

METADATA INSTRUCTIONS FOR PITCHING SONGS

What is metadata? Why is it so important when you are trying to license your music?

Metadata is the critical information about your track that a supervisor needs to make a decision about whether to use it or not. You need to let them know not just the obvious things like the artist and song name, but who the copyright holders are and your contact info...etc. If you don't include metadata in your song file and just send out untagged songs, a music supervisor will have no idea who you are or how to reach you.

So how do we make sure we do this right?

Once you have your mastered tracks, the first thing you're going to want to do is create an MP3 from your full resolution master audio file (either 16 bit/44.1 kHz or 24bit/48 kHz). Your master file will almost always be a .WAV file these days which can't hold metadata. Only MP3s and AIFF files can hold this information. Since music supervisors don't like receiving large music files, creating MP3s will be your main way to share your music. Make sure you create your MP3 at the bit rate of at least 192 kbps. You won't get much perceivable quality from MP3 bit rates above 192 kbps, but it's smart to use 256 kbps to be on the safe side.

It's really easy to enter metadata in almost all digital audio workstations. Just check your help menu in your favorite one. Disco.ac is also a great way to store, tag, and share your music, but if you're looking for a simple solution for adding metadata, you can also easily do this in iTunes (now known as "Apple Music"). Go to iTunes/Apple Music preferences > Files > Import Settings. Select MP3 under "Import Using" and then click on "Custom". Under "Stereo bit rate" select 256 kbps, check off "Use VBR", select "Highest" under "Quality", and you can leave the rest of the preferences the same.

After you have created your MP3, you simply need to select it in iTunes/Apple Music and click on the "3 dots" and select "Get Info". This will bring up the MP3 information box allowing you to type in the metadata. Enter your info in the comment fields. Make sure you include the song name, contact email, phone number and something that indicates you own all the rights to your master and publishing for the song. You can put "*I own 200%*" or "*One-Stop*" which lets the person listening to your music know that you control all rights to the song so they only need to contact you to license the track. **If you don't control 200% of the song, then you have to list the songwriter, publisher, and/or label share.** Copyright clearance is a HUGE deal in sync so be sure to clearly state who controls the composition and master recording.

You even have the option to add album artwork (or a photo), song bpm, song description & mood, as well as lyrics. Even though these are not required, the more key details you can share about your song, the better.

Here's what you should list:

Song Name: Make sure the title is clear and you don't have any 'extras' like "*Song title alt mix master 2*". You may have labeled your song that way to make it easy for you to know which version it is, but it's not good when sending it out to someone. Some other things to note...

- If you have a featured artist on the track, they should be included in the song title - ie. "*Song Name (feat. Guest Artist)*".
- If it's a cover song, be sure to list the original artist in the song name. For example: "*Hey Jude (The Beatles cover)*".
- If the song contains explicit lyrics, be sure to list this in the song title - ie. "*Song Name (explicit)*". It also a good idea to have clean versions of your explicit tracks (and list that in the song title) so the supervisor knows you have both versions - ie. "*Song Name (clean)*".
- Whether you are a composer or vocalist, you want to have instrumental versions of all your songs and should list that in the song title - ie. "*Song Name (instrumental)*".

Artist: Artist or band name

Album: If the song is a single, you can list it in this field or leave it blank

Composer: Be sure to list all the songwriters' FULL names, PRO information (ie. ASCAP/BMI) and splits (ie. ownership %). And it's not a bad idea to list the CAE/IPI# too if you have it handy.

Grouping – List the companies clearing the master and publishing sides and their splits if applicable - i.e. Publishing Co. Name (50% publishing). If you control the song completely, you would list it here as well - ie. Artist Name (one-stop).

Genre – You can choose a genre from iTunes's dropdown list or enter your own genre (this is good if it's multi-genre).

BPM – Include if you have it (very helpful), but not required. You can use an app or your DAW to figure out your song's BPM.

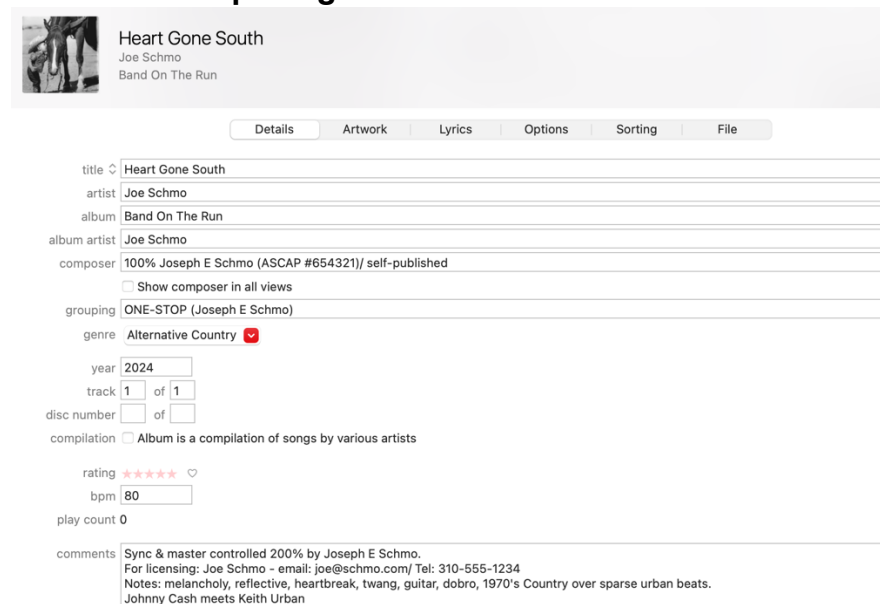
Comments – It's really important that your **CONTACT INFO** is listed at the top of this section.

