Growing up in Ohio, Knox’s whole existence before he ever wrote a song was basketball. “Once I hit my senior year, it all came to an end and I didn’t really know what to do with myself,” he recalls.

He knew he always liked music more than his friends. He doesn’t identify as a full “scene” kid, but he loved the pop-emo of bands like Fall Out Boy, Panic! At the Disco and the All-American Rejects. He grew up on Lil Wayne and Drake, as well, and entered high school as Ed Sheeran was taking over pop radio.

“I remember watching videos of him live and hearing the songs he wrote. I always told myself, ‘If I learned how to play, I feel like I could do that.’

During the summer before he matriculated at Ohio University, Knox finally picked up a guitar. He learned everything in those few months, self-taught through YouTube videos. His new college friends were encouraging, so Knox began playing open mic nights covering songs by Sheeran as well as any hits that were in rotation on the radio at the time. By his sophomore year, his musical ambitions were so all-consuming that he dropped out of school (much to the chagrin of his teacher parents), moved in with his grandma and began saving up money to start his life in Nashville. He made the leap in January 2019.

While isolating in his new Nashville home in 2020, Knox used the time to work on his craft. With the help and encouragement of new friend Spencer Jordan, who Knox writes almost all his songs with, he ended up finding his footing as both an artist and a new resident of Nashville. Knox’s focus and determination paid off: his songs caught the attention of fellow rising star John Harvie, who placed a few on his album, as well as Harvie’s label.

“I never really thought the artist thing was in the cards for me,” Knox explains. For years, his ambitions were to only be a songwriter for other artists. He was thrilled to be considered for any publishing contract. “The goal was just to have a job in music, whether a million people knew who I am, or if nobody knew.”

He signed his publishing deal in 2022 but was struck with the urge to record a collection of seven songs he had been working on with a friend in Columbus. When he came back to Nasvhille, he told his publisher that he wanted to pitch those songs as his own. The final result was *How to Lose a Girl in 7 Songs*, Knox’s debut EP that will be released this February.

His team was ecstatic and started showing labels, but all the feedback was the same: get yourself an audience. While on a family vacation, he began filming TikToks with the hope that at least one would help his song “Sneakers” gain traction. After six or seven videos, one amassed nearly two million views overnight. “Sneakers” has since reached over 15 million streams.

“We just started dropping the other songs and now I get to work with my dream record label, which is freaking awesome,” he says enthusiastically.

Even though Knox first got attention as a songwriter for his pop-punk style, that’s not the crux of his own writing or artistry. His songs are a mix of all his influences, ranging from EDM to hip-hop. More than anything, he sees himself as a pop songwriter.

“[My sound] can dip into so many different genres. I feel like anybody who listens can find something to enjoy.”

As made clear by its playful title, Knox’s new EP is a collection of break-up songs inspired by the end of a two-year relationship he was in when he first moved to Nashville. Songs like “Porch Lights” are written “backwards,” told from the perspective of the person he was hurting.

“In real life, I was probably the bad guy,” he admits with a few years’ clarity and maturity. Each song tells the story of a reason to leave someone. “For a lot of the songs, I put myself in that position. In real life, I was the antagonist in those situations.”

Lead single “NYC” was the first song Knox had written entirely himself and brings his career so far full-circle. He wrote it at the beginning of the pandemic, having never been to New York or Los Angeles yet. He was stuck in a one-bedroom apartment with his ex and imagining what it would be like to get out and see those cities.

“I want to go see everything before my time here is gone,” Knox says. “I'm from a town where a lot of people don't really have that same mindset. But now, I'm in New York regularly, and I'm about to be in LA regularly.”

Knox has since started to get on the road, opening for the Band Camino and Boys Like Girls (an emo staple he grew up with). He is starting to see all these cities he never imagined he would get to for the first, and certainly not the last, time in his life.

“I was in Asheville, North Carolina, a place I've never been in my life. I'm six states away from home and there’s a thousand people in the audience that are singing the song that I wrote with my friends in my bedroom,” he recalls. “And that's when it gets you, when you see real people genuinely connecting to something that I made with my best friends. It’s the most unreal feeling in the world.”