E-Book

On

The Musician's Life Hack

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October 2018

CHANGE LOG

Template Version Number: 1.0 Template Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Version	Brief Description of Change	Date	Author	Reference (Optional)

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1 Introduction

The primary objective of this E-Book is to describe in detail the various life hacking strategies that includes advise, shortcut, tip or skill dedicated to improve your relationships, happiness, productivity, health, entertainment, and more.

These life hacking strategies give an effective way to develop fundamental skills that would change your predefined approach to learning and working. If you want to completely re-engineer your current way of thinking, then this E-Book is your ultimate guide for your refined transformation. This E-Book will surely be your source of practical and adaptable knowledge to keep you organised in this increasingly digital and fast paced life!

This E-Book will not only teach you WHAT to do, but HOW to think. A framework of thought like this can be a game changer in your life.

Once you are done with scanning through this entire E-Book on lifehacks, you will feel eager to continue to apply these methods and strategies to your own life, you have a clear mental framework for how to stay organized.

2 Areas of international music industry and how they operate

This section describes the overview of the global music industry areas and how it operates. In addition, this section provides key information on musical copyrights and associated issues.

When a Writer composes a musical melody with or without lyrics, a musical composition has been created. Compositions are also referred to as musical "works.". As soon as that composition is written down or recorded, that composition is automagically copyrighted. You don't actually need to submit a form to the US Copyright Office to get your basic copyright protection. For instance, if you do submit to the US Copyright Office, you will get some other benefits; however it is not necessary in order to be granted your basic rights. The composition copyright code in the US Copyright Office usually starts with Performing Arts (PA).

Every time someone creates a new finished recording of a performance of a composition, a new sound recording is born. Sound recordings are also often called "master" recordings because they refer to the final master mix of all of the tracks and stems that make up the recording; to put it another way, masters are what artists finally burn to CDs or upload to iTunes to sell.

Similar to the composition, as soon as a sound recording is created, it is automagically copyrighted. You can go through the official process; however that is not needed to get your basic rights. The Sound Recording (SR) copyright code starts with "SR" (sound recording).

Remember that it is possible to formally copyright both the composition and sound recording on one SR form. Therefore, you must look into the details of a specific copyright before assuming someone did not file for the composition copyright, too.

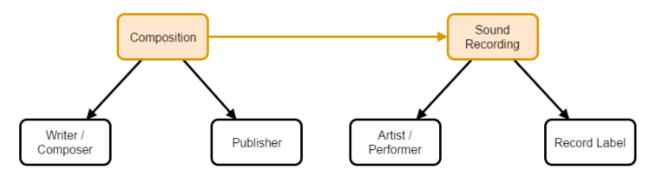
Music as a business is quite symmetric. There is often a corresponding company, organization, service, or feature on the other side. If something exists for the composition, a similar thing probably exists for the sound recording, and vice versa. This general rule can help you make sense of what you need to do and who you need to work with.

2.1 COMPONENTS OF A MUSICAL SONG

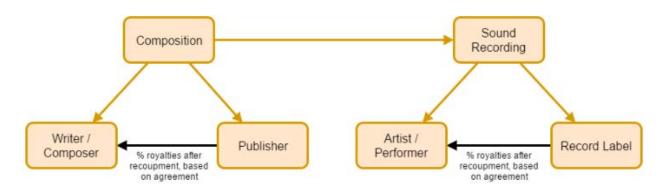
There are two distinct components to a song that control most of the music industry. Much of the music world is divided into stuff having to do with either the composition or the sound recording. Many music businesses and services are in some way tied to one or both of those. More importantly, almost all royalties can also be divided between the two. By asking yourself this question: "Does it have to do with the composition or with the sound recording?" It's like a binary search. as soon as you figure out if you're dealing with the composition or the sound recording, you're able to throw away half of the confusing information and narrow in on the other half of the confusing information that actually matters. Of course, some things deal with both... but that's also good to know, and you can usually track down what happens to each side separately.

2.2 STAKEHOLDERS OF A MUSICAL SONG

It gets even better because both the composition and the sound recording can each be divided in half into two groups of people that have some skin in the game. There are two primary stakeholders for the composition: the Writer (Composer) and the Publisher. If you are a solo independent Song Writer, you are both the Writer and the Publisher. You'll see below that the Writer gets royalties as well as the publisher. The Publisher usually is the one that owns the composition copyright. Similarly, there are two primary stakeholders for the sound recording: the Artist (Performer) and the Record Label. If you are a solo independent performer, that means you are both the Artist and the Record Label. The record label usually is the one that owns the sound recording copyright.



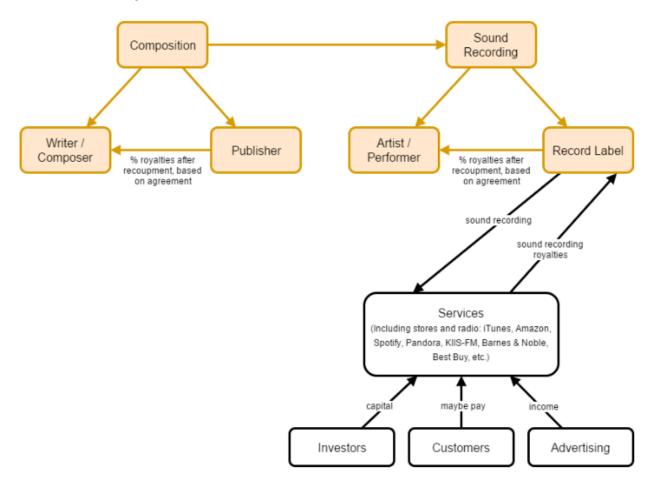
Each of those stakeholders can be further divided, as in the case when there are Multiple Writers, Publishers, Artists, or Record Labels involved. Or when a Producer or Mixer takes a portion of the writer's or Publisher's share.



For those who have separate Publishers or record labels, your deal probably specifies what portion of royalties they collect should be shared with you, after they recoup any costs and money that you owe them.

2.3 SOUND RECORDINGS

In order to get your music heard, you want to set up your sound recordings on all the various music services, such as iTunes, Spotify, Amazon, and put your CDs in stores like Barnes & Noble, Target, etc. Here's what the diagram looks like with those music services.



2.4 DISTRIBUTORS AND AGGREGATORS

It is a challenge to sign agreements with, send your sound recording information to, and collect royalties from each service individually. Here is where the 'Distributors' or 'Aggregators' come in. A Distributor will work with all of those services directly without you having to, in exchange for a fee and/or percent of the royalties you get. You just have to do the work once with the Distributor.

There are times, a Distributor might want to get a Partner. For instance, a Distributor in the US probably knows very little about how to get your music into all of the services that are in say Africa. Rather than throw their hands up and skip Africa, they Partner with another Distributor or Company that knows how to work with the services in Africa, in exchange for a fee and/or percent of the earnings.

2.5 How the Services Work?

There are a ton of music performance types for recordings, each generating different types of royalties with different rules, regulations, and companies that help them along. Services and platforms come in all shapes and sizes, and they all can generate different types of royalties with different calculations.

Performance-based services include things like the following:

- Terrestrial radio, such as KIIS-FM.
- Digital radio (aka non-interactive streaming), such as Pandora (the original version), iHeartRadio, and SiriusXM.
- On-demand (interactive streaming), such as Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon Music Unlimited.
- Broadcast television, such as music used in a TV series or commercial on ABC or NBC.
- Movie theaters, such as music played during a movie at AMC or Regal.
- Online videos, such as music used in a YouTube cat video.
- Venues, such as music piped into restaurants or in a church.

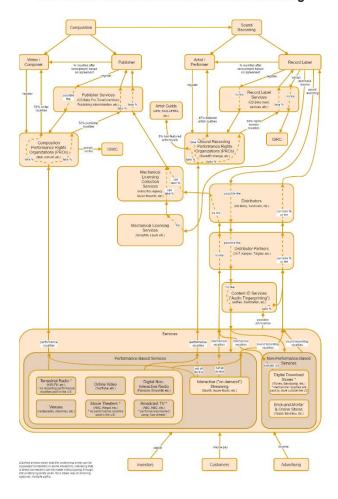
Non-performance-based services include things like the following:

- Digital download stores, such as iTunes and Bandcamp.
- Brick-and-mortar and online stores selling physical CDs, such as Amazon, Target, Best Buy, and Barnes and Noble.

