

Preparing for a one-day EP

On March 1st 2025, I'll be welcoming a group of musician friends to my home studio to write and record an album (or at least an EP) from scratch. I've explored a few options for how to format the day's work.

Goals:

Release an album on the day it was written and recorded.

Perform at least one track from the album live.

Pay attention to production and quality.

Possible Approaches

Individual songwriting: taking 30 minutes to write songs individually or in small groups seemed like a good option at first. I've seen it work before: 30 minutes is a limited amount of time, and an expectation of a complete, performable song constructed in that time tends to produce surprising and impressive results.

Pros:

- everybody writes a song
- we have a good well of performable songs which aren't too complicated

Cons:

- teaching the songs to other bandmates is a pain
- individual ownership of songs might lead to hurt feelings.

Group songwriting: quickly generate A and B sections one after the next, then stitch them into songs.

Pros:

- lots of options which everybody can immediately connect with
- stems, loops, and even whole sections can come together really fast

Cons:

- genericization
- inflexibility
- no opportunity for lyrics

Overture: freely improvise, and harvest favorite themes

Pros:

- continuity of artistic vision

Cons:

- improvisation in the moment + remembering for later is an intense cognitive load

So, the format for the day is to simply play some group improvisation games of my own design, then write some songs based on the experience!