

Title:

Making Your Own Music: Songwriting Basics

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626

Summary:

Whether you are a teenager or are well into your golden years, it is never too late to explore your creative side, especially if you are interested in music. Songwriting is an excellent way to express your thoughts and feelings and to communicate them to your friends and family, even if you have no aspirations of musical fame or fortune. If you are interested in selling or performing your songs, however, you should be aware that it is a hard road and that very few songwriters...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Whether you are a teenager or are well into your golden years, it is never too late to explore your creative side, especially if you are interested in music. Songwriting is an excellent way to express your thoughts and feelings and to communicate them to your friends and family, even if you have no aspirations of musical fame or fortune. If you are interested in selling or performing your songs, however, you should be aware that it is a hard road and that very few songwriters achieve great fame or fortune, and especially not instantly. Nonetheless, if you have realistic expectations, you will find that writing music is a worthwhile experience whether it is a hobby or a profession.

People write songs in many different ways. Some writers compose the music first, while others first write the words. For some, the words and the melody come to them at the same time, while others write the melodies first and write the words last. No matter what order you are comfortable with, you will eventually have to decide what the song is about. There are a variety of different types of songs ranging from songs that tell fictional stories to songs that communicate deep personal feelings.

If you decide to write a story song, a good first exercise is to write about a news story or about something you've read in the newspaper. That way you can use your first song to hone your word choosing skills without the pressure of coming up with your own story. However, if you already have an idea for a story to

tell, you can write it out in poem form and try to make appropriate rhymes and structures that help communicate what happens in the song.

Because music is so expressive, many songwriters use their compositions to express how they feel, whether it be about a person or a situation or even geographic location. Writing these types of songs can be highly personal, so every person does it differently. When you have a strong feeling about something, write it down in a notebook and come back to it later. You might think of a good line that expresses an emotion really well, and if you remember it you might be able to build an entire song around it. Having quiet time to think is always helpful when you are trying to write a song.

Writing the actual music for a song can be done in many different ways depending on your musical prowess and your focus. If you write mostly to communicate words, then a few well-chosen guitar chords might be all of the accompaniment you need. However, if you are an instrumental virtuoso, your approach to writing music will be quite different. Many people think of a musical idea and play it over and over again until they think of a melody. Often times, songwriters will construct whole pieces, melody and all, without even knowing what the song is going to be about. Once the melody is complete, the writer will sit down and think about lyrics that fit the feeling behind the music and will go from there.

Once you have put together your words and music, you might feel the need to perform your new song. It is always a good idea to play for friends and family first before trying to play to a crowd. When you feel comfortable enough playing your song, you should consider visiting an open mic night at a local coffeehouse or bar. At open mic nights, songwriters can play one or more of their songs to an appreciative and attentive audience. Performers can discuss their craft with other writers, making it a fun way to learn more about the writing process.