2.6 LIFE OF A SOUND RECORDING

The below diagram depicts the life of a sound recording as an end-to-end music flowchart.

The Music Business: Life of a Sound Recording



3 JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND BENEFITS WITHIN THESE INDUSTRIES

This section describes the ways you can adopt and seek work and where you can find it in the music industry. In addition, you can find ways to recognize and take the opportunities and where to find them.

As the saying goes... "While the road brings hard lessons", the glory and the novelty of seeing new places is truly invigorating. You can find ways for new successes by following these tips to help you get your head in the music business:

- **Be Optimistic at Every Turn** There are approximately 80,000 albums released every year, of which Billboard and other associated charts report on a revolving Top 200. That's 0.25% of the total releases each year that are moving and shaking enough to get on the radar.
- Observe Excellence and Be Excellent at Your Craft It all starts with the music you listen to.
 Sometimes, society can train us to lower our expectations by convincing us mediocrity is acceptable. It is not. Excellence is at your fingertips, it simply needs to be understood and observed.
- **Be Careful Who You Take Advice From** People often tend to seek advice from those who have been unusually successful. It's a natural human tendency to do so. But remember, the best advice always comes from those who have failed and are painfully aware of their mistakes.
- Form a Strong Professional Peer Group as Your Sounding Board Family and friends are great
 but they are often too biased to give proper guidance and advice when it comes to your music.
 Music professionals tend to give more constructive guidance and can set more realistic goals
 and expectations
- Know That No One Simply Gets Up and Puts on Their Famous Pants The road to success in the music business is never a straight one. By the time an artist breaks into mainstream consciousness there is always a story to tell about how and when it all happened. Unfortunately, the bulk of your new fans will never experience this part of your journey. The illusion is, to the general public, that one day you woke up, wrote a song, and put on your famous pants. Don't let the long and winding path to your success get you down, it's totally normal!
- Understand What the Top Revenue Streams are in the Music Business Touring, Publishing, and Branding. These top three revenue makers in the music industry encompass a wide range of sub-topics, but it's important you understand how you can make money from these three main sources.
- Incorporate Your Brand At first you most likely will be pinching pennies at every turn, so be smart about your cash flow and your spending. One way to do this is by incorporating so you can receive tax breaks and manage your cash flow and expenses properly. It can also protect you as an individual and be more effective in financial growth
- Learn How to Produce Your Own Music Those who learn how to produce their own music have a much higher chance at success.. Not only does it make you well versed at your craft but it

- makes you highly authentic with your sound. Yes, there is a learning curve. Sure, it's going to take some time and money. Make it work for you! Your recorded music is your calling card to your artistry, so start producing now
- Register Your Works If you are writing and recording your own music then you need to have a clear understanding of what Performing Rights Societies are and how they collect money for you!. If you are the Sole Writer then you will receive the entire share of the Writer's revenue stream. If you are also the Administrator/Publisher (which you are if your works are original and you're putting them out yourself) you'll collect the entire share of publishing revenue stream, as well. So make sure you register as both a Writer and a Publisher!
- Understand What a Copyright Is Copyrighting is a process used to protect your works from
 theft. The United States Copyright Office offers a verified method that is used universally to
 acknowledge protected works. Contrary to popular belief, deliberate music copyright
 infringement is quite rare. It often mistakenly occurs as we all emulate what we have heard over
 our lifetimes. Also, choosing to flagrantly rip off music does nothing to benefit your career in the
 face of your peers
- **Distribute Your Music Effectively** It used to be that having your music distributed was reserved for signed artists to large record labels. That is no longer the case! There are many distributors, large and small, now operating in the music and media business. Some are harder to establish relationships with. However companies such as CD Baby are now at your fingertips and offer emerging artists a way to get their music in stores such as iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, and many others. Music streaming platforms are now an integral part of how people listen to your music, so be sure you are well represented at sites such as Apple Music, Spotify, and Pandora for streaming services.
- Have a Clear Focus on Social Media Platforms This is a topic that rarely needs significant discussion, as everyone today is a social media pro. However, it's important you separate personal social from business social, even though they may appear to be the same. Make sure your social media platforms are engaging fans and representing your overall brand. Social media is a lot of work and can consume hours per day for most professional musicians. Try using tools that blast all social platforms at the same time or buffer posts throughout the day. Having a great team player for your social media will soon become a top priority for you.
- Create an Amazing Team This takes time and can be in constant flux. However, you can't do
 this all by yourself. If you look carefully at the most successful music careers you will see that it's
 the team that creates the success, not the individual or band alone. Labels, managers, booking
 agents, publicists and social media all go into making a well-oiled team. Recognize talent in
 others and hold them close to your chest. It's about surrounding yourself with talented and
 highly motivated people that believe in you and bring resources to the table.

Now that you're a success, keep on going!. You can use these tips to continue developing your career in music.

- **Stay The Course** There's a saying relates to success in the music business: "If you play golf long enough in a lightning storm you will eventually get struck by lightning.". This basically means that you must stay the course, not deviate, and have faith that eventually your hard work will pay off. This is the same for artists that have already received success.
- Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds You Music artists, can have a slightly egotistical view of their
 music and persona after they receive some success. We often think that the success we are
 receiving is the result of "my music," "my hard work," "my talent," etc., and make unusual
 requests of labels and team players. There is no positive outcome here and results in bad
 reputation.

From the job opportunities perspective, the below countries would best suited for your international travel based on the analysis and studies.

- Switzerland
- Germany
- Norway
- South Africa
- Ireland
- Australia
- Belgium

4 PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND PRINCIPALS REQUIRED

If you've been gifted with an amazing voice, you might be thinking about using your talent to make you famous. This is a great goal! Before jumping in, know that being a famous singer takes more than just having a good voice—you have to have a good stage presence and be a good performer as well. This is doable with practice and experience. While there is no guarantee for the level of fame you will reach, know that there are plenty of steps you can take to become known and recognized and even get paid for your talent.

For instance, the following professional skill sets would help you attain your goal to become a successful Vocalist. The subsequent sections describe the tips and key pointers for a broader audience.

Developing Your Talent - Practice, practice, practice - Sing all the time to exercise your voice
and keep it strong. Practice singing a variety of songs with different tones and ranges. The goal is
to get as much practice in as many different areas as possible. Sing in your room, in the shower,
in the car, with friends.

- Take singing lessons online or in private to improve your vocal skills. Finding a good vocal coach is probably one of the most important things you can do to further your music career. Even people who naturally have an amazing singing voice can benefit from professional lessons.[2] Singing lessons teach you more than just how to sound good, they also help you to:
 - Use proper breathing techniques
 - Stay in key while under pressure
 - Clearly enunciate and articulate your words
 - Access a wider vocal range without straining
 - Build your confidence
- **Find something unique about yourself and develop your own style**. The goal here is to discover what makes you stand out from everyone else. You may have to experiment to find your own voice and what sets you apart from everyone else.
 - If you have the ability to alternate between alto and soprano, use that skill to show off how your talent spans a wide vocal range.
 - Maybe you have a raspy voice and a gritty vocal style that works great for soul music
 - Playing an instrument like the guitar or piano can also set you apart and help you stand out.
- Sing on a stage to get familiar with performing in front of people. Once you feel confident in the strength of your voice, take the next step to showing it off to strangers. It's typically much easier to sing to yourself or in front of friends and family who care about you. Singing in front of a group of strangers takes a lot more courage!
 - Sing karaoke at a local spot or join a school or church choir. While these types of performances are "safe" because they are done for fun or with a group for a good cause, they are still a good starting point for putting yourself out there.
- **Perform in places that take you out of your comfort zone**. After you've nailed stage performances, branch out and try something new. Try being a guest singer with a local band or singing on the patio at a restaurant. Singing at any sort of venue that is new or different for you will help.
 - You may not get paid when you are first starting out, but you will probably be able to set out a tip jar. If you do get paid for performing, consider it a bonus!
 - No 2 venues, performances, or even songs will be exactly alike. Give yourself opportunities to experience as many different factors as you can. All of these experiences will work to prepare you to be able to give a successful performance no matter what the circumstances.[7]
 - You can't be shy. Put yourself out there and introduce yourself to the people you want to work with. If there's a particular band you want to play with, ask if you can

- come to one of the practices. Using mutual acquaintances can also be helpful in finding venues to perform at and/or people to sing with.
- These experiences can also help give you a sense of what kind of performances you want to do. You may discover that you would rather sing with a group or a band instead of solo.
- Have a go-to song that you nail every time. Always be prepared. If you're asked to get up and sing unexpectedly, or the instrumentals or background music don't work during an audition, you need to have something to fall back on. Choose a song that you can sing perfectly, every time.
 - Your go-to song should be familiar to most audiences, well-liked, and within your natural vocal range.[8]
 - As you become more experienced, this list will become longer and you will have multiple songs that you can sing perfectly no matter what.
- **Practice singing a variety of cover songs**. A lot of singers don't write their own songs, and that's OK. Particularly when you're first starting out, you want people to pay more attention to the quality of your voice than the quality of your songwriting. Build up a "set list" of 10 to 15 cover songs you know you can really knock out of the park, and practice getting better at them.
 - Choose a good mix of current and classic songs.
 - A good way to get a cover noticed is to drastically alter the tone, tempo, or instrumentation of a popular song. Compare the several different versions of "Hallelujah," or listen to the Civil Wars' cover of Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" for ideas.
 - Don't worry about royalties for performing cover songs live. Copyright and licensing issues only come into play if you are recording and distributing those songs.

