



# Avenged Sevenfold

**Avenged Sevenfold** (abbreviated as **A7X**) is an American [heavy metal](#) band from [Huntington Beach, California](#), formed in 1999. The band's current lineup consists of vocalist [M. Shadows](#), rhythm guitarist Zacky Vengeance, lead guitarist [Synyster Gates](#), bassist Johnny Christ, and drummer [Brooks Wackerman](#).

Avenged Sevenfold are known for their diverse rock sound and dramatic imagery in album covers and merchandise.<sup>[1]</sup> The band emerged with a [metalcore](#) sound on their debut album *[Sounding the Seventh Trumpet](#)* and largely continued this sound through their second album *[Waking the Fallen](#)*. The band's style had evolved by their third album and first major label release, *[City of Evil](#)*, into a more traditional heavy metal style. The band continued to explore new sounds with its [self-titled release](#) and enjoyed continued mainstream success before their founding drummer, Jimmy "The Rev" Sullivan, died in 2009. Despite his death, Avenged Sevenfold continued on with the help of [Dream Theater](#) member [Mike Portnoy](#), and released and toured in support of their fifth album *[Nightmare](#)* in 2010, which debuted atop the *[Billboard 200](#)*, their first number one debut.<sup>[2]</sup>

In 2011, drummer Arin Ilejay joined the band on tours and recording. The band's sixth studio album *[Hail to the King](#)*, which was released in 2013, marked the only Avenged Sevenfold album featuring Ilejay. It would feature a heavy metal and hard rock style, with it being written as a tribute to their influences. *Hail to the King* charted as number 1 on the *[Billboard 200](#)*, the UK Albums chart, as well as the Finnish, Brazilian, Canadian, and Irish charts. Ilejay left the band in late 2014 and was replaced by former [Bad Religion](#) drummer [Brooks Wackerman](#), but the lineup change was not announced to the public until 2015. The band then surprise-released their seventh studio album *[The Stage](#)* in October 2016, which debuted as number 4 on the *[Billboard 200](#)* chart in the US. *The*

## Avenged Sevenfold



Avenged Sevenfold in 2016. From left to right: [M. Shadows](#), Zacky Vengeance, Johnny Christ, [Synyster Gates](#), and [Brooks Wackerman](#)

## Background information

**Also known as** [A7X](#)

<b>Origin</b>	<a href="#">Huntington Beach, California, U.S.</a>
<b>Genres</b>	<a href="#">Heavy metal</a> • <a href="#">progressive metal</a> • <a href="#">alternative metal</a> • <a href="#">hard rock</a> • <a href="#">metalcore</a> (early)
<b>Discography</b>	<a href="#">Avenged Sevenfold discography</a>
<b>Years active</b>	1999–present
<b>Labels</b>	<a href="#">Good Life</a> • <a href="#">Hopeless</a> • <a href="#">Warner</a> • <a href="#">Capitol</a>
<b>Spinoffs</b>	<a href="#">Pinkly Smooth</a>

<b>Members</b>	<a href="#">M. Shadows</a> <a href="#">Zacky Vengeance</a> <a href="#">Synyster Gates</a> <a href="#">Johnny Christ</a> <a href="#">Brooks Wackerman</a>
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<b>Past members</b>	<a href="#">Matt Wendt</a> <a href="#">Justin Sane</a> <a href="#">Dameon Ash</a> <a href="#">The Rev</a> <a href="#">Arin Ilejay</a>
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*Stage* is their first conceptual album and marked another stylistic change for the band, moving towards a progressive metal sound. The band released their eighth studio album, *Life Is But a Dream...*, a highly experimental record, in June 2023.

Mike Portnoy

Website

[avengedsevenfold.com](http://avengedsevenfold.com) (<http://avengedsevenfold.com>)

**AVENGED SEVENFOLD**

To date, Avenged Sevenfold have released eight studio albums, one live album/DVD, two compilation albums and eighteen singles and have sold over 8 million albums worldwide,<sup>[3]</sup> and their records have received numerous certification awards, including five platinum album awards from their home country's institution (RIAA). They have also created four original songs for the *Call of Duty: Black Ops* series, all of which were compiled together in the 2018 EP *Black Reign*. The band were ranked No. 47 on *Loudwire's* list of Top 50 Metal Bands of All Time.<sup>[4]</sup> Christina Fuoco of *AllMusic* called Avenged Sevenfold "one of the more successful and accessible metalcore outfits of the early 21st century."<sup>[5]</sup>

## History

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### Formation and *Sounding the Seventh Trumpet* (1999–2002)