iTunes/Apple Music imposes a **maximum** of 255 characters here so you always want your name, email, and phone # clearly visible. After that, you can list if your song is "one-stop" (if you control all the rights), add a link to your website, or include additional keywords like the song description, mood/vibe/theme, similar artist ("sounds like"), or specific instrumentation. These help a music supervisor find your song if they're doing a search in their music library for a specific type of song (ie. upbeat pop, emotional ballad, melancholy, female vocals, Christmas, dobro, sounds like 'artist'...etc).

*****IMPORTANT: No matter what platform you use for metadata, the most important tags are song title, artist name, writer/publisher, master recording rights, and above all... CONTACT INFO. You need all these for sync!**

Below are three examples of correct metadata tagging:

1. One-Stop song



The screenshot shows the iTunes metadata for the song "Heart Gone South" by Joe Schmo. The metadata is as follows:

- title:** Heart Gone South
- artist:** Joe Schmo
- album:** Band On The Run
- album artist:** Joe Schmo
- composer:** 100% Joseph E Schmo (ASCAP #654321)/ self-published
- grouping:** ONE-STOP (Joseph E Schmo)
- genre:** Alternative Country
- year:** 2024
- track:** 1 of 1
- disc number:** 1 of 1
- compilation:** Album is a compilation of songs by various artists
- rating:** ★★★★★
- bpm:** 80
- play count:** 0
- comments:** Sync & master controlled 200% by Joseph E Schmo. For licensing: Joe Schmo - email: joe@schmo.com/ Tel: 310-555-1234 Notes: melancholy, reflective, heartbreak, twang, guitar, dobro, 1970's Country over sparse urban beats. Johnny Cash meets Keith Urban

2. Multi songwriter/publisher song:



Summer Loving Ends

The Doe Girls

Summer Loving Ends - Single

Details

Artwork

Lyrics

Options

Sorting

File

title ↕ Summer Loving Ends

artist The Doe Girls

album Summer Loving Ends - Single

album artist

composer Jane Doe (50%) (ASCAP #123456)/ Judy Doe (50%) (BMI #7891011)
 Show composer in all views

grouping Master (100%) Slow Jam Rec/ Pub. (100%) DG Music Pub

genre Pop ballad

year 2024

track 1 of 1

disc number of

compilation Album is a compilation of songs by various artists

rating ★★★★★

bpm 60

play count 0

comments For more information or licensing contact: John Deer @ DG Music Publishing and Jim Buck @ Slow Jam Records
Email: jd@dgmusic.com and jb@slowjamrec.com
Notes: contemporary, emotional, ballad, love, loss, female vocals duet, in the style of The Veronicas

3. Cover song



Blackbird (The Beatles cover)

Julie Darling

Sing Julie Sing

Details

Artwork

Lyrics

Options

Sorting

File

title ↕ Blackbird (The Beatles cover)

artist Julie Darling

album Sing Julie Sing

album artist Julie Darling

composer John Lennon (PRS) (CAE/IP# 17798450)/ Paul McCartney (PRS)
 Show composer in all views

grouping Master (100%) Darling Music/ Publishing (100%) Sony/ATV

genre Cover songs

year 2024

track 1 of 1

disc number of

compilation Album is a compilation of songs by various artists

rating ★★★★★

bpm 90

play count 0

comments Master controlled by Darling Music. Julie Darling
Email: julie@juledarlingmusic.com
Phone: 212-555-1234
Female vocals, singer/songwriter, folk, acoustic guitar, strings, haunting, melancholy, percussion,
Similar artists: Phoebe Bridgers, Taylor Swift

4. Instrumental song:



Sweet Sunset (Instrumental)

Mason Banner
Sunset Vibes

Details | Artwork | Lyrics | Options | Sorting | File

title

artist

album

album artist

composer
 Show composer in all views

grouping

genre

year

track of

disc number of

compilation Album is a compilation of songs by various artists

rating

bpm

play count

comments