From a broader musical audience perspective, there's more to becoming a successful musician than practicing. You can learn all the scales and perfect your technique; however if you don't have certain psychological skills in place, all of that effort will have been wasted.

It would be great if you can master and practice these five performance phycology skills:

Energy Management - Being a musician is a tiring career. Between the long hours on the road, longer nights on the stage, and the physical toll taken on the body, it's common to feel exhausted at the end of every day. Usually, when it comes to thinking about why we're tired, the physical reasons pop up first. They certainly play a large role, but it's possible to wipe ourselves out through psychological effects, too. For example, when practicing music, make sure to take regular breaks. Divide up your day evenly so you're not doing one activity for too long. Keeping organized can also help reduce stress and therefore save energy. There are various rituals like this you can take part in. Getting involved with mindfulness is a good place to start.

Resilience - In terms of psychology, resilience is defined as how one can successfully adapt to life's problems despite a disadvantage or poor conditions. For example, let's say someone lost a family

member or has relationship issues, health problems, or money concerns. All of these issues lead to stress. How well one handles that stress is what we call resilience. In order to succeed in life (and music), you must learn to be resilient. It's not a rare skill to have at all; in fact, resilience can be found in everyone and developed even further. It's less of a trait and more of a process. There are plenty of ways to build this up. Check out this article by the American Psychological Association for some quick pointers.

Confidence - As musicians, building confidence is an essential psychological skill to master. More often than not, a confident musician is a successful one, and that becomes quite obvious to everyone that musician meets as well. Confidence can be used as a launching pad for taking big chances with even bigger rewards. For those who lack confidence, the disadvantages begin to pile up. Making performance mistakes, writing uninspired songs, and avoiding competition for fear of failure are just some negative aspects of poor confidence. To avoid this, you need to start building confidence. At first, start by setting realistic goals that can easily be accomplished. Learn a few easy songs and play in front of your friends to get used to a crowd. Additionally, learn to develop a positive response to stress. Over time, your confidence will begin to grow and you can start to increase the difficulty of the goals. It's important to keep in mind, though, that confidence is not the same as cockiness. No one likes a show-off.

Focus - Focus requires quieting the mind. At any given time, there can be several different thoughts going through your head that distract from the moment. These thoughts will take you out of "the zone," and the music will suffer for it. Quiet the mind the best you can, and keep your thoughts solely on the music. Presently, there many ways in which to do this, and different strategies work of different people. Some musicians suggest focusing on one part of playing the instrument, like how the fingers move. Others think that chewing gum, meditating before a show, or staring at one object while onstage helps them out. It might take some experimentation, but once you find focus, your music will benefit.

Preparation - You may think that preparing in music simply translates to practicing. While it's true that mastering a song before you go out to play it is an effective method, there are elements of the psyche that need to undergo preparation as well. According to psychologists, mental preparation is one of the key aspects of performing under pressure. In music and many other instances in life, there are high-pressure situations that place intense demands on us. When we're in the proper state of mind, these demands are easily met. In order to get in this proper state, mental preparation is needed. Additionally, it helps many musicians to set up routines before performing. They don't even have to be musical routines — just anything that keeps the mind in a certain zone. Maybe it's counting pickles at the bar, going over scales, or running around the venue three times. Whatever routine your mind responds to the best will help you enter a state of preparation.

There may be times that you end up deciding not to pursue a career in music, the transferable music skills you'll gain as a music major will provide you with the background necessary to enter many other fields as well as graduate programs:

- Ability to be creative and think outside the box Think: improvising; composing innovative music; dealing with myriad challenges that crop up before or during performances.
- Ability to plan ahead Think: learning the music in advance of performances; juggling your schedule; knowing what it takes to look your best at concerts.

- **Ability to take responsibility Think**: scheduling and getting to lessons and rehearsals; learning your part for a group performance; leading a section of the orchestra or a band.
- Ability to collaborate and work effectively with others to meet goals Think: being part of an
 ensemble, orchestra or chorus.
- Ability to think and understand in patterns Think: learning and performing music.
- Ability to manage time well and handle several projects at once Think: juggling school with performing, practicing and the rest of your life to succeed at majoring in music.

5 How to Create an Effective Digital Footprint on a Budget

As you move around the online world you leave tracks and traces of your activity all the time: social media accounts, tagged images, professional presences, scraps of text, but also many artefacts you don't always realise you are leaving behind, or that others leave about us.

Digital footprint is the information about a particular person that exists on the Internet as a result of their online activity. For example all the social media activity on various platforms like Face-Book, twitter, YouTube, and so on, and all the activity such as likes, comments and shares are ones digital footprint.

Digital footprints do have a positive bright side as well. By leaving a positive digital footprint you make yourself a brand so that when someone goes through your online footprint or search you online if they find all the positive things it is beneficial for your brand image and that is YOU. Also, participating in professional groups or forums, discussions, bringing your opinion about issues upfront and networking with others in your field speaks volumes of you. Another option is to create a personal blog to highlight your strengths and personality online.

It is therefore, you need to understand on how to create a digital footprint for your business and the following key parameters.

- Google Web design for free
- CD Baby
- Canva.com
- Mailchimp
- Lunapic
- Using Instagram for quality photos
- People Per Hour
- Face-Book and Instagram etc. Creating events, fan pages, and so on

Note: For more information on creating a positive digital footprint, refer this <u>link</u>.

5.1 KOBALT TRANSFORMS MUSIC INDUSTRY TO DIGITAL AGE

It is in this context, you need to get an insight on Kobalt to succeed in today's complex world of music. Kobalt is now a new disruptive voice in the music industry that is getting louder.

Kobalt is a passionate team, deeply committed to reinventing the music industry so that it works better for creators. Kobalt has prioritized creators from the start. Kobalt has a solid mission: Making the music industry more fair and rewarding for creators. Kobalt gives artists, songwriters, musicians, labels and publishers the freedom and transparency they needed to build their careers.

Whether you're an artist, songwriter, musician, label or music publisher, Kobalt's full range of services offers a modern alternative to the traditional music industry.

Today, Kobalt does exactly that. Kobalt's music services combined with their innovative technology offer a viable alternative to the traditional industry model. Kobalt is trusted by some of the world's greatest artists, and they represent more than 40% of the top 100 songs and albums in the U.S. and U.K.

5.2 IMPORTANCE OF CREATING A DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

As a Successful Musician, you must understand why creating an effective digital footprint on a budget is paramount to keep track of your digit footprint. These are the key reasons:

- Protecting Your Online Reputation
- Preventing Financial Loss
- Preserving Your Freedom and Maintaining Your Ability to Decide Where
- How Your Personal Information is Shared

As mentioned above, digital footprint can be beneficial if digital ethics are abided.

By engaging in ethical use of digital technologies you can create a positive digital footprint.

For additional details, refer this link.

6 PRACTICAL EQUIPMENTS FOR TRAVELLING

From the air travel perspective, musical instruments are permitted for carriage as Hand Baggage provided that the instrument, including its case, does not exceed 30cm x 120cm x 38cm.

Carriage as Hand Baggage is subject to available space in the overhead lockers and strictly at the Captain's discretion. Please note the instrument will be classed as your one allowed piece of Hand Baggage.