Avenged Sevenfold was formed in 1999 in Huntington Beach, California by Matt Sanders, James Sullivan, Zachary Baker and Matt Wendt.<sup>[6][7]</sup> Although they are not a religious band, Sanders came up with the name as a reference to the story of Cain and Abel from the Bible, which can be found in Genesis 4:24.<sup>[8]</sup> All four members already had experience performing in bands, with Sanders being the vocalist and Wendt the bassist for the punk band Successful Failure,<sup>[9]</sup> Baker playing guitar in the punk bands Society Down and MPA (short for Mad Porn Action/Addiction),<sup>[9][7]</sup> and Sullivan being the drummer for the ska band Suburban Legends (formerly known as Bomb Squad).<sup>[9]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold's first creative output was a three-song demo recorded in October 1999 at the A-Room Studios in Orange County, California.<sup>[10][11]</sup> The band played their first show at the Walnut, California City Hall on February 11, 2000.<sup>[12]</sup> Around this time, they were asked by Sadistic Records to contribute to two compilations,<sup>[7]</sup> so the band recorded two new songs and released them along with the previously recorded songs on a second demo.<sup>[11]</sup> They sent this demo to the Belgian label Good Life Recordings and were subsequently signed.<sup>[13]</sup> Afterwards, the band participated in another two compilation albums, their label's *GoodLife 4* and Novocaine Records' *Scrape III* compilations.<sup>[14]</sup> Around this time, Matt Wendt left for college and Justin Meacham, the previous bassist of Suburban Legends, joined Avenged Sevenfold. In late 2000, the foursome took on their initial stage names – M. Shadows, Zacky Vengeance, Justin Sane and The Rev – and recorded their debut album, *Sounding the Seventh Trumpet*.<sup>[15]</sup> In early 2001, lead guitarist and old friend Synyster Gates joined the band and they re-recorded the introductory track "To End the Rapture" for the album's lead-single/EP, *Warmness on the Soul*, released in April 2001. Although their debut album's release was initially planned for the same month, it was pushed back multiple times and eventually released on July 24, 2001, on Good Life Recordings.<sup>[16]</sup>

Around August 2001, Meacham attempted suicide by drinking excessive amounts of cough syrup.<sup>[17][18]</sup> This event was the reason for Avenged Sevenfold to join the Take Action Tour in 2003.<sup>[17]</sup> During Meacham's hospitalization, he remained in poor condition and had to leave the band.<sup>[18]</sup> In an interview,

lead singer M. Shadows said of Meacham that "he perma-fried his brain and was in a mental institution for a long time, and when you have someone in your band who does that, it ruins everything that's going on all around you, and it makes you want to do something to prevent it from happening to other people."<sup>[18]</sup> His replacement was Frank Melcom, stage name Dameon Ash, who performed with the band for the following months, but does not appear on any releases.

On January 18, 2002, Avenged Sevenfold left Good Life Recordings and signed with Hopeless Records.<sup>[19]</sup> They re-released their debut album on March 19 and also appeared on the *Hopelessly Devoted To You Vol. 4* sampler in April. The band started to receive recognition, performing with bands such as Mushroomhead and Shadows Fall.<sup>[20]</sup> They spent the year touring in support of their debut album and participated in the Vans Warped Tour. In September, Dameon Ash left Avenged Sevenfold and their current bassist Johnny Christ joined them, completing their best known line-up.<sup>[21]</sup>

## ***Waking the Fallen and City of Evil (2003–2005)***

Having found a new bassist, the group released their second studio album titled *Waking the Fallen* on Hopeless Records in August 2003. The album featured a more refined and mature sound production in comparison to their previous album. The band received profiles in *Billboard* and *The Boston Globe*, and again played on the Vans Warped and Take Action tours.<sup>[22][23][24]</sup> Shortly after the release of *Waking the Fallen*, Avenged Sevenfold left Hopeless Records and were officially signed to Warner Bros. Records on November 1, 2003.<sup>[25]</sup> In 2004, Avenged Sevenfold toured again on the Vans Warped Tour and recorded a video for their song "Unholy Confessions" which went into rotation on MTV2's *Headbangers Ball*.<sup>[26]</sup>

*City of Evil*, the band's third album and major label debut, was released on June 6, 2005, and debuted at No. 30 on the *Billboard* 200 chart, selling over 30,000 copies in its first week of release.<sup>[27][28]</sup> It utilized a more classic metal sound than Avenged Sevenfold's previous albums, which had been grouped into the metalcore genre.<sup>[29][30]</sup> The album is also notable for the absence of screamed and growled vocals; M. Shadows worked with vocal coach Ron Anderson—whose clients have included Axl Rose and Chris Cornell—for months before the album's release to achieve a sound that had "grit while still having the tone".<sup>[29][31]</sup> The album received positive reviews from several magazines and websites and is credited for propelling the band into international popularity.

