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Online music stream

On average, Americans spend 20 hours each week listening to music and only three of those hours are spent listening to music we actually own [source: Frere-Jones]. The majority of the music we listen to is streamed from the Internet and stored on our computers or smartphones. There are plenty of online streaming options to choose from like MOG, Rhapsody, Pandora and Spotify, but is there a way we can access all of this great online music in our cars and trucks?The short answer: most definitely! Streaming online music to your car requires the combined effort of two technologies -- the good news is that those two technologies are ones that a large number of consumers are already familiar with. Smartphone and Bluetooth wireless technology have made it possible to stream your favorite Internet music stations to your car's radio. The only problem is that, right now, only a handful of car companies have radios that can receive the Bluetooth signal.Automakers have seen the demand for smartphone integration and many are adding Bluetooth-enabled radios to allow for streaming online music. Manufacturers like Mini, Ford, Scion, BMW and Mercedes-Benz all have models that incorporate Pandora music streaming. And as of 2012, all of Scion's vehicles will have the option of having a Pandora-enabled radio in the car [source: Pandora]. Many others, like Hyundai, Toyota, Buick, GMC and Chevrolet are incorporating online music streaming into future vehicles as well [source: Booton].At a fall 2011 technology conference, Ford and Spotify got together and hacked the Ford SYNC system to, not only allow Spotify to stream music to the car, but to also take advantage of Ford's voice recognition technology. They were able to change songs on Spotify using voice commands [source: Kovach]. Although Ford and Spotify don't currently have an official way to integrate the two systems, their hack showed the capabilities of online music streaming to a car.And if you're looking to stream online music in your car, but you don't have the latest model on the road, there's no need to fret. Some aftermarket companies are already selling radios with built-in Bluetooth technology for just that reason.With all the mobile music apps available and the ease of streaming audio wirelessly through Bluetooth, you may never have to sit in traffic and listen to a song you don't like ever again.For more information about streaming online music to your car and other related topics, follow the links on the next page. Some people can dig up great music like magic, or have friends inside the industry who keep them updated. Others are perfectly content with their weekly Spotify Discover playlist. But if you need more ways to find music, here are some ideas—taken from Twitter users, writers from across Lifehacker publisher G/O Media Group's sites, and my own habits. Some are obvious, some are bizarre, some are embarrassing, but all have helped people find a new favorite song, or even their new favorite band.Scour "best of" lists If you're getting into a new era or genre, or if you just want to "be more of a music person," you might enjoy a guided tour though the works that have already been given the critical seal of approval. Consider this comprehensive lists of acclaimed songs and albums.Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Albums of All Time: Fill out your knowledge of canonical popular music with one of the most famous "greatest music" lists, published in 2012. The list is a mix of music so popular it's painfully clichéd, and important albums that you probably missed if you weren't in the right generation.Pitchfork collects the top 100 or 200 albums of every decade—the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. Pitchfork digs a little deeper than Rolling Stone, with a little less concern for an album's mass appeal. If you are looking to beef out your playlists, since 2006 the site has also assembled rankings of each year's best songs, and gone back to the 1960s to craft best-of-the-year song lists by decade.The Slog culture blog loves to tell you what Pitchfork missed.If you're noticing that most of these best-of lists focus on male artists, you're not wrong. Check out NPR's list of the 150 greatest albums made by women for a crash course in what you've probably missed.AllMusic's annual best album lists are beautifully presented, with album art and a short description that links to a longer review. AllMusic doesn't rank its listings, instead breaking out alphabetical lists by genre.Search "best [genre]" and find a source you like. Pitchfork and Rolling Stone will show up a lot, as will NPR, Complex, and Uproxx. But so will sites dedicated entirely to that one genre, which will choose deeper, more distinctive cuts. (I've previously worked through Q Magazine's 40 cosmic rock albums and Rolling Stone's 50 greatest prog rock albums.) Rate Your Music has over 40,000 user-created lists; scroll to the "popular lists" section (current top result: "Please Excuse My Dark, Ambient Swag") or browse the list of "ultimate box sets," which compile the best of niche genres like Belgian techno, neoclassical dark wave, and mumble rap.1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die: A doorstopper of a book reviewing all the essential albums from the 1950s to 2005. Discogs has the list for free.Looking for some new music to lose yourself in this weekend? Look no further. Each year, NPR's All...Read moreFollow music review sitesIf you find a site whose taste matches yours, great! If not, you can still use these, if only just to keep track of what's out this week.Metacritic Music averages critical reviews, so it's a good starting point, and shows you what's controversial or universally acclaimed. From there you'll find review sites like these:"I check Pitchfork every morning to see what just came out; they publish 4-5 album reviews a day. I don't really read it or care what they say too much. Pitchfork's ratings are arbitrary!"