

## My Girl

(The Temptations)

[Intro]

[Verse 1]

I've got sunshine on a cloudy day  
When it's cold outside, I've got  
the month of May  
I guess you'd say  
What can make me feel this way?

[Chorus]

My girl, my girl, my girl  
Talkin' 'bout my girl, my girl

[Verse 2]

I've got so much honey, the bees  
envy me  
I've got a sweeter song than the  
birds in the trees  
Well, I guess you'd say  
What can make me feel this way?

[Chorus]

My girl, my girl, my girl  
Talkin' 'bout my girl, my girl

[Bridge]

Hey, hey, hey  
Hey, hey, hey  
Ooh, yeah

[Verse 3]

I don't need no money, fortune, or  
fame  
I've got all the riches, baby, one  
man can claim  
Well, I guess you'd say  
What can make me feel this way?

[Chorus]

My girl, my girl, my girl  
Talkin' 'bout my girl, my girl

[Outro]

I've got sunshine on a cloudy day  
With my girl  
I've even got the month of May  
With my girl  
Talkin' 'bout, talkin' 'bout, talkin'  
'bout my girl

"My Girl" is a soul music song recorded by the Temptations for the Gordy (Motown) record label. Written and produced by the Miracles members Smokey Robinson and Ronald White, the song became the Temptations' first U.S. number-one single, and is today their signature song. Robinson's inspiration for writing this song was his wife, Miracles member Claudette Rogers Robinson. The song was included on the Temptations 1965 album *The Temptations Sing Smokey*. In 2018, it was selected for preservation in the National Recording Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or artistically significant."

The recorded version of "My Girl" was the first Temptations single to feature David Ruffin on lead vocals. Previously, Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams had performed most of the group's lead vocals, and Ruffin had joined the group as a replacement for former Temptation Elbridge Bryant. While on tour as part of the *Motortown Revue*, a collective tour for most of the Motown roster, Smokey Robinson caught the Temptations' part of the show. The group had included a medley of soul standards in the show, one of which, the Drifters' "Under the Boardwalk", was a solo spot for Ruffin. Impressed, Robinson decided to produce a single with Ruffin singing lead. Robinson saw Ruffin as a "sleeping giant" in the group with a unique voice that was "mellow" yet "gruff". Robinson thought that if he could write just the perfect song for Ruffin's voice, then he could have a smash hit. The song was to be something that Ruffin could "belt out" yet something that was also "melodic and sweet".

After some persuasion from Ruffin's bandmates, Robinson had the Temptations record "My Girl" instead of the Miracles, who were originally to record the song, and recruited Ruffin to sing the lead vocals. According to Robinson, he allowed the group to create their own background vocals "because they were so great at background vocals". The signature guitar riff heard during the introduction and under the verses was played by Robert White of the Funk Brothers. This part can be heard without vocals on the 2004 deluxe edition of the soundtrack from the 2002 documentary *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*.

"My Girl" climbed to the top of the U.S. pop charts after its Christmas time 1964 release, making it the Temptations' first number-one hit. The single was also the first number-one hit on the reinstated *Billboard R&B Singles* chart, which had gone on a fifteen-month hiatus from 1963 to 1965. The single also gave the Gordy label its first number one on the *Hot 100*. The Temptations were the first Motown act to earn a Grammy.

In 2004, "My Girl" was ranked number 88 on *Rolling Stone's* list of "The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time".

In 1965, Otis Redding brought a traditional blues flavor to the song. Produced by Steve Cropper, it was released on Redding's album *Otis Blue: Otis Redding Sings Soul*. His version was not released as a single in the US, but Atlantic issued it in the UK to capitalize on the relative lack of success by the Temptations' original version, and Redding's cover eventually peaked at number 11.