Cellos may be taken into the cabin provided an additional seat is purchased for the item. Due to the size of the cello, it fits well into the seat and the seat belt can fit around it, making it secure. A smaller instrument (for instance, violin, guitar, and so on) could slip out of the seat belt restraint and fall onto the floor of the cabin, which could be hazardous in the event of an emergency. For instruments larger than a cello (for instance, double bass, harp, and so on) there is no option to purchase a seat as these instruments are too large and heavy.

You need to know the following while you travel with your musical instruments.

- Know Your Airline's Regulations Extra baggage fees and weight restrictions differ from airline
 to airline, and depend heavily on where you're traveling. Even if your instrument is more than
 the carry-on limit allows, most airlines will accommodate musicians.
- **Know How to Pack** Be creative! Most drum, guitar, bass, and other cases allow for some extra packing room, not to mention extra padding for your instrument.
- Know What to Pack It In If your bass is your baby, by all means invest in a flight case. However
 don't forget all those nights you'll spend lugging that thing through the subway or the bus from
 club to club.
- **Know What Is (And Isn't) Available** Depending on your situation, you may want to consider buying your instrument overseas. Make a list of items you're picky about (specific strings, sticks, effects processors, and so on) and bring a decent supply in case you have a hard time hunting them down.
- **Should I Just Ship It?** Unless you're not too attached to your instrument and feel you can live without it in the worst case scenario.

If you're moving someplace with a record of reliable shipping, feel free to take the risk, however it is recommended using that box for something less precious than instruments.

Violins, violas, piccolos, flutes, clarinets, bugles and trumpets all fall within these musical instruments dimensions.

The following pointers would help you prepare and plan to take a practical approach while travelling with you musical instruments.

- Papers, Leave a Copy of Your I.D. at Home If you lose your driver's license or passport, you
 might have to find an alternative to flying home. Without proper identification, you will not be
 allowed past the airport's security screening area. Worse still, if you're in a foreign country and
 your passport is lost or stolen, you won't be allowed to leave the country.
- **Emergency Paper Trail**: Document Everything and Leave a Copy at Home Many of us use a mobile phone for everything—telling time, boarding passes, and travel info. Yet, there will be times when your battery dies, or the phone goes missing or gets damaged.
- Picture This: Photograph Your Luggage and Cases If you arrive at your destination but your
 checked luggage doesn't, you'll need to describe what is missing (including the contents). At the
 baggage claim desk, there is usually a card with photos of various brands and sizes of luggage:
 Chances are good that yours will not be pictured. But you don't need to worry if you follow this
 tip.
- Day Care: Pack for Unexpected Luggage Loss or Delays Despite well-intentioned efforts by the
 airlines, checked luggage goes missing from time to time. Whether it's gone for a short period or
 lost altogether, you will likely be stuck with only the clothes on your back and none of your
 personal hygiene items.
- Knowledge is Power: Read the Baggage Policies of Your Airline Before you pack, visit your airline's website and make sure your bags are within their size and weight allowance. This may seem obvious, but few people seem to do it. Occasionally, the staff at the baggage check-in counter are unaware of the latest policies. Be ready to school them—nicely, of course—with the information you've thoroughly researched.

7 Travelling Techniques for Flights Cruise Ships

Here are your travelling tips and techniques while you travel along with your band in flights and ships.

Preparing your instrument for flight - Since storage for carry-on baggage is first come, first serve, a good rule of thumb for preparing your instrument for flight is to do so under the assumption that it'll be gate checked. This way, you're covered even if there's not enough room on board.

- Make sure your musical instrument is in a hard case Not a soft case, and not a polyfoam case. While polyfoam cases are great for their portability and generally provide adequate protection for day-to-day handling, they're not well suited for the abuse luggage may receive before, during, and after a flight. At the very least, your instrument should be inside a sturdy wooden case, although you can never go wrong with a flight-safe case with TSA latches. Gator and SKB are two great companies who make such cases, and while they do tend to be more expensive than the standard hard case, it is definitely a sound investment for frequent flyers.
- Your musical instrument should fit snug in its case If there's any noticeable wiggle room, it's a
 good idea to stuff the open space with rags, towels, or T-shirts. Not so much as to add too much
 extra pressure that could cause harm, but enough to prevent the instrument from moving
 around.
- Remove any accessories and tools from the case and pack them elsewhere for the flight This includes, but is not limited to, things like string winders, cutters, multi-tools, hex wrenches, tuners, pedals, and cleaning supplies. While these items may seem harmless and commonplace for musicians, they may be unfamiliar and foreign to airport security personnel. You want to avoid giving anyone a reason to need to search your case, as this often provides an opportunity for rough handling and accidental dropping of instruments.
- You do not need loosen the strings of your musical instrument for flight In spite of a fairly
 common travel myth, stringed instruments are designed to withstand string tension. As long as
 your bass guitar isn't strapped to the wing of the airliner, your instrument is being transported
 in a pressurized, reasonably climate-controlled environment. If this were not the case, people
 would be unable to travel with their pets.

Boarding with you equipments - Now that you have safely packed your instrument for travel, here are a few tips for ensuring successful boarding:

- Remember to be polite and always keep your cool when dealing with airport staff, as they tend to feel more inclined to accommodate someone who's treating them with respect.
- Since many gate agents and flight attendants may be unaware of the official policy regarding musical instruments, it's important that you have a copy of the official rules printed and ready.
- It's advised that you pay extra for priority boarding so that you can make sure to find a space for your instrument before the overhead luggage racks fill up.

 Some planes may have an additional closet on board for extra storage. This varies depending on the size of the aircraft, but there's certainly no harm in asking a flight attendant if your instrument can be stowed there for the duration of the flight.

Cruise Ship Musicians perform a wide variety of music to entertain guests on board a cruise ship.

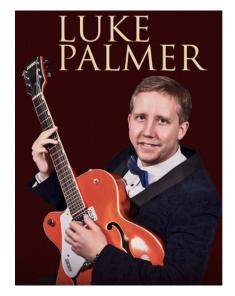


had better accommodations."

As a Cruise Ship Musician, you could move up the ranks in his or her career by attaining a Bandleader position, although "there wasn't much in the way of career advancement" for Cruise Ship Musicians.

"You were either hired for the type of gig you do or you weren't, and got whatever rate you negotiated with the agent. Some gigs were better than others, though; the solo performers (the "piano man" and the folk guitar singer in the pub) always made twice what we did, and

If a Cruise Ship Musician is interested in growing his or her career with the cruise line he or she can apply for a position as the ship's Musical Director after gaining a certain amount of experience. However, this is not a performing role, but rather a management one.



As a touring musician, packing for the road should be an ongoing learning experience. You need clothes for travel days, meet-and-greets, and performances; documents and copies of documents; all of your essential gear; and just enough backup gear to be covered in case of inevitable emergencies. You may have to haul your own bags, so overpacking is not an option. The bottom line is to have items that can multi-task and expect the unexpected.

Here are some things to remember as you prepare to hit the road:

 Keep a copy of your passport and license at home with someone you trust. It also helps to have redundant copies in the cloud. "Lost or stolen" happens, and without proper I.D. you'll have a hell of a time getting to your next destination. Domestically, you won't get past T.S.A. checkpoints.

- Pack essentials for one day in a personal bag. Even if your only luggage is a carry-on, bring that
 extra personal bag as well. That way, if you're forced to gate check your carry-on and it gets lost,
 you'll have some essentials until you get your luggage back. Personal bag essentials: toiletries,
 IEM's, a pair of socks and underwear. As a drummer, I now also keep a couple of pairs of sticks
 and a "stage shirt" in that bag, too.
- The Breakaway Bag This is mostly for longer tours: if you can, pack an extra smaller bag to use later as a breakaway. Touring situations vary greatly, but having an extra bag that you can use for a scaled down/essentials version of your luggage can come in handy when dragging your larger luggage everywhere is not a practical option.
- Carry and stow your instrument on the plane. You can and understand now it's the law.
- Take photos of every piece of luggage and gear. Many suitcases look the same or similar, so even if your bags aren't lost on the way, there's the chance of someone grabbing your luggage by mistake. If your stuff goes missing, photos will be a big help in reclaiming it. They should clearly show the brand names of the luggage, the contents and, if possible, any serial numbers on packed gear.