## ***Avenged Sevenfold (2006–2008)***



The band performing in 2008

After playing Ozzfest in 2006, Avenged Sevenfold memorably beat out R&B Singers Rihanna and Chris Brown, Panic! at the Disco, Angels & Airwaves and James Blunt for the title of Best New Artist at the MTV Video Music Awards, thanks in part to their *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*-inspired song "Bat Country".<sup>[32]</sup> They returned to the Vans Warped Tour, this time headlining and then continued on their own "Cities of Evil Tour".<sup>[33]</sup> In addition, their lead single "Bat Country" reached No. 2 on the *Billboard* Mainstream Rock Charts, No.6 on the *Billboard* Modern Rock Charts and the accompanying video made it to No. 1 on MTV's Total Request Live.<sup>[34]</sup> Propelled by this success, the album sold well and became Avenged Sevenfold's first Gold record.<sup>[35]</sup> It was later certified platinum in August 2009. Avenged Sevenfold was invited to join Ozzfest tour on the main stage, alongside other well

known rock/heavy metal acts such as DragonForce, Lacuna Coil, Hatebreed, Disturbed and System of a Down for the first time in 2006.<sup>[36]</sup> That same year they also completed a worldwide tour, including the US, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. After a sixteen-month promotion of *City of Evil*, the band announced that they were cancelling their Fall 2006 tour to record new music.<sup>[37]</sup> In the interim, the band released their first DVD titled *All Excess* on July 17, 2007.<sup>[38]</sup> *All Excess*, which debuted as the No. 1 DVD in the US, included live performances and backstage footage that spanned the band's eight-year career. Two tribute albums, *Strung Out on Avenged Sevenfold: Bat Wings and Broken Strings* and *Strung Out on Avenged Sevenfold: The String Tribute* were also released in October 2007.

On October 30, 2007, Avenged Sevenfold released their self-titled album, the band's fourth studio album. It debuted at No. 4 on the *Billboard* 200 with over 90,000 copies sold.<sup>[39]</sup> Two singles, "Critical Acclaim" and "Almost Easy" were released prior to the album's debut. In December 2007, an animated video was made for "A Little Piece of Heaven". Due to the song's controversial subject matter, however, Warner Brothers only released it to registered MVI users over the internet. The third single, "Afterlife" and its video was released in January 2008. Their fourth single, "Dear God", was released on June 15, 2008. Although critical reception was generally mixed the self-titled album went on to sell over 500,000 copies and was awarded "Album of the Year" at the Kerrang! Awards.<sup>[40]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold headlined the 2008 Taste of Chaos tour with Atreyu, Bullet for My Valentine, Blessthefall and Idiot Pilot.<sup>[41]</sup> Footage from their last show in Long Beach was used for the band's next release, *Live in the LBC & Diamonds in the Rough*, released on September 16, 2008. Its content includes live DVD from their performance at Long Beach, and a CD containing B-sides from *Avenged Sevenfold*, and other rarities, such as covers from Pantera's "Walk" and Iron Maiden's "Flash of the Blade".<sup>[41][42][43]</sup>

## Death of The Rev and *Nightmare* (2009–2011)

In January 2009, M. Shadows confirmed that the band was writing the follow-up to their self-titled fourth album within the upcoming months.<sup>[44]</sup> They also played at Rock on the Range, from May 16–17, 2009.<sup>[45]</sup> On April 16, they performed a version of Guns N' Roses' "It's So Easy" onstage with Slash, at the Nokia Theater in Los Angeles.<sup>[46]</sup> On December 28, 2009, the band's drummer James "The Rev" Sullivan was found dead at his home at the age of 28.<sup>[47]</sup> Autopsy results were inconclusive,<sup>[48]</sup> but on June 9, 2010, the cause of death was revealed to have been an "acute polydrug intoxication due to combined effects of Oxycodone, Oxymorphone, Diazepam/Nordiazepam and ethanol".<sup>[49]</sup> In a statement by the band, they expressed their grief over the death of The Rev and later posted a message from Sullivan's family which expressed their gratitude to his fans for their support.<sup>[50][51]</sup> The band members admitted in a number of interviews that they considered disbanding at this point in time.<sup>[52][53]</sup> On February 17, 2010, Avenged Sevenfold stated that they had entered the studio, along with Dream Theater drummer Mike Portnoy, to drum for the album, in place of The Rev.<sup>[54]</sup>



Avenged Sevenfold performing at the Sonisphere Festival on August 2, 2009. This was The Rev's final show with the band before his death.

