

YOUTUBE MUSIC

1. Three Things to Improve

1. Improved Playlist Management & Sorting

- *Problem:* Users cannot search within a playlist, making it difficult to find a specific song. Additionally, playlist sorting options are limited.
- *Why Important:* Playlists are a core feature of any music streaming service. Offering robust sorting and search options will enhance user experience and engagement.

2. A More Focused Music-Only Experience

- *Problem:* YouTube Music still feels too much like YouTube. Music videos are shuffled with songs, and the option to disable them is buried deep in the settings. Additionally, there's no HiFi audio quality like Apple Music or Tidal.
- *Why Important:* Many users prefer a pure music streaming experience. Making it easier to disable videos and offering HiFi audio will position YouTube Music as a serious competitor to premium music services.

3. Smarter Shuffle & Playback Behavior

- *Problem:* Shuffle mode does not truly shuffle a curated playlist; it often repeats a small subset of songs before switching to recommended tracks. Additionally, when searching for a song, specifically in my car which is a Tesla, YouTube Music often plays the entire album instead of just the selected track.
- *Why Important:* A core expectation of a music streaming app is that shuffle mode works properly and search results prioritize user intent. Users should feel in control of their playback experience.

2. Define a New Feature for One of the Areas

Let's focus on Improved Playlist Management & Sorting since it directly impacts usability.

New Feature: "Smart Playlist Controls"

- Search within Playlists: Users can quickly find a song within their playlist via a dedicated search bar.
- Custom Sorting: Allow users to sort playlists based on custom parameters (e.g., artist, release date, most played, manually drag-and-drop).
- Persistent Shuffle State: The shuffle feature should remember user behavior and truly randomize playback instead of cycling through a limited selection.

Why this Feature?

- Directly improves user experience by making playlist management easier.
- Addresses frustration from users who struggle to find songs or deal with broken shuffle functionality.
- Aligns with industry standards, where competitors like Spotify and Apple Music already offer these capabilities.

4. MVP Trade-offs and Prioritization

Since the feature must launch at an annual product conference, but the team is behind schedule, we need to define an MVP.

Trade-offs to Meet the Deadline:

- Start with Search & Sorting Only: Implement playlist search and drag-and-drop sorting first. Persistent Shuffle can be added in later updates.
- No Advanced Filters Yet: Advanced filtering (e.g., sort by least played, release date, etc.) will be added post-launch.
- No Desktop-Specific Version: Focus on mobile UX first, since most YouTube Music users are on mobile.

Why this MVP?

- High-impact changes that improve usability with minimal engineering effort.
- Solves major frustrations while keeping the release manageable.
- Allows future iteration without delaying the core feature.

5. Metrics for Measuring Success

To track the impact of this feature, we'll measure:

- Feature Adoption: Percentage of users engaging with playlist search or custom sorting.
- Playlist Search Frequency: How often users search within a playlist.
- Shuffle Retention Rate: Whether users stick with Shuffle mode after enabling Persistent Shuffle.
- User Satisfaction: Qualitative feedback via surveys and app store reviews.

Data Collection Methods:

- Log search queries and sorting interactions.
- A/B test shuffle behavior before and after launch.
- Conduct user feedback sessions to refine the experience.
- Monitor Reddit and other social media for constant user feedback.