The life of a traveling musician is awesome and exciting. So don't trip, just enjoy the journey! A little common sense and preparation can ensure that every tour and fly-out goes great. Safe travels!

8 TELEPHONIC SKILLS

This situation deals with how to deal with people on the telephone and make the auditioning experience for you next band worth your time. With telephonic skills, you should be able to:

- Get what you want out of any conversation.
- Paint an accurate picture of your soon to be band mates.
- Make a not-of-interest phone call into a brief call.
- Network with people of interest.
- Create your contact book

As you might be thinking where do you get all these names and phone numbers? Easy, everyone and everything around you that pertains to music. The music shop, the local record store, the papers, word of mouth, and any other connections you can come up with.

Let us say that we have collected phone numbers and put them into a book, Access or Excel database file, or whatever (the databases are great because you can filter phone numbers immediately to see if you called before). Make a list of what you are looking for! Seriously think of what you want and what you want to avoid.

Always remember, a phone call is akin to a verbal resume, so be honest. Don't inflate your talent because you will have to produce when called upon. Also, you are interviewing them, not the other way around, even if they did place the ad for auditions. You want to see if the job is for you, and you won't know if you don't ask. One thing that is common, more often than not, is that people tend to inflate themselves and they are the ones desperate to get people in to play. Lastly, if you don't like what you hear, immediately say, "I do not think I am right for this situation. Thank you for your time."

By being open minded, modest and considerate, you will find it much easier to meet people and connect with individual personalities. The best part about being prepared with the above list is that you do not have to be a phone person to accomplish this task, just determined.

9 SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Social Media Campaigns can make you feel closer to friends, which makes you happier – so how can bands and artists channel that positivity, rather than contribute to the potential sadness of their fans?.



Conveying a flawless existence on social media certainly won't help. While that strategy is the go-to for tons of popular influencers and celebrities (musicindustry heavyweights

included), for independent artists and musicians, a packaged approach can have drawbacks. Your appeal is often rooted in the emotions you evoke in listeners; many fans are following you because of how your music makes them feel.

Here are the tips for avoiding those pitfalls to instead tap into the positive possibilities of social media – ways to connect with fans, opportunities to be authentic and allow your own experiences to resonate with your followers. Read on for some suggestions, and feel free to add your own ideas in the comments.

- Celebrate your accomplishments without bragging It's totally normal to want to share your successes on social media; that's part of its purpose, right? But comparing ourselves to others via Instagram or Face-Book can be a pathway to anxiety and low self-esteem so how can you promote something, like the release of an album or a new video, in a way that doesn't make your fans feel lesser than?
 - You can't completely control how followers will react to your posts, obviously. But you can give context to your accomplishments that inspires folks to celebrate with you: Mentioning the hard work of that went into a project, the resulting pride you feel, and thanking the crew who helped you achieve it all are ways to subtly remind users that they can achieve their goals too, just like you've done.
- Check in with your followers directly If you want your fans to feel connected to your band, talk to them. Social media is made for exactly that so take the time to address their comments and DMs when you can. Even simply liking their responses to a post is a way of acknowledging them, and you can also post general comments to fans from time to time where you thank them for supporting your work.
- Share an inspiring personal triumph Not everyone feels comfortable sharing the intimate details of their life online; that's just fine, and this tip isn't for everyone. But if you are okay with being open on social media, consider how a personal story might inspire others.
 - We all have obstacles to overcome and challenges to face, and your victory over your own struggles could help motivate others to beat their own. Maybe you've even written a song about a situation like this why not use social media to delve into its meaning and message?

• **Don't contribute to 24/7 social-media use** - Are you documenting your every waking moment in your Instagram Stories? Do you post pictures of practically every meal or videos of you doing nothing more than sitting around? Are your daily shares in the double digits? If any of this applies to you, then you might want to consider cutting back.

On average, users are mindlessly scrolling for a total of two hours each day. That can contribute to the reduction of much-needed human interaction, and can disrupt our focus and productivity. The cycle of checking-and-updating-and-checking repeatedly is not only a time suck, but can also chip away at happiness by making you feel disconnected from actual, IRL people and, when it keeps you from getting things done, will make you feel less accomplished (and, probably, subsequently bummed out).

Try to avoid being one of those users that's constantly documenting even the most minute of moments of their lives. Instead, stick to quality over quantity in your content.

• **Be your authentic self** - Whatever you post, be you. Don't resort to sharing content that's not a genuine representation of you or your band because you think it might garner more engagement. Fans want to feel connected to you, and you should try to provide that – but it's difficult to do if you're not being yourself.

As a successful artist or for your band, be mindful that whatever you post, that you're posting it because you legitimately want to – and not solely because you know that specific content will result in loads of likes or comments.

10 VIDEO LIVE AND STUDIO

When it comes to Musician's video live and studio, most performers will admit that they are in the dark when it comes to lighting. Lighting is traditionally considered to be a specialty of DJs and front of house masters. What if we told you that lights and their extensive features are valuable tools for all musician, educators, houses of worship, or corporate events? DJs, singers, singer songwriters, guitar players, bass players, drummers, teachers, public speakers and events planners all have a need for lighting that can elevate their performances or events.



With a little help from a well-placed FX light or PAR can a venue, performance or engagement can be transformed into an energetic and moody gig set to amplify the talent or presentation on display.

Finding the right combination of lighting elements will empower presenters and performers to captivate their audience and drive the message home. To begin your journey into lighting, consider some of the best sellers.

If simplicity of installation and ease of use are the deciding factors for you, IRC remote controlled lights, which can all be controlled using IRC controllers or the American DJ UC IR. For the venue owner looking to update and refresh their lighting package, check out the Chauvet DJ D-Fi USB enabled professional lighting series, which empowers you to leverage the simplicity of USB connections, and control your DMX lighting effortlessly and wirelessly.

These are only a few of the exciting options available today, so dive into our Lighting and Stage Effects assortment, find the right fit for your performance, and give your audience a timeless and memorable show.

Besides Lighting, you might as well want to know more about the following key resources.

Zoom Q8 Video Camera - The new Zoom Q8 video camera produces excellent sound quality recorded at 24-bit/96kHZ - something we have come to expect from Zoom - but with video capabilities that can record up to 1296p at 60fps. Furthermore, the Q8 features Zoom's interchangeable capsule system and two XLR inputs to allow for up to 4 channels of audio being recorded simultaneously. This allows the user to switch out one mic for another, depending on the job at hand. This makes it an ideal camera for YouTubers, video bloggers, podcasters, musicians capturing a live performance, or capturing a presentation in the classroom, lecture theatre or workspace

YouTube Video Editor - You can see very many free YouTube video editor software over the internet for working with. All YouTube video editing software have their distinct features that you should lookout for as well as pros and cons. The following video editors for YouTube will give you a good starting point.

- YouTube Video Editor (Windows and Mac) This free YouTube video editor allows for easy customizing of video files through specialized tools and effects. You should choose a good combination of those that will suit your video editing. Also, the program helps in trimming down the size of videos.
- Filmora Video Editor for Windows (or Filmora Video Editor for Mac) Filmora is the best video editing software for YouTube on Mac 10.13 or Windows 10. This video editor for YouTube has very many effects that you can use to personalize your video when editing. They include intro/credit where you will get to enjoy multiple templates, transitions to help come up with a flawless exchange from one scene to another, sound effect and filters. The selection will be all yours to make and you should be very keen on what you decide to use with your video. Furthermore, this powerful YouTube video editing software has support for very many file formats and guarantees high quality to edited files.
- **iMovie** When you are looking for the best free YouTube video editing software program to use with Mac, iMovie will be the best choice to consider. This free video editing software for YouTube allows for easy importing of videos as well as editing in terms of adding effects, inserting titles and adding sound tracks. A simple drag and drop will help you add files to the program.
- Windows Movie Maker (Windows) This YouTube video editing software is another best video
 editing software for YouTube videos and it's designed by Microsoft. You can create, edit and
 publish your videos using this program on online sites like YouTube and Face-Book. That will
 help in enhancing your overall editing experience. It has support for very many transitions,
 effects and titles to help customize video.

11 How to Produce a Quality E-Mail

The average corporate employee spends about a quarter of the work week combing through the hundreds of e-mails we all send and receive every day.