The single "Nightmare" was digitally released on May 18, 2010.<sup>[55][56]</sup> The song was leaked on May 6, 2010, on Amazon.com, but was removed soon after.<sup>[57][56]</sup> Mixing for the album had been completed in New York City, and *Nightmare* was finally released on July 27, 2010,<sup>[58]</sup> in the United States. It met with mixed to positive reviews from music critics but was well received by the fans. *Nightmare* beat sales





Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates live in Norway in 2011

projections easily, debuting at number one on the *Billboard* 200 with sales of 163,000 units in its first week.<sup>[59]</sup> After finishing recording, in December, Portnoy and the band posted simultaneous statements on their websites stating that he would not be their replacement for The Rev. However, Portnoy did travel with the band overseas in December 2010 for three shows in Iraq and Kuwait sponsored by the USO. They played for U.S. Soldiers at Camp Adder, Camp Beuhring, and Balad Air Base.<sup>[60]</sup> On January 20, 2011, Avenged Sevenfold announced via Facebook that former Confide drummer Arin Ilejay would begin touring with them that year. He was not yet considered a full-time member

at this point.<sup>[61][62]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold performed at the Rock am Ring and Rock im Park festivals on June 3–5, 2011 alongside other bands such as Alter Bridge, System of a Down, and In Flames.<sup>[63]</sup> In April 2011, the band headlined the Golden God Awards held by *Metal Hammer*. The same night the band won three awards for "Best Vocalist" (M. Shadows), "Epiphone Best Guitarist(s)" (Synyster Gates and Zacky Vengeance), and "Affliction's Album of The Year" for *Nightmare*, while Mike Portnoy won the award for "Drum Workshop's Best Drummer" for his work on the album.

Avenged Sevenfold headlined the 2011 Uproar Festival with supporting acts Three Days Grace, Seether, Bullet for My Valentine, Escape the Fate, among others.<sup>[64]</sup> In November and December 2011, the band went on their "Buried Alive" tour with supporting acts Hollywood Undead, Asking Alexandria, and Black Veil Brides.<sup>[65]</sup>

## ***Hail to the King and Waking the Fallen: Resurrected (2012–2014)***

On April 11, 2012, Avenged Sevenfold won the award for "Best Live Band" and "Most Dedicated Fans" at the Revolver Golden Gods awards.<sup>[66]</sup> The band toured through Asia into April and early May, and played at the Orion Music + More, Festival on June 23 and 24 in Atlantic City, New Jersey alongside Metallica and Cage the Elephant among many others.<sup>[67]</sup>

On September 24, 2012, Avenged Sevenfold released a new song, titled "Carry On"; it was featured in the video game *Call of Duty: Black Ops II*.<sup>[68]</sup> On November 15, 2012, vocalist M. Shadows said that the band had been working on a new album since the recording of "Carry On" in August 2012.<sup>[69]</sup> The band began recording material for the album in January 2013.<sup>[70]</sup> The band then started streaming snippets of the album in May 2013 on their new radio app.<sup>[71]</sup> There, Arin Ilejay was confirmed as an official band member and replacement of deceased The Rev. M. Shadows said that the album would sound more blues rock-influenced and more like classic rock/metal like Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin.<sup>[72]</sup>



M. Shadows at Rock im Park, Germany, 2014

The band was confirmed to play at the 2013 Rock in Rio festival on September 22, 2013.<sup>[73]</sup> On May 24, 2013, the band have announced dates for their European tour with Five Finger Death Punch and Device serving as their support bands.

The album, entitled *Hail to the King*, was released on August 23, 2013.<sup>[74]</sup> This is the first Avenged Sevenfold album without any musical contributions from late drummer, The Rev. The album's lead single and title track was released on July 15, 2013. *Hail to the King* charted as No. 1 on the US *Billboard* 200, the UK albums chart, as well as the Finnish, Brazilian, Canadian, and Irish charts, and was commercially and critically acclaimed. The band headlined Monster Energy's Welcome to Rockville two-day music festival in Jacksonville, Florida, April 26–27, 2014, joined by more than 25 rock acts, such as Motörhead, Rob Zombie, Chevelle, Korn, Staind, Alter Bridge, the Cult, Five Finger Death Punch, Volbeat, Black Label Society, and Seether.<sup>[75]</sup> On June 13, the band headlined the Friday night of Download Festival 2014. The band also headlined the Mayhem Festival 2014 with Korn, Asking Alexandria, and Trivium.

