Born Jock Nowell-Usticke in New Zealand in 1996, Baynk initially started taking piano lessons at age five. Around age 12, he switched to saxophone and also played guitar throughout high school. Later, while studying chemical engineering at college, he played in a cover band and developed an interest in recording his own material. He downloaded some music production software and taught himself how to use it, writing songs that mixed live instruments, including his saxophone, with electronic beats and synth sounds.