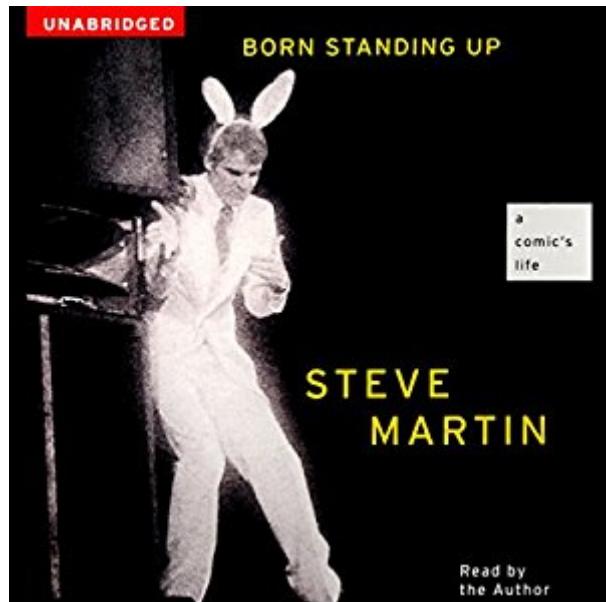


The book was found

# Born Standing Up: A Comic's Life



## Synopsis

The Emmy and Grammy Award-winner's candid, spectacularly amusing memoir of his years in stand-up. In the mid-seventies, Steve Martin exploded onto the comedy scene. By 1978 he was the biggest concert draw in the history of stand-up. In 1981 he quit forever. *Born Standing Up* is, in his own words, the story of "why I did stand-up and why I walked away." At age ten Martin started his career at Disneyland, selling guidebooks in the newly opened theme park. In the decade that followed, he worked in the Disney magic shop and the Bird Cage Theatre at Knott's Berry Farm, performing his first magic/comedy act a dozen times a week. The story of these years, during which he practiced and honed his craft, is moving and revelatory. Martin illuminates the sacrifice, discipline and originality that made him an icon and informs his work to this day. To be this good, to perform so frequently, was isolating and lonely. It took Martin decades to reconnect with his parents and sister, and he tells that story with great tenderness. Martin also paints a portrait of his times: the era of free love and protests against the war in Vietnam, the heady irreverence of *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* in the late sixties, and the transformative new voice of *Saturday Night Live* in the seventies. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My pre-ordered copy from arrived the day before Thanksgiving. I tried to explain to my son who was home from college for the break how much I looked forward to reading Steve Martin's autobiography. He thought it sounded about as interesting as reading the autobiography of Chevy

Chase. But to anyone old enough to remember Steve Martin's sensational, if seemingly brief, career as a stand-up comic, this is a fascinating book, not to be missed. There is much here that was new to me. I had no idea, for example, that he appeared so many times on the Tonight Show before becoming really famous, or that he had appeared as a bearded, long-haired comedian before adopting his famous clean-cut 3-piece white suit look, or that he suffered from debilitating panic attacks just as he began his career as a writer on the Smothers Brothers show. For the first 80 pages or so I thought his life story was a bit humdrum, almost like a parody of Bob Dylan's "Chronicles". Martin grew up 2 miles from Disneyland, and the fact that he became an entertainer seemed almost inevitable. But the book really takes off as he recounts the early days of his career making the transition from magician with a few funny bits to a full-blown stand-up comic. Not that Steve Martin is the colossal genius that Bob Dylan is, but it's interesting that much as Dylan describes how he became a songwriter because he realized he could never succeed as a virtuoso guitarist, Martin writes how he became a comic because, well, who doesn't want to be in show business? At the height of his career as a stand-up comic Steve Martin was the funniest man in America. One of the joys of this book is that he appreciates how funny he was and delights in retelling the same jokes that amused us then and amuse us now.

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