

I Won't Back Down

(Tom Petty)

[Verse 1]

Well, I won't back
down No, I won't back
down
You can stand me up at the gates
of hell But I won't back down

[Verse 2]

No, I'll stand my
ground Won't be turned
around
And I'll keep this world from
draggin' me down
Gonna stand my
ground And I won't
back down

[Chorus]

I won't back down
Hey baby, there ain't no easy
way out I won't back down
Hey I will stand my
ground And I won't
back down

[Verse 3]

Well I know what's
right I got just one
life
In a world that keeps on pushin' me
around But I stand my ground
And I won't back
down

[Chorus]

I won't back down
Hey baby, there ain't no easy
way out I won't back down
Hey, I will stand my
ground And I won't back
down
I won't back down
Hey baby, there ain't no easy
way out I won't back down
Hey, I will stand my
ground And I won't back
down
No, I won't back
down

"I Won't Back Down" is a song by American rock musician Tom Petty. It was released in April 1989 as the lead single from his first solo album, *Full Moon Fever*. The song was written by Petty and Jeff Lynne, his writing partner for the album. It reached number 12 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 and topped the *Album Rock Tracks* chart for five weeks, starting the album's road to multi-platinum status.

Petty recalled the recording of this song to *Mojo* magazine: "At the session George Harrison sang and played the guitar. I had a terrible cold that day, and George went to the store and bought a ginger root, boiled it and had me stick my head in the pot to get the ginger steam to open up my sinuses, and then I ran in and did the take."

A message of defiance against unnamed forces of difficulty and possibly oppression, the lyric is set against a mid-tempo beat:

Well I know what's right, I got just one life
in a world that keeps on pushin' me around
but I'll stand my ground, and I won't back down

Due to its themes, the song was played often on American radio following the September 11 attacks. Petty and the Heartbreakers played a quiet but resolute version of the song at the *America: A Tribute to Heroes* telethon following the 2001 attacks.

In the 2007 documentary *Runnin' Down a Dream*, Petty said that he felt some initial hesitation about releasing the song, given its clear and unabashed message.

The music video, directed by David Leland, was shot on March 22 and 23, 1989 on a sound stage at Pinewood Studios and released on April 24, 1989. Traveling Wilburys bandmates George Harrison and Jeff Lynne appear in the video. Mike Campbell and Harrison's former Beatles bandmate Ringo Starr are also featured in the video along with George's famous painted Stratocaster "Rocky" being played by Campbell. Starr is depicted in the video as playing the drums on the song, though in reality, drumming was performed by Phil Jones.