

FREE MUSIC BUSINESS CHECKLIST

Catalog Money Music Checklist

Organize your songs. Protect your rights. Prepare your music catalog for more income opportunities.

Released Songs

Splits

Metadata

Royalties

Sync Files

Catalog Systems

How To Use This Checklist

This is not a motivational worksheet. This is a catalog reality check. Go through each section and mark what you already have in place. Be honest. If a section feels confusing, incomplete, or scattered across folders, emails, old drives, and text messages, that is probably where your catalog needs attention.

By the end, you should know:

- What songs you actually have
- What registrations or royalty pieces may be missing
- What rights, splits, and credits are documented
- Whether your catalog is ready for sync, licensing, and future opportunities

Quick Score Guide

0-18

Catalog chaos

Your music exists, but your system needs real cleanup.

19-36

Partially organized

You have pieces in place, but gaps could slow down money or opportunities.

37-54

Strong foundation

Your catalog is becoming easier to manage, pitch, and monetize.

55-70

Catalog ready

You are closer to having a professional music business asset.

Important note This checklist is educational and not legal advice. Contracts and rights questions should be reviewed with a qualified professional.

Catalog Inventory

Before the money conversation, there has to be a system. You cannot manage what you cannot find. Stunning discovery, I know.

1 What Songs Do You Actually Have?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a full list of my released songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have the ISRC code for each released song. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a full list of my unreleased songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have the UPC code for each project or release. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Each song is labeled: single, EP, album, demo, or feature. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know which distributor was used for each release. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know the release date for each released song. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can quickly find any song if someone asks for it. |

HARD QUESTION

Could you send your full catalog list in under 10 minutes?

2 Are Your Files Easy To Find?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have final masters saved in one organized place. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have artwork files saved with each release. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have WAV and MP3 files for key songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> My folders are named clearly, not final_final_REALmix2. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have backup copies of important music files. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know where my unreleased demos are stored. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have lyric sheets for important songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have one main catalog tracker or spreadsheet. |

HARD QUESTION

Would an opportunity die because you could not find the file?

Rights, Splits & Ownership

A song is not just a file. It is ownership, contributors, percentages, approvals, and paperwork. Everyone is “cool” until a check appears.

3 Is It Clear Who Owns What?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know who wrote each song. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have written agreements with producers. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know who produced each song. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have written agreements with featured artists. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know who owns each master recording. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know if any samples were used. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know who owns the publishing. | <input type="checkbox"/> Samples are cleared or documented when needed. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have split sheets for every released song. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can contact all contributors quickly. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have split sheets for key unreleased songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know who must approve a license. |

HARD QUESTION

If money showed up tomorrow, could you prove who owns what?

Mini Reality Check

- Which 3 songs would you pitch first for an opportunity?
- Which of those songs has the cleanest ownership situation?
- Which song has the biggest paperwork problem right now?

Registration & Royalties

Uploading a song is not the same as setting it up to collect. The internet made distribution easier and the business somehow stayed allergic to simplicity.

4

Are Your Songs Set Up To Collect?

- I am registered with a PRO.
- My released songs are registered with my PRO.
- My writer shares are listed correctly.
- My publisher shares are listed correctly.
- My songs are registered for mechanical royalties.
- I understand where my streaming royalties come from.
- I check distributor royalty reports.
- My credits are correct in my distributor dashboard.
- My artist name is consistent across platforms.
- I know which songs need registration cleanup.
- I safely store rights/royalty platform logins.
- I track royalty payments by source.

HARD QUESTION

Are you only uploading music, or actually building a catalog system?

Track These Basics For Every Song

Song title

Artist name

Writers

Producers

ISRC

UPC

Release date

Distributor

Master owner

Publishing owner

Metadata & Presentation

Metadata is the boring label on the box that tells the money where to go. Naturally, it matters.

5

Can Your Music Be Found And Credited?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My artist name is spelled the same everywhere. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know the main genre for each song. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My song titles are spelled the same everywhere. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know the mood or feeling of each song. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All writers are credited correctly. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have BPM information where possible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All producers are credited correctly. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have short descriptions for my strongest songs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Featured artists are credited correctly. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have explicit/clean notes for key songs. |

HARD QUESTION

Would a curator, blog, or supervisor see you as prepared?

6

Is Your Catalog Easy To Present?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a short catalog bio or artist summary. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have links to my strongest releases. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have a current EPK or one-sheet. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know my strongest songs by audience response. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have professional artist photos. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can explain my sound without rambling. |

HARD QUESTION

Can someone understand your music business quickly?

Sync, Licensing & Opportunity

A song cannot move fast if the files, rights, and descriptions are a mess. Sync dreams usually die quietly in unorganized folders.

7 Could Your Song Be Licensed Quickly?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have clean versions where needed. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can describe the mood or scene each song fits. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have instrumental versions where needed. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know if each song is easy or difficult to clear. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have stems for key songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can send files and song info quickly. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know which songs fit TV, film, ads, or games. | <input type="checkbox"/> No uncleared samples in songs I plan to pitch. |

HARD QUESTION

If a show wanted your song tomorrow, could you send everything today?

8 Are Your Songs Working Beyond Streaming?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I reuse older songs in reels, shorts, and promo videos. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a way to collect fan emails or contacts. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have lyric videos, visualizers, or performance clips for key songs. | <input type="checkbox"/> I track which songs perform best. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know which songs deserve more promotion. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a plan for my catalog beyond uploading music. |

HARD QUESTION

Are your songs creating opportunities, or just sitting online?

Your Catalog Score

Count every box you checked. The point is not to shame yourself. The point is to stop guessing. A harsh little miracle, really.

Total Checked

/70

0-18

Catalog Chaos

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Partially Organized

Gaps could slow down money and opportunities.

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Catalog Ready

You are close to a professional catalog system.

Your Songs Deserve A System

Your music catalog is more than a list of songs. It is your creative history, your business foundation, and one of the most important assets you can build as an artist.

RadMedia
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Music. Media. Artist Development.

bookingradmedia@gmail.com | radmediaent.com

**Before you release more music,
make sure your catalog can work for you.**