A good e-mail:

- Has a clarity of Thought
- Is complete and self-explanatory
- Is comprehensive but compact
- Has a proper date and signature
- Is presented in a lucid style

The following guidelines would help you draft a professional e-mail:

- 1. Include a clear, direct subject line Examples of a good subject line include "Meeting date changed," "Quick question about your presentation," or "Suggestions for the proposal."
- Use a professional e-mail address If you work for a company, you should use your company e-mail address. However if you use a personal e-mail account--whether you are self-employed or just like using it occasionally for work-related correspondences ---you should be careful when choosing that address.
- 3. Think twice before hitting 'reply all' No one wants to read e-mails from 20 people that have nothing to do with them. Ignoring the e-mails can be difficult, with many people getting notifications of new messages on their smartphones or distracting pop-up messages on their computer screens.
- 4. Include a signature block Provide your reader with some information about you, "Generally, this would state your full name, title, the company name, and your contact information, including a phone number. You also can add a little publicity for yourself, but don't go overboard with any sayings or artwork."
- 5. Use professional salutations Don't use laid-back, colloquial expressions like, "Hey you guys," "Yo," or "Hi folks."
- 6. Use exclamation points sparingly If you choose to use an exclamation point, use only one to convey excitement.
- 7. Be cautious with humor Humor can easily get lost in translation without the right tone or facial expressions. In a professional exchange, it's better to leave humor out of e-mails unless you know the recipient well. Also, something that you think is funny might not be funny to someone else.
- 8. Know that people from different cultures speak and write differently Miscommunication can easily occur because of cultural differences, especially in the writing form when we can't see one another's body language. Tailor your message to the receiver's cultural background or how well you know them.
- 9. Reply to your e-mails--even if the e-mail wasn't intended for you. It's difficult to reply to every e-mail message ever sent to you, but you should try to. This includes when the e-mail was

- accidentally sent to you, especially if the sender is expecting a reply. A reply isn't necessary but serves as good e-mail etiquette, especially if this person works in the same company or industry as you.
- 10. Proofread every message Your mistakes won't go unnoticed by the recipients of your e-mail. "And, depending upon the recipient, you may be judged for making them. Don't rely on spell-checkers. Read and re-read your e-mail a few times, preferably aloud, before sending it off.
- 11. Add the e-mail address last "You don't want to send an e-mail accidentally before you have finished writing and proofing the message," "Even when you are replying to a message, it's a good precaution to delete the recipient's address and insert it only when you are sure the message is ready to be sent."
- 12. Double-check that you've selected the correct recipient -Pay careful attention when typing a name from your address book on the e-mail's "To" line. "It's easy to select the wrong name, which can be embarrassing to you and to the person who receives the e-mail by mistake."
- 13. Keep your fonts classic Purple Comic Sans has a time and a place (maybe?), but for business correspondence, keep your fonts, colors, and sizes classic. The cardinal rule: Your e-mails should be easy for other people to read.
- 14. Keep tabs on your tone Just as jokes get lost in translation, tone is easy to misconstrue without the context you'd get from vocal cues and facial expressions. Accordingly, it's easy to come off as more abrupt that you might have intended --you meant "straightforward," they read "angry and curt."
- 15. Nothing is confidential--so write accordingly Always remember Every electronic message leaves a trail. "A basic guideline is to assume that others will see what you write.

For additional details, refer this <u>link</u>.

Benefits of Mailchimp – Mailchimp is a marketing automation platform and an email marketing service. Features of Mailchimp includes; however not limited to:

- Keep your audience engaged with email marketing. Mailchimp's campaign builder is easy to use, packed full of features, and designed to grow with your business
- Our drag-and-drop email designer makes it easy to switch up content and layouts to create an email that brings your brand to life
- Store all your images and files in Mailchimp's content manager so you can always find what you need for your campaigns.
- No need for extra design work. You can edit and resize images with our built-in photo editor.
- You can make teamwork easier. You can comment, reply, and send test emails as you work together to send things out the door.

12 CREATING GRAPHICS ON A BUDGET

Graphics are always a great alternative to express a pictorial representation and as a Successful Musician, you might want to create graphics for your websites. The following pointer are worth noting while you create your own graphics.

- **Purpose** Deciding what the image needs to achieve.
- Imagery Choosing a photo or graphic that fits your brand and the message you want to convey.
- Color Working with a color palette that matches your brand and stands out.
- Fonts If words are needed, think about the typography on your image.
- Bringing the elements together Using simple software to bring your image to life.

Creating a good graphic first involves understanding its intention. Of course you want it to look good, but design is more than making things pretty. Design can have a positive impact on the number of visitors who purchase your product or share your article and can bring in a new audience. Rather than setting out to create an image that looks nice, instead you need to decide you're going to create an image that fulfills a need.

How to make a great blog graphic - The imagery you use in your blog graphics should be cohesive and tie in to your brand. You've got a few different options here. You could go for:

- A photo
- An illustration
- Maybe even a texture

The option you pick will depend on what best suits your content or your brand. Photos are great for creating a personal connection and for showing highly visual subject matter, but if your content is more conceptual or theoretical, then illustrations or a texture could work really well for you (and save you trying to come up with a relevant photograph).

Think about how the image will look not just on this single blog post, but in your blog directory too. When you see a grid of six of your posts together, you want them to all feel like they fit together without looking exactly the same. Pat Flynn does a great job of this with the illustrations he uses to accompany the posts on Smart Passive Income. They're all different, but they belong together.

For photographs, taking the approach of an Instagram theme (where you try to post photos that have a similar style or tone to them) works great for a blog too. Pauline from the food blog livingthehealthychoice.com has this down! Her blog imagery is beautiful on its own, but it's clear that the photo style is a part of her brand, and looks great together in the directory too.

If you don't have the photography skills of Pauline or access to an illustrator to create custom graphics like Pat Flynn, here's some of my recommended resources for sourcing imagery:

- Stock photography The cliché woman laughing with salad is a bit cheesy, but there are many sites that offer elegant, beautiful stock photography without the cringe-factor. Unsplash and Death to Stock are great resources we use for the ConvertKit blog, but keep in mind that the more popular a resource site is, the more common it is to see the images used on other blogs. If you're using stock photos it's a good idea to add graphics or text to them to tie them in with your brand and make them more unique.
- Taking your own photos You don't need a fancy DSLR or professional training to take great photos. Going the DIY route for photography will guarantee you unique, personal images for your blog. Check out these tips for taking great photos with your phone and this guide to taking beautiful ways to get you started.
- Graphics and illustrations Creative Market has pre-made graphics or illustrations for purchase
 to suit just about every style, and they also give away freebies weekly that you could use on
 your blog. Iconfinder is also a great resource for, you guessed it, icons to represent an article
 topic.
- **Textures** Lost and Taken and Subtle Patterns have beautiful background textures that would look great with an icon or text on top to accompany a blog post.

How to make a great blog graphic - Adding text to an image is a great way to make it super compelling for Pinterest as a potential reader will know exactly what article they're about to click into no matter what the pinner has titled the image on their board. You can pick a great font and simply type the name of your article on an image, or you can flex your design muscles and try some typographic arrangements like the beautiful images on the Creative Market blog.

Here is the nitty gritty of making your graphic:

Whatever software you're using, you'll first need to create a canvas that's the size you need your blog image to be (this will depend on your blog design, however 1080x720px is a good place to start if you're not sure). Then start building your graphic from the base up.

Add your image then arrange your text on top of it. A tip here to create balance in your image is to place your text on the opposite side of the main focus of the photo or graphic.

It's easy to get carried away with different fonts, icons and colors, but the age-old rule of 'less is more' definitely applies to blog graphics. Don't try to overload your image with every new asset you've downloaded. Instead pick one or two and save the rest for future images! Remember the graphic is there to support your content, not overshadow it.

If you're struggling for inspiration, get layout ideas from Pinterest or Dribble for instance. The point of creating your own unique blog imagery is just that: to be unique! You can still take inspiration from these sources without directly copying by remixing, and being influenced by multiple images and styles. Writer Austin Kleon has a great book on the topic of 'stealing like an artist', where instead of copying one person, you take little pieces of inspiration from different work you see and put your own spin on them to combine them and make something new! So when you look for inspiration, make sure you're being inspired by multiple different sources and aren't copying one too closely.

Putting your graphic design process into action - Now that you've got a process to follow, it's time to get to work on creating beautiful images for your blog. It's worth putting in the time and effort as the right graphic can increase the shareability of your post, entice more people to buy your product, and strengthen your brand.