In March 2014, vocalist M. Shadows revealed in an interview with Loudwire that the band had plans in the works to put something out for the overdue 10th anniversary of *Waking the Fallen*.<sup>[76]</sup> *Waking the Fallen: Resurrected* was released August 25, 2014.<sup>[77]</sup> The reissue charted No. 10 on the US *Billboard* 200.<sup>[78]</sup>

## **Drummer change and *The Stage* (2015–2017)**

In October 2014, M. Shadows confirmed that the band would begin writing their seventh album during mid-2015.<sup>[79]</sup>

In July 2015, the band announced on their website that they would part ways with drummer Arin Ilejay, due to "creative differences".<sup>[80]</sup> In October 2015, the band announced on their website that they had been working with a new drummer for over a year, making sure that it was a good fit before making sudden changes.<sup>[81]</sup> On October 21, in an interview with Kerrang! magazine, guitarist Zacky Vengeance revealed that the band had been working on the new album for the past couple of months and that a couple of songs had already been completely written.<sup>[82]</sup> On November 4, 2015, the band announced that Brooks Wackerman would replace Arin Ilejay as the drummer for Avenged Sevenfold.<sup>[83]</sup> In an interview with Kerrang! magazine on December 3, guitarist Zacky Vengeance said that the new album went in all sorts of aggressive and melodic directions and described it as very "aggro".<sup>[84]</sup>

On January 14, 2016, Billboard reported that Avenged Sevenfold had been sued by Warner Bros. for trying to leave the label. The band later released a statement clarifying that they wanted to leave because a majority of the executives who helped sign the band to Warner Bros were no longer at the label. They also revealed that the band was going to be entering the studio to record their new album very soon, intending to release it later in 2016.<sup>[85]</sup> On March 31, the band posted a teaser of their upcoming album on their website.<sup>[86]</sup>

On August 18, 2016, the band performed a free live show for 1500 people in Minnesota, marking it the first live performance with new drummer Brooks Wackerman.<sup>[87]</sup> The band was announced as support for Metallica with Volbeat in the U.S. Bank Stadium on August 20, 2016, making it the first ever rock show in the stadium.<sup>[88]</sup> The band was announced as a headliner of Monster Energy Rock Allegiance 2016, along with Alice in Chains, Slayer, The Offspring, Breaking Benjamin and others.<sup>[89]</sup> Avenged Sevenfold also performed on "Louder Than Life" festival as headliners on October 1, with Slipknot, Slayer, Disturbed, Korn and other artists.<sup>[90]</sup> On June 21, the band announced a U.S. Fall tour with Volbeat,

Killswitch Engage, and Avatar.<sup>[91]</sup> The band also announced a UK tour for January 2017 with Disturbed and In Flames.<sup>[92]</sup> Avenged Sevenfold was announced as a headliner of 2016 edition of Knotfest Mexico.<sup>[93]</sup> The band also announced the European Tour for February and March 2017 along with Disturbed and Chevelle.

On October 3, 2016, the band's logo Deathbat started appearing as a projection in London. After that, Deathbat also started appearing in Berlin, Toronto and Paris, indicating a release of the new album. On October 12, Chris Jericho posted an Instagram photo of the Deathbat logo with a date 12/9/16 underneath it. He then revealed the supposed title of the album, Voltaic Oceans.<sup>[94]</sup> It was later revealed that the new album would actually be called The Stage, a concept album about artificial intelligence, which was released on October 28, 2016, via Capitol Records.<sup>[95]</sup> The album was released to generally favorable reviews,<sup>[96]</sup> and the band decided to make a unique stage production for it, hiring Cirque du Soleil directors for its making.<sup>[97]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold was announced as the main support act on Metallica's WorldWired 2017 stadium summer tour in the US and Canada, alongside Volbeat and Gojira.<sup>[98]</sup> The band also announced a series of 2017 US headlining summer shows of The Stage World Tour, with Volbeat, Motionless in White, and A Day to Remember as special guests across various dates.<sup>[99]</sup>

On December 22, 2017, the band released a deluxe edition of The Stage that included one new original track, six cover songs, and four live tracks from their European tour earlier that year.

In a December 2017 interview with Billboard, M. Shadows revealed that the band are planning "a big US summer 2018 tour", and that the band would start working on the follow-up to The Stage in late 2018.<sup>[100]</sup> End of the World tour with Prophets of Rage was later announced for summer 2018.<sup>[101][102]</sup> The band was also announced as one of the headliners of 2018's Rock on the Range and Download Festival, in addition to appearing at Hellfest, Graspop Metal Meeting, Rock am Ring and Rock im Park the same year.<sup>[103][104]</sup> Due to a blood blister forming in M. Shadows' throat, the band cancelled remaining dates from their summer tour with Prophets of Rage.<sup>[105]</sup>



Avenged Sevenfold on stage in Dublin, Ireland, 2017

Avenged Sevenfold was nominated at 60th Annual Grammy Awards in "Best Rock Song" category for The Stage.<sup>[106]</sup>

