# Renowned Saxophonist David Sanborn Dies at 78 After Battle with Cancer



Renowned saxophonist David Sanborn passed away on May 12, 2023, at the age of 78 after a prolonged battle with prostate cancer. His death was announced through a statement on his social media and confirmed by his publicist. Diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2018, Sanborn continued performing almost until his passing, with concerts planned through 2025.

Sanborn, born in Tampa, Florida, and raised in Missouri, took up the saxophone at age three following his recovery from polio. He began playing with notable musicians like Albert King and Little Milton by age 14. Sanborn studied music at Northwestern University before transferring to the University of Iowa, where he studied with saxophonist JR Monterose.

He joined the Butterfield Blues Band and performed at Woodstock. Sanborn toured and worked with prominent artists including Stevie Wonder, The Rolling Stones, and David Bowie. His solo on Bowie’s "Young Americans" is particularly celebrated. Sanborn’s career also included significant collaborations with musicians such as Paul Simon and James Taylor.

Sanborn released his debut solo album "Taking Off" in 1975, and gained further success with several follow-up albums. His contributions to music earned him six Grammy Awards and recognition with eight gold albums and one platinum. Sanborn was honored for his lifetime achievements in jazz in St. Louis in March 2024.