Besides these, you might want to know about GIMP and Canva Softwares and use it in appropriate situations.

GIMP - GHIMP; GNU Image Manipulation Program) is a free and open-source raster graphics editor used for image retouching and editing, free-form drawing, converting between different image formats, and more specialized tasks. GIMP is released under GPLv3+ licenses and is available for Linux, Mac OS, and Microsoft Windows.

Canva - Canva is a graphic-design tool website. You can use its drag-and-drop format feature and provide access to over a million photographs, graphics, and fonts. You can as well use Canva for both web and print media design and graphics.

13 CREATING A WEBSITE ON A BUDGET

It is always recommended to have a website for you, as a Successful Musician. The following steps would help you create a website on a given budget.

STEP 1: CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLATFORM - If you want to build a good, mobile friendly and a functional website quickly, you'll need to choose a platform (also known as content management system). To put simply – content management system (or website building platform) is a user-friendly platform for building websites and managing your own online content instead of using a bunch of loose HTML pages.



WordPress is the most popular content management system (55%) followed by Joomla (20%) and Drupal (11%).

It's the easiest platform I've ever worked with, but it's flexible enough to suit everyone from small business owners and freelancers to creative artists and bloggers.

STEP 2: GET A DOMAIN & WEB HOSTING - Step 2 of creating a website in order to set up your WordPress (or any other type of websites), you're going to need two things:

- A domain name (a web address like yoursitename.com)
- Hosting (a service that connects your site to the internet)

Owning your own domain name looks far more professional than having your site on someone else's domain (like yourbusiness.my-free-website.com), and it's super affordable, too.

STEP 3: SET UP & CUSTOMIZE YOUR SITE - Once you've bought your domain name and set up your hosting, you're well on your way!. Now it's time to get your website up and running. The first thing you'll need to do is install WordPress to your domain.

Installing WordPress using One-Click Installation - Almost every reliable and well-established hosting company has integrated 1-click-installation for WordPress, which makes getting going a snap.

If you sign up with a hosting company, you should find your "1-click-installation" in your account control panel.

Here are the steps you should follow (should be similar/same on all the major web hosting companies):

- 1. Log in to your hosting account.
- 2. Go to your control panel.
- 3. Look for the "WordPress" or "Website" icon.
- 4. Choose the domain where you want to install your website.
- 5. Click the "Install Now" button and you will get access to your new WordPress website.

Note: Always remember to improve your website.

For additional details, refer this <u>link</u>.

14 MUSICIAN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Did you know that health is wealth? As a successful musician, you need to understand and assess your health conditions in a regular interval.

This section describes in detail the various health and wellbeing factors for you to stay focused.

Health - It is paramount for health and wellbeing to plan physical practice and include appropriate recovery principles. Mental health means managing stress and anxiety and physical health means meeting the requirements of playing and recovering fully. For painless playing you will need to build up your strength to prepare the body for the demands of professional life. You need to plan so that your best physical condition times exactly with your performance. In this way you will feel confident coming into the performance. Because mental wellbeing correlates closely with physical wellbeing there are strategies you can implement such as breathing and relaxation skills that have both physical and mental benefits.

Prevent Injuries - To prevent injuries it is important to take care of your physical health by planning your practicing. Systematic planning is important for structuring your practice and for getting better results. During your student years in particular, it is worth dividing your practice into periods of time to foster development and enable your skills to develop as required. These can be periods of weeks or as much as

a year in advance. Practice periods, for example, of a month can be linked to previous exercises and skills you have learnt. Healthy, varied practice that exercises your whole body guarantees sufficient general strength alongside your 'instrument-specific' practice. The advantages of planned practice enable optimal development, helps you to avoid burnout and injuries and produce better practicing results.

Resting and Breaks – You need to understand that only by resting your body can you recover from practicing. You also need to add rests into your daily practicing sessions. Hand surgeons say your hands should have a rest from playing every 30 minutes so that the nerves can recover. When you have rests you can stretch your body, walk around, practice in your mind so that you can still be focused on practicing if you want to. Remember that if you check your phone during a short break, it takes 20 minutes to get back into a focused state of mind again.

Mental Wellbeing - Managing stress and anxiety is essential for learning and performing. This covers a large subject field that includes human relationships and other aspects of life. Examples of these are feeling confident in yourself, managing your time and daring to express yourself musically. It is important to understand how failure impacts you and how you can find more joy in your playing.

Mindfulness - Mindfulness is simply the ability to bring your attention to the present moment and engage fully with whatever you are doing. In the first instance, it involves a decision to increase awareness and direct it at the 'here and now'. This decreases the amount of internal dialogue that deals with worries about the past and present and generally aims to increase the quality of any activity by consciously focusing on it.

Planning Short Term Practicing - Short term practicing means practice time frames from one to three weeks. It takes your muscles about 24 hours on average to recover from a demanding practice session. This means that you need to plan your practicing in terms of alternating days of light and heavy sessions so that you don't strain yourself. On a lighter day, it is recommended that you include an easier practice session so that your body will keep strengthening your tired muscles.

Planning Long Term Practicing - During the month-long time frame you can plan your practicing so that you increase the amount of practicing during the first three weeks. You can then have a "light week" (week 1), "medium week" (week 2) and a "heavy week" (week 3). It is important that every fourth week is always a recovery week so week 4 should be lighter than week 1 in terms of loading. This is because the tiny blood vessel networks that transport energy to your muscles need time to renew themselves every fourth week. If you want to improve your overall muscle condition, you have to give your body time to renew and repair its capillaries, otherwise constant heavy practicing could eventually lead to injury.

Maintain Wellbeing with Flow Techniques - If you notice you are getting bored and losing motivation whilst playing, you can raise the level of your interest by changing direction and/or focusing on a more challenging goal. If you are becoming frustrated, tense and experiencing negative self-talk, you can relax yourself by focusing on physical sensations and musical expression and asking yourself questions such as 'Can I play more slowly so that I can feel more and express more?' If you are becoming bored take some time to create a fun exercise or improvise around your repertoire to discover more about it.

Stress Management and Flow - A reduction of stress in the practice room can help to provide an antidote to the anxiety that many musicians experience leading up to and during performances. Musicians tend to put too much pressure on themselves by setting unrealistic goals and then practicing with stress or alternatively, avoiding practice and feeling guilty. In the Flow Music Method, musicians are encouraged to experience positive feelings of engagement in their practice by setting small, achievable sensory and expressive sub goals that relate to the overall task at hand. By setting clear, realistic goals musicians can notice the feedback of improvement quickly and feel the resultant sensations of fulfilment and satisfaction. This feedback is important for the recognition of completion of tasks and maintaining a positive motivation for future tasks. Activities that support a healthy approach outside the practice room include imagining playing the music with all the details (called 'vivid imagining'), singing the music expressively and using relaxation techniques and positive thinking. These activities can be used as needed to alleviate stress and bring you back into a state of relaxed joyfulness. Remember that you have the power to reduce excess stress through maintaining an awareness of how you feel mentally and physically and applying suitable strategies and antidotes.

Injury Prevention - Research shows that more than half of all musicians experience injuries during their career. These types of injuries include tendonitis, problems with their neck, shoulders, back and arms and embouchure issues. If you focus in your practicing on recovery and optimal physical feelings, you will develop your strength and body for demanding playing. You will feel better and stronger all the time. You can prevent injuries by planning your practicing well and developing your muscle strength.

15 Business Card Options and Alternatives

As a Successful Musician, you need to be mindful that business cards don't fall out of fashion even though the online business world is growing. To tell you the truth, even people who negotiate online mainly need business cards.

Here are some reasons why business cards are something that will stay in our world for years to come:

- **Networking Purposes**: Even the average businessman knows the importance of networking. If you are a businessman or businesswoman (don't want to discriminate here), chances are that you are in a chamber of commerce or registered at another place that joins several merchants and business owners together. How can you possibly turn those connects into leads if you can't give them a business card?.
- **Guaranteeing Professionalism**: Business cards are used to "show off" sometimes, but that's a vital part of making clients perceive quality and professionalism. If you are an online professional like myself you need to assure your suspicious offline leads that you are a "legit" entrepreneur. Business cards give you credibility.
- Lead Exchanging: Business people usually hang around with other business people and they keep stacks of cards of other business people too. They usually engage in Lead Exchanging: they recommend people to their friend's services and they do the same. So, you see, business cards are a must.