The band released a single titled "Mad Hatter" in September 2018, which was made specifically for the video game Call of Duty: Black Ops 4.<sup>[107]</sup> It would later be a part of the Black Reign EP released later that month, which comprises all four of the songs Avenged Sevenfold made for the Call of Duty franchise.<sup>[108]</sup>

## ***Life Is But a Dream... (2018–present)***

In a December 2017 interview with Billboard, M. Shadows revealed that the band are planning "a big US summer 2018 tour", and that the band would start working on the follow-up to The Stage in late 2018.<sup>[100]</sup> Bassist Johnny Christ in a May 2018 interview confirmed that the band is currently getting

ideas and writing in their own studios to start the next record in September or October 2018.<sup>[109]</sup>

In September 2018, Synyster Gates revealed in an interview with Loudwire that the band has started working on their eighth studio album, saying "It's still early on, but we're working on a bunch of stuff".<sup>[110]</sup> In March 2019, Zacky Vengeance stated the band would take the rest of the year off tour to concentrate on the upcoming album, saying the band is really focused on the new material.<sup>[111]</sup> In January 2020, Avenged Sevenfold released "Set Me Free", an unreleased song recorded during the *Hail to the King* recording sessions. They also announced that the song would be included in a remastered re-release of *Live in the LBC & Diamonds in the Rough*, released on March 6. A limited edition clear vinyl of *Diamonds in the Rough* was also released.<sup>[112]</sup>

On March 14, 2023, after several days of teaser videos, the band released the first single, "Nobody", along with a music video. At the same time, they officially announced that their eighth studio album, *Life Is But a Dream...*, was set for release on June 2, 2023 while also revealed the album cover and the track list.<sup>[113]</sup>

## Musical style and influences

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Members of Avenged Sevenfold cite In Flames, Metallica, Iron Maiden, Megadeth, Slayer, Mr. Bungle, Elton John, Leonard Cohen, At the Gates, Helloween, Dream Theater, Pennywise, NOFX, Pantera, Def Leppard, Guns N' Roses, the Beatles, Anthrax, Testament, Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, and the Rolling Stones as influences.<sup>[114][115][116][117][118][119][120][121][122]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold's musical style has consistently evolved throughout the duration of the band's career. As a result, the band has been categorized under several genres of heavy and extreme music, primarily heavy metal,<sup>[123][124][125][126]</sup> alternative metal,<sup>[127][128][129][130]</sup> hard rock,<sup>[125][131][132]</sup> and progressive metal (most notably in their album *The Stage*).<sup>[133][134][135][136]</sup> The band's initial style in their first two albums was primarily categorized as metalcore,<sup>[125][126][137]</sup> which according to Christina Fuoco of *AllMusic*, also "freely incorporat[ed] emo and post-hardcore."<sup>[138]</sup> The band's debut album *Sounding the Seventh Trumpet*, while consisting largely of a hardcore or metalcore sound, has several deviations from this genre, most notably in "Warmness on the Soul", which is a piano ballad.<sup>[139][140]</sup> On *Waking the Fallen*, the band displayed a metalcore style once more, but added more clean singing and leaned a bit more towards metal and bit less close to hardcore.<sup>[126]</sup> In the band's DVD *All Excess*, producer Andrew Murdock explained this transition: "When I met the band after *Sounding the Seventh Trumpet* had come out before they had recorded *Waking the Fallen*, M. Shadows said to me 'This record is screaming. The record we want to make is going to be half-screaming half-singing. I don't want to scream anymore. And the record after that is going to be all singing'."

On Avenged Sevenfold's third album *City of Evil*, the band chose to outright abandon the metalcore genre,<sup>[141]</sup> creating a sound consistent with hard rock, heavy metal,<sup>[142]</sup> and progressive metal.<sup>[143]</sup> Avenged Sevenfold's self-titled album experiments with an even wider array of musical genres than that from *City of Evil*, most notably in "Dear God", which shows a country style and "A Little Piece of Heaven", which is circled within the influence of Broadway show tunes, using primarily brass instruments and stringed orchestra to take over most of the role of the lead and rhythm guitar.<sup>[144]</sup> *Nightmare* contains further deviations, including a piano ballad called "Fiction", progressive metal-oriented track "Save Me" and a heavy metal sound with extreme vocals and heavier instrumentation on



"God Hates Us". The band's sixth studio album *Hail to the King* shows more of a classic metal sound and a riff-oriented approach. On their seventh album *The Stage*, the band explores further into progressive metal,<sup>[133]</sup> blending it with elements of thrash metal. Their eighth album, *Life Is But a Dream...* shows the band taking on more of an avant-garde metal sound.<sup>[145]</sup>

