original *Tomb Raider* game sold over 3 million copies. There were four sequels and a movie, starring Angelina Jolie.



Regrets

I wish I hadn't...

Read the sentences about Steve and rewrite them using the third conditional.

1 Steve regrets leaving school at 16. Steve wishes...

2 Steve regrets not listening to his parents when he was a teenager. Steve wishes...

3 Steve regrets watching *Neighbours*. Steve wishes...

Do you have any regrets?

Complete the following sentence about yourself. I wish I...

*Glossary • get serious (phr) – if you get serious about your boy/ girlfriend, your relationship becomes very important • fancy (v, informal) – find very attractive • like mad (phr, informal) – a lot • luminous (adj) – producing or reflecting bright light especially in the dark • thrift store (n) – shop that sells cheap, secondhand clothes • take sb/sth by storm (phr) – suddenly be very successful in a particular place or group of people