These are the 3 most important reasons people still cling on to the old habit of handing out business cards.

16 Examples of Free Apps for Media and Music Production

Free music apps will help you listen to music in just about every different way imaginable. These are the best free music apps to help you listen to your personal music library, discover new artists, identify songs, listen to streaming music, and find radio stations near you.

All of these music apps are completely free and most are compatible with both Android and iPhone. Use the link to download the app or find it in the app store on your phone. You'll be up and running in no time with a free music app that you won't be able to remember how you lived without.



Audacity - Audacity is a free and open-source digital audio editor and recording application software, available for Windows, Mac OS/OS X and Unix-like operating systems. In addition to

recording audio from multiple sources, you can use Audacity for post-processing of all types of audio, including podcasts by adding effects such as normalization, trimming, and fading in and out. You can also use Audacity to record and mix entire



albums, such as by Tune-Yards. As an additional information, Audacity is currently used in the UK OCR National Level 2 ICT course for the sound creation unit.

• Garage Band - GarageBand is a line of digital audio workstations for Mac OS and iOS that allows you to create music or podcasts. GarageBand is developed and sold by Apple Inc. for Mac OS, and is part of the iLife software suite. Its music and podcast creation system enables you to create multiple tracks with pre-made MIDI keyboards, pre-made loops, an array of various instrumental effects, and voice recordings.



 ReverbNation - ReverbNation helps you grow lasting careers by introducing you to music industry partners, exposing you to fans, and building innovative tools to promote you success



• **SoundCloud** - SoundCloud contains tons of audio uploaded by other users, so it includes both homemade audio and music from up-and-coming artists.

You can search for music, artists, and audio as well as follow other users to keep track of their new uploads. A combined



10+ hours of audio is posted every minute from the users, which means you can surely find something interesting to listen to.

Playlists can be built on the iPhone so you can create a customized stream of your favorite music and share the playlists with others.

17 How to Deal with Financials and Wellbeing

As a successful musician, dealing with your financials paramount for a healthy life. There are many reasons for financial difficulties. Rising debt is one of the major ones. You need to first know how to deal with financial problems effectively. Once you do that you will see that your finance related stress and anxiety have gone down too.

Here are some of the best and practical ways to deal with financials:

- Identify the Triggers The first thing you need to know is what is causing you the stress. Is it your debt, loans, credit card bill or low income or low savings? It is essential to identify your triggers. The problem will always weigh in your mind so it isn't that difficult to identify it. If you are constantly thinking of debt rather than your low income, then debt is your trigger. Once you have identified the major cause of the stress you can then devise a strategy to overcome it.
- Mange Your Expenses Now, it's time to get serious about your expenses. It's pretty common that you are spending more money than you can afford. Managing your expenses effectively can help you reduce stress and help you come out of the problems real quick. One of the best ways to deal with financial problems is to create a budget and stick to it. It will help you avoid any unnecessary expenses.
- Save as Much as You Can Saving money is one of the most important steps when it comes to
 facing the question how to deal with financial stress. Saving money gives you a back-up. Saving
 for emergency situations can help you in various situations like when you are out of a job or
 have a medical emergency situation. Saving for retirement is another type of saving that will
 cover your expenses in your old age. Plan ahead and create a healthy financial situation.
- **Get Help from a Professional** If things have come to a bankruptcy-like situation, then it will be the ideal time for you to consider seeking the help of a professional. Financial experts will help you manage your finances and advise you on how to pay off the debt and loans against your car title real quick. You can also seek help of family and friends and ask them for help.
- **Seek Medical Help** If the financial stress is taking a toll on your health then you should be visiting the doctor for help. It's essential that you manage your stress well before it gets out of

hand. Meditating and keeping a positive frame of mind will also help you overcome your problems.

Most importantly, no matter what your financial situation is, always remember that there is a solution to it. You need to stay focused and try to deal with your financial stress as effectively as you can. These points will help you overcome your financial problems and reduce the stress and make you a Successful Musician.

Besides these, you also need to understand the free accountancy websites, musician's mortgages, and musician's accountants.

17.1 WAVE AND BRIGHTBOOK

Brightbook - This completely free software makes invoicing a breeze. With your free account you get invoicing, instant insights and accounting software that allows you to import your banking statements to see profit and loss. Multiple users can use the software, but you can provide selective access for extra security and privacy. For more information, refer this <u>link</u>.

Wave Accounting - Designed for non-accountants, Wave's completely free tools include software for invoicing, accounting and payroll, as well as receipt scanning. They charge for credit-card processing, but the amount of organization you'll have when tax time comes around will make it well worth it. For more information, refer this <u>link</u>.

17.2 Managing your Accounts as a Freelance Musician

Making a living as a freelance musician is a dream to some but, just like all freelance work, it has some aspects that might make you wish you'd just taken that office job. Sleeping in the back of vans, endless practice and worrying about getting paid are some of the big ones. Then, of course, there's the accounting to deal with too. We know you'd rather be spending your time on the fun stuff, but here's some simple advice how to take care of your finances as a freelance musician.

Forming A Limited Company - First things first, depending on what you're earning it might be a good idea to start working under your own limited company. To many this might seem like overkill for the level of work they're doing, but there are plenty of good reasons to form a limited company. If you're bringing in around £20,000 a year, with £2,000 annual expenses, you may find your own accountant pays for itself. We've got a great article about how to set up your own limited company that show just how easy it can be.

Expenses - This is simultaneously the most enjoyable and irritating part of doing your accounts. While it's great to recoup some of your costs, there are also loads of rules about what is and isn't acceptable. The basic rule is that anything you claim as an expense must be used 'wholly and exclusively' for your business, with no exceptions.

Keeping Your Papers In Order - Whether you have an accountant or are taking on the books yourself, it's incredibly important to be organised, especially if you're planning on making expense claims. Do you ever empty your wallet of two weeks of receipts and have no idea what half of them were for? Imagine

this, but over the space of a year, and you'll realise why prompt and proper filing is your friend. The first rule is to keep everything. Receipts, contracts, invoices (we've got a great free invoice generator or alternatively some free invoice templates) and anything else that might be useful. While it's possible all of this will never be needed again, you want to be prepared in case HMRC have any probing questions about your accounts after you submit them.

Self-Assessments - This is the part where you actually have to sit down and work everything out. As a self-employed musician you won't be paying your tax through a PAYE scheme (as a normal employee would), so every year you must complete a Self-Assessment to tell HMRC about your earnings, and calculate how much tax you owe. If you've been good with your record-keeping this shouldn't be too difficult. If you haven't, you may find January to be a fairly miserable month. Make sure you get registered for your Self-Assessment as soon as you can – registration can take a few weeks, so it's best not to leave it to the last minute. Here's all the information you'll need to get yourself sorted.

Failure to register or submit your Self-Assessment will lead to fines and penalties. Get the jump on your accounting and you'll feel much better for it.

17.3 Musician's Mortgages

Do remember that getting a mortgage can be tricky for freelance musicians – with variable incomes from sources that your bank may not recognise – but it's definitely possible. Follow these steps to get a mortgage.

- The first step is to gather a suitable deposit, starting to save as soon as you earn enough money to put some aside each month. 5% deposits are possible through the government help to buy scheme otherwise, you will need a minimum of 10%. [So for a £200,000 house, you'll need at least a £10,000 (5%) deposit.]
- Your deposit amount, rather than your income, will dictate what interest rates are available to you so the bigger your deposit, the better your rate. And don't forget about stamp duty: if you are buying your first property, the stamp duty in 2016 on a £300,000 property is £5,000. [Stamp duty is a tax owed on the purchase of property above a certain threshold.]
- As most freelance musicians are self-employed as sole traders or have formed their own limited company, most lenders will want to see two years' worth of audited accounts before they would be willing to consider your mortgage application. You can expect to be able to borrow around 4.75 times your income. If you have any existing credit commitments or debt, this multiple will reduce accordingly.
- Finally, it is important to identify what state your credit file is in. It is always a good idea before
 embarking on your property search to request your credit file from a credit agency. This will help
 to identify if you have a good credit score, and ensure there are no previous late payments or
 defaults that may hinder your application. [Check out these tips from Experian on how to
 improve your credit score.]