Avenged Sevenfold has been criticized for "not being metal enough".<sup>[124][146]</sup> In response to this, vocalist M. Shadows said: "we play music for the sake of music, not so that we can be labeled a metal band. That's like telling us we aren't punk enough. Who cares?"<sup>[146]</sup> Avenged Sevenfold is one of the notable acts of the new wave of American heavy metal.<sup>[147]</sup>

## Band members

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### 3 Arena, Dublin on 7 January 2017



M. Shadows



Zacky Vengeance



Synyster Gates



Johnny Christ



Brooks Wackerman

### Current members

- M. Shadows (Matthew Sanders) – lead vocals, keyboards (1999–present), additional guitars (2000, 2016)
- Zacky Vengeance (Zachary Baker) – rhythm guitar, backing and occasional lead vocals (1999–present); lead guitar (1999–2001)
- Synyster Gates (Brian Haner Jr.) – lead guitar, keyboards, backing vocals (2001–present); co-lead vocals (2013–present)
- Johnny Christ (Jonathan Seward) – bass, backing vocals (2002–present)
- Brooks Wackerman – drums (2015–present)

### Former members

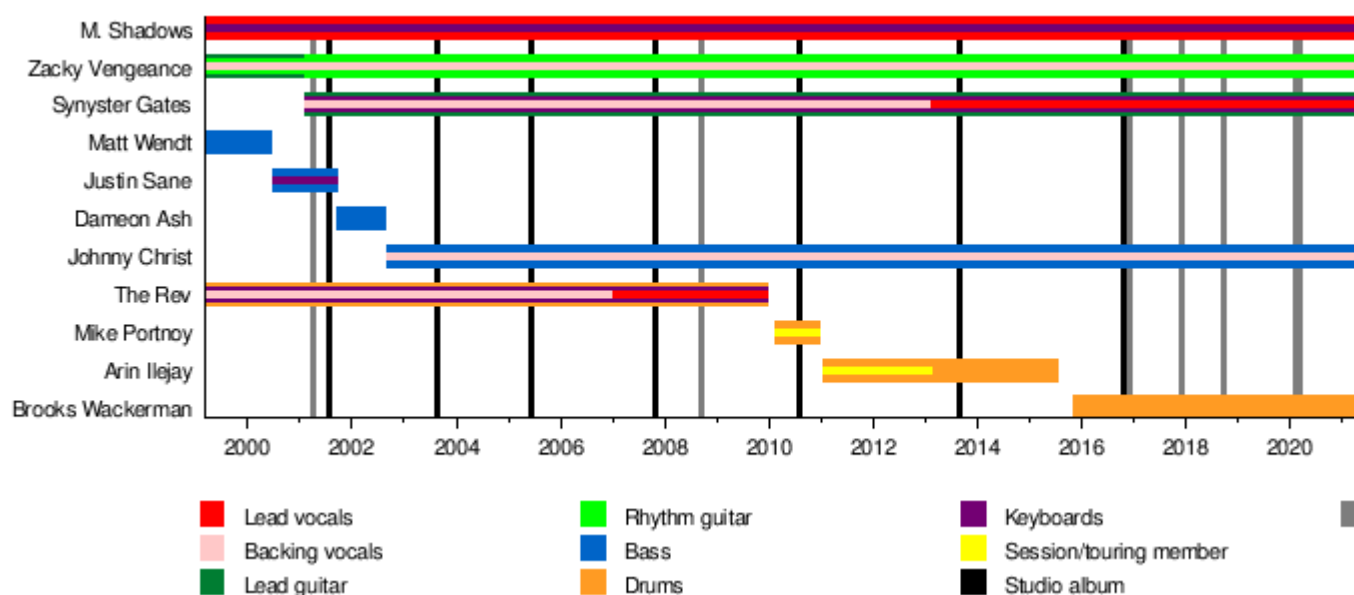
- The Rev (James "Jimmy" Sullivan) – drums, backing vocals, piano (1999–2009; his death); co-lead vocals (2007–2009)

- Matt Wendt – bass (1999–2000)
- Justin Sane (Justin Meacham) – bass, piano (2000–2001)
- Dameon Ash – bass (2001–2002)
- Arin Ilejay – drums (2013–2015; session and touring 2011–2013)

### Former session and touring musicians

- Mike Portnoy – drums (2010)

### Timeline



## Discography

### Studio albums

- *Sounding the Seventh Trumpet* (2001)
- *Waking the Fallen* (2003)
- *City of Evil* (2005)
- *Avenged Sevenfold* (2007)
- *Nightmare* (2010)
- *Hail to the King* (2013)
- *The Stage* (2016)
- *Life Is But a Dream...* (2023)

