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What You Should Know Before You Download Music Online

By JM Anderson

Throughout the past several years, nearly everyone has become familiar with the music industry

closing in on music-sharing websites that permit visitors to download music at no cost. Both company executives and artists believe that this practice is damaging the financial prospect of the industry as a whole. Why is that? Because individuals were gaining access to music files for free instead of purchasing the compact disc release, which resulted in a loss of revenue. The outcome was various lawsuits being filed against individuals, themselves, and the companies who provided the free access.

Since that time, however, new businesses have emerged that are designed to provide customers with a paid service to download music tunes. This advance appears to be working as the music industry's revenue is continuing to stream in, as fans are enjoying quality music at a low monthly subscription rate. This option works especially well for anyone who has a favorite song, but doesn't wish to purchase the entire CD for just that one song. Even with fee-based services, there are some restrictions that do apply and consumers must be cautious as to not violate existing copyright laws.

Not many websites continue to offer free file-sharing services in light of the recent lawsuits brought against their competitors, but they do still exist. Along with concerns surrounding their legality, these companies often lack in the premium sound quality that professional recordings offer. One interesting way to download music, freely and legally, is to visit a specific artist's official website. During their earliest release, some musicians allow fans the opportunity to download music featuring the entire track of a new song. The purpose of this is to entice them into purchasing the entire CD by gaining their interest with one track. Because this usually relates to a new song promotion, these offers are usually limited and may expire fairly quickly.

The most common ways to download music is onto a computer or an MP3 player. Most computers feature software that will allow them to easily record a song for storage or playback. Once downloaded, consumers are not permitted to make additional copies and/or profit from this activity in any way. The download is for personal use only and cannot be redistributed or sold.

When you download music onto an MP3 player, a USB connection is generally required between your computer and the player. Before transferring music files, it is best to make sure that your MP3 player

What You Should Know Before You Download Music Online

has the capability to support the song's file format. All MP3 players can playback an .mp3 format, but many can also read .wma files.

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How to Download Music From The Internet

By Gary Hendricks

Most of you have probably heard of the RIAA's quest to crush online music piracy. The illegal sharing of copyrighted songs via the MP3 format over the Internet costs the music industry billions of dollars. This is conventionally done using illegal file sharing programs like KaZaa and iMesh. This article explores the legal ways to download and enjoy music from the Internet.

Method 1: Check out Free Music Sites

There are many free music websites which provide free music downloads. These are not the websites of your music pirates – they are totally legal. Don't expect to find full albums to download, particularly if the song is from a famous artist (only music pirate websites allow full album downloads). You'll only find a few "teasers" intended to make you want to buy the artists' CD. Independent, less well-known artists are an exception – many of them will let you down their complete song catalog to promote themselves.

Here are a few of the free music websites which I recommend: AMPCAST.com Amazon.com Digital Music Downloads RollingStone.com ElectronicScene.com The Internet Underground Music Archive

Method 2: Buy Music Online

An increasingly popular way to find and download music online is to head for legal online music services. The most popular of these is the Apples iTunes service. Currently it provides over 400,000 songs from all five major labels. Each song is available for a standard price of 99 cents each. Here are the best online music services I've come across: EMusic.com iTunes MusicMatch Downloads Napster 2.0 Rhapsody Weblisten.com

Conclusion

It is very tempting to use KaZaa and other file sharing programs to download music – but please don't. If you wrote a song and sold a CD, would you be happy to see millions of people distributing that song for free? No. You don't have to break the law to find and download free MP3 music. There are many

What You Should Know Before You Download Music Online

websites out there offering free music – you just need to find them.

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