—Joel Kahn, senior video producer at LifehackerConsequence of Sound uses a letter-grade system for reviews, and streams new tracks as they come out (sometimes before they hit Spotify or iTunes).Needledrop keeps a running "loved list" of its favorite new songs. (via Péter Szász, managing director at GMG Hungary)Usually when I load up a "biggest hits" playlist, I end up skipping half the tracks. I'm barely...Read moreThe rest of the internetPhoto: Carlos E. Azevedo (Shutterstock)The internet wants very badly for you to hear new music.Each month, Bandcamp names the best new music on the platform, in varying genres. E.g., July's best of jazz or the best recent reissues. (via Maria Sherman, senior writer at Jezebel.)You can dig deeper into Bandcamp by "tag surfing" from a band you like to others, or following the Bandcamp blog, says GMG developer Janos Hardi.SoundCloud is similarly built for wandering; when you're done with a track, it autoplays something else you might like. Find an artist you enjoy, then check out the tracks they've "liked." Tag surfing works great here as well.Pandora might show up in Google below the jewelry brand of the same name, but it's still one of the best "custom radio" services. Just tell it an artist you like and it builds a new station. For less obvious results, plug in a band that you've only recently fallen in love with.iHeartRadio is also still around, streaming radio stations (both old-school and niche digital-only) based on your genre preferences—and you can listen on your favorite smart speaker. Tools like Gnosic and Musicroamer work like tiny versions of Pandora or Spotify Discover, suggesting new music based on what you enter.Spotify and Apple Music try to alert you to new releases by artists you already like, but their delivery systems kind of suck. (Just give me a playlist, and don't clog it up with bands I "might like," you weirdos!) But you can fix that with services like MuzerRoom, mussy, and Swam.fm. They all offer different options for importing your listening history from iTunes, Spotify or last.fm, plus options for manually entering bands to follow.A pandemic is not the time to get your friends to gather for an in-person listening party, but you could probably coax them onto JOBX, where users synch up their Spotify playback in a virtual DJ room. You need Spotify Premium to use it, but JOBX also lets you import and export music to Spotify—plus its search function seems to work better than Spotify's own. Lifehacker loves it.If your workplace has a chat app, start a channel for sharing music. That's where I got all the recommendations from my GMG colleagues.Join last.fm, which tracks your music listens across different platforms, and you'll have a centralized record of your listening habits, along with recommendations. I've had an account for over a decade, and sometimes I dig into the archives to find forgotten favorites.If you're still using Facebook, join some music-based groups, or follow the pages of specific artists. Music recommendation communities can be intimidating, but Facebook has a way of making it all feel accessible.Apple Music, as everyone knows, sucks at algorithmic music recommendation. But its staff-curated playlists are intricate and reliable. For major artists, Apple supplements its "essentials" lists with "next steps," "deep cuts" and music that influenced or was influenced by the artist. There are even playlists of the best covers of certain artists.Compilation streams on SoundCloud: On "Vintage Obscura Summer Mix 2014," I found the Smiles original "I Am Just a Star on a Democratic Flag,"which you won't find on Spotify or Apple Music. (You will find a beautiful, if less haunting, cover by Pink Flames.)Compilation streams on YouTube: The internet is really into the stream "lofi hip hop radio - beats to relax/study to," stream. Gaming site Polygon even made a parody, lofi chill beats X hip hop study X waluigi. The 7clouds account runs 7 live streams of good background music.fr/vintageobscura is the source for that summer mix; all entries are obscure tracks from 1900 to 1989. Most entries link to YouTube, home of all rarities. You'll find more mixes and genre filters in the right rail.NPR's Tiny Desk Concert series is a fun listen in itself, but it's also a cool way to get a "live" introduction to an artist. Most of the concerts are 15-20 minutes, the correct length for a music set. If there's anything wrong with discovering music this way, it's that everyone sounds their best behind the tiny desk.You probably already bump into covers when you're looking for music. Try collections of covers of your favorite artists (Spotify probably has a cover for every Beatles song), to find groups that might have a different sound, but share your love of the first artist."Vice News Tonight has a tragically overlooked segment called New Music Corner in which they ask musicians to comment on new releases from other acts. This construct leads to surprising moments like Weezer discussing new tunes from Bjork and Kelly Clarkson, Yo La Tengo being baffled by a new David Byrne record, Andrew W.K. somehow finding glee in every scrap of recorded sound, or Liam Gallagher walking off the set for being subjected to modern music. Finally, a way to experience new music while watching Run The Jewels beef with Sheryl Crow."—Rex Sorgatz, authorSubscribe to some music podcasts. Each episode of Song Exploder breaks down one song's inspiration, composition, and production. That's where I first heard Ibeyi and Mitski. It's also a good place to rediscover older acts in a new phase of their careers."The podcast Reverberation Radio is just a weekly playlist. Most songs not on Spotify though," says Beth Griffenhagen. There are currently 405 available episodes, and in each one, the music feels obscure, like something you heard in a dream.Tumblr has tons of individual music blogs. The good ones—the ones with really obscure shit—can be tough to find. But search Tumblr for band names and dig around til you find a blog that matches your taste. You could start at naquelescaminhos, recommended by Jezebel staff writer Ashley Reese.Late Night Tales: Each album in this compilation series is curated by a recording artist like the Flaming Lips or Belle and Sebastian. You'll hear some rarities and deep cuts as the artists try to impress and surprise you. Here's a sampler from Bandcamp.Check out other releases from your favorite artist's label. "Follow the labels on Twitter and they'll tweet support for other bands and labels."