# Accolades

Year	Nominated work	Award	Result
2005	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best Live Band <sup>[148]</sup>	Nominated
2006	Avenged Sevenfold	MTV Music Awards: Best New Artist <sup>[32]</sup>	Won
	Avenged Sevenfold	Golden God Awards: Best International Band <sup>[149]</sup>	Won
	Synyster Gates on <i>City of Evil</i>	Total Guitar: Guitarist of the Year <sup>[149]</sup>	Won
	Synyster Gates on <i>City of Evil</i>	Dimebag Darrell "Young Shredder" Awards <sup>[149]</sup>	Won
	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best Band on the Planet <sup>[150]</sup>	Nominated
2008	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best International Band <sup>[151]</sup>	Nominated
	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best Live Band <sup>[152]</sup>	Nominated
	<i>Avenged Sevenfold</i>	Kerrang! Awards: Album of the Year <sup>[153]</sup>	Won
2010	The Rev on <i>Nightmare</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Drummer <sup>[154]</sup>	Won
	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best International Band <sup>[155]</sup>	Nominated
2011	Mike Portnoy on <i>Nightmare</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Drummer <sup>[156]</sup>	Won
	Synyster Gates & Zacky Vengeance on <i>Nightmare</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Guitarists <sup>[156]</sup>	Won
	M. Shadows on <i>Nightmare</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Vocalist <sup>[156]</sup>	Won
	<i>Nightmare</i>	Golden God Awards: Album of the Year <sup>[156]</sup>	Won
	Best Live Band	Golden God Awards: Best Live Band <sup>[156]</sup>	Nominated
	Best Live Band	Kerrang! Awards: Best Live Band <sup>[157]</sup>	Nominated
	Avenged Sevenfold	Loudwire Music Awards: Live Act of the Year <sup>[158]</sup>	Won
	<i>Nightmare</i>	Kerrang! Awards: Best Single <sup>[157]</sup>	Nominated
	<i>Nightmare</i>	Kerrang! Awards: Best Album <sup>[157]</sup>	Nominated
	Avenged Sevenfold	Kerrang! Awards: Best International Band <sup>[157]</sup>	Nominated

	"Buried Alive"	Revolver Magazine: Song of the Year <sup>[159]</sup>	Nominated
2012	Best Live Band	Golden God Awards: Best Live Band <sup>[160]</sup>	Won
	Most Dedicated Fans	Golden God Awards: Most Dedicated Fans <sup>[160]</sup>	Won
2013	"Carry On"	Golden God Awards: Song of the Year <sup>[161]</sup>	Nominated
	"Hail to the King"	Loudwire Music Awards: Best Rock Song <sup>[162]</sup>	Won
	<i>Hail to the King</i>	Loudwire Music Awards: Rock Album of the Year <sup>[163]</sup>	Nominated
	Avenged Sevenfold	Loudwire Music Awards: Rock Band of the Year <sup>[162]</sup>	Won
	Avenged Sevenfold	Loudwire Music Awards: Most Devoted Fans <sup>[162]</sup>	Nominated
2014	Most Dedicated Fans	Golden God Awards: Most Dedicated Fans <sup>[164]</sup>	Won
	<i>Hail to the King</i>	Golden God Awards: Album of the Year <sup>[164]</sup>	Nominated
	M. Shadows on <i>Hail to the King</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Vocalist <sup>[164]</sup>	Nominated
	Synyster Gates & Zacky Vengeance on <i>Hail to the King</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Guitarists <sup>[164]</sup>	Won
	Arin Ilejay on <i>Hail to the King</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Drummer <sup>[164]</sup>	Won
	Johnny Christ on <i>Hail to the King</i>	Golden God Awards: Best Bassist <sup>[164]</sup>	Nominated
	"Hail to the King"	Golden God Awards: Song of the Year <sup>[164]</sup>	Nominated
	Avenged Sevenfold	Golden God Awards: Best International Band <sup>[165]</sup>	Won
2016	Synyster Gates & Zacky Vengeance on <i>The Stage</i>	Total Guitar: Best Metal Guitarists in the World	Won
2017	Avenged Sevenfold	Golden God Awards: Best International Band <sup>[166]</sup>	Won
	<i>The Stage</i>	Loudwire Music Awards: Metal Album of the Year <sup>[167]</sup>	Won
2018	"The Stage"	Grammy Awards: Best Rock Song <sup>[168]</sup>	Nominated

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## External links

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- [Official website \(http://www.avengedsevenfold.com\)](http://www.avengedsevenfold.com)
- [Avenged Sevenfold \(https://www.allmusic.com/artist/mn0000691371\)](https://www.allmusic.com/artist/mn0000691371) at [AllMusic](#)



