

# Gatsby Playlist



## 1 YELLOW / COLDPLAY

because, really, where Gatsby is concerned, it's all yellow.

## 2 GOLD ON THE CEILING / BLACK KEYS

This song may encapsulate Gatsby's view of people who come by the dozens to his house, parking 5 cars deep to party like it's 1925. The guests come seeking to take something from Gatsby—and Nick tells us Gatsby himself doesn't feel comfortable unless people take something from him. Between the color (gold) and the height (ceiling), this song brings to mind the idea of the gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover mentioned in the book's opening quotation.

(And because, as we have previously established, with Gatsby, it's all yellow. Unless, of course, it's gold. Which is really still yellow.)

## 3 BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY / GARY CLARK, JR.

Maybe seeming a little racy at first, this song works in part like a backstory to many of the characters: the idea of city life "going to their heads"—that is, getting an inflated sense of self or becoming somewhat intoxicated by the environment and/or its people—could explain some of the character's careless behavior and supercilious attitudes. A repeated line in the song mentions an audience knowing the name of the narrator, and making a name for himself is one of Gatsby's motivating factors—indeed, he literally "makes" a name for himself—"Gatsby" (which also reminds me of the part in the song when the narrator goes upstairs as one person but "comes down somebody else." Lastly, this song mentions drinking, which is clearly a favorite pastime of the book's characters—especially drinking to "fill up what is hollow," and the hollowness of the characters, their lifestyles, their relationships, and maybe even life itself (Fitzgerald was a modernist, after all) is kind of a major idea that Fitzgerald wants to suggest.