—Pat Cartell"See who your favorite artists are talking about. I've found that often people who work in music—those on top of their discovery game—learn about cool new shit before everyone else simply because they saw a musician they like tweet about it."—Maria ShermanSimilarly, if you find that you like one song by an artist, but not the rest of their stuff, look up the producer and find some of their other work. "The producer can play a big role in how the final song turns out."—redditor jade_monkey07If you or someone you know has a SiriusXM subscription, pick a channel featuring an artist you already know you like and see what else they play. Their decade-based channels ('60s on 6, '80s on 8, etc) definitely play the hits from the decade, but also mix in some deep cuts you may not have heard before.If you're into pop music but can't stomach the usual "Adult Top-40" station, try looking up the charts in other countries to see what's popular outside the U.S. Sure, there will be some worldwide hits that you already know, but you also might discover new artists or songs that would have been off your radar. PopVortex is an easy way to access charts from around the world.Listening to classical music is a bit different from listening to modern pop music. The music is...Read moreSoundtracksPhoto: Nattapol Meechart (Shutterstock)Music rating sites have to churn through everything as it comes in; soundtracks are curated samplers of one particular sound.I first heard a lot of my favorite songs through my favorite TV shows. Some shows (like GIRLS, Atlanta, The Magicians, Divorce, and Mad Men) just constantly played bangers. "[Soundtracks] remind me of the poignant scenes they underscore, so the songs alone can elicit that same catharsis & blend of emotions," says Lou McLaren. "Watch CW shows to hear what the teens are listening to," says Alicia Adamczyk, former personal finance writer at Lifehacker.Same goes for movie soundtracks, which will have a narrower range of sound, but often their own original hits, like Black Panther, Call Me By Your Name, the Twilight soundtracks (really), and anything from Wes Anderson.And don't forget video game soundtracks; sister site Kotaku fell in love with Far Cry 5's in-game cult radio. The Grand Theft Auto series has always been a home for rarities by good bands. More instrumental soundtracks can make great work/study music. We're fans of the soundtrack to 2d platformer Celeste, which combines piano, synth, and drums.Look, I've not only googled the music from Apple ads, I've done it at least five times. Apple has a good ad agency! They pick the songs because they're catchy! I'm not ashamed but I feel like I'm supposed to be! AppleMusic.info lists the music from Apple commercials from 1984 to the present.The 50th anniversary Woodstock concert may not have panned out as originally planned, but if you...Read moreSpotify, Apple Music, and Amazon MusicThere are loads of features beyond "Discover" for finding new music. And some of the best have nothing to do with algorithms.Watch the social feed on the Spotify right rail, says Drew Olanoff. And dig through your friends' public playlists.If you haven't searched Spotify for incredibly specific playlists, just to see if they exist, you're missing the best part of the app. Start with these musical toy boxes.Listen to the thousand-song Spotify playlist of music from The Best Show, says Twitter's jitka. This weekly comedy show plays a wide variety of new and old songs.Search for Spotify Sessions, exclusive recordings from big artists. Apple Music also features exclusives on its "browse" tab.Apple Music lags behind Spotify in the recommendations department, but it does offer a "My Soundtrack" feature that plays songs based on other music you've added to your library or played extensively in the past. As the songs come up, you can give them a thumbs up or down, indicating whether they should be kept in the rotation or not (and factored into what other suggestions you get in the future).Writing is 1% writing, 1% staring into space, and 98% doing little errands to "prepare" for...Read moreThe worldPhoto: Anton Gvozdiikov (Shutterstock)Did you know music exists outside your computer?One of the great losses of the pandemic is that we're spending less time being exposed to good music while hanging out in the local coffeeshop or bar. But when we can do that again—and when the staff isn't busy—if you hear a good song playing in one, ask about it. The staff would probably love to tell you all about it. Like, you might get dragged into a music lecture. But really, just ask them.Because everywhere else, where the staff didn't pick the music, you'll have to ask Soundhound or Siri. And usually that will work, but you won't hear about all the other related shit. You won't connect with a real human being, maaan. You wanna connect? When it is safe to do so again, show up at local music venues. Or just make a habit of choosing a bar with live music—I used to get antsy at shows, so I liked this low-commitment option, where the band complements the drinks and not the other way around.The radio tends to be a terrible place to find new music; it's the ultimate in "played to death." But find your local college radio station, where the kids are more interested in impressing you than playing the hits.Public radio is similarly unconcerned with hits, and if (like me) you've barely listened to it since the first iPod came out, you'll be happy to find that many public radio stations are diversifying from the old "classical and jazz" mix."I think the most underrated (and coolest) way to discover new music is to just see who your favorite acts are touring with, who they're bringing on as openers."—Maria ShermanThis list is just the tiniest sample, and we've left out some major sources of new music. If you're hungry for more, read (and add) more suggestions in the comments.This story was originally published on in April 2018 and was updated in August 2019 and on Feb. 11, 2021 to update outdated links and to change the header image, provide new suggestions, and slightly revise the content to align with current Lifehacker style guidelines.

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