

What is Royalty Free Music?

by Steve Bainbridge



THEBEATSUITE
WWW.BEATSUITE.COM

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The Beat Suite is a Production Music Library specialising in high-quality, royalty-free production
music and sounds for the multimedia, broadcast and computer games industries.



What is Royalty Free Music?

Introduction

'Royalty Free Music' is a term that refers to production music that has no additional fees to pay once the music has been bought. It is purchased once and can be used again and again. Since it has no additional license payments it is classed as 'royalty free music'. This is not always true since fundamentally no music is ever royalty free.

"Royalty Free Music (RF music) is simply a way to make licensing music easier, cheaper and more convenient"

Traditionally, production music had to be licensed each time it was used as part of a production or broadcast. For instance, TV programmers would have to pay a 'Needle drop fee' each time the music was used as part of a broadcast i.e. every time the needle was dropped on the record! The disadvantage is that it could be expensive and time consuming.

Royalty Free Music (RF music) is simply a way to make licensing music easier, cheaper and more convenient.

The Convenience of Royalty Free Music

The convenience of RF music means that it is an excellent solution for most production companies. The music is usually composed especially to work with TV, film, radio, computer games or multimedia. Its very composition targets certain moods, genres or themes. It is tailor-made for that exact purpose and fits the criteria of most production music needs.

The music at The Beat Suite has been hand picked so that it is high quality, has a professional sound, works with visuals and relates to the styles/genre's of modern day audiences. We try and give you the best new music that is both suitable for the project and also has the highest quality sound and production qualities.

The Beat Suite royalty free music library has been designed so that finding music, auditioning, downloading and licensing is all done quickly and easily. It is fast, accessible, direct and cost effective.



The Differences in Royalty Free Music from Library to Library

Although the term 'royalty free music' is frequently used, most music libraries have various terms and conditions of use for their own music. For example The Beat Suite allows you to use music on a royalty free basis, that is it can be purchased once and used again and again on your projects. However to use that same piece of music on a TV advertising campaign you must negotiate a license fee. Our license terms reflect that. It means RF music is cost effective for many users but higher end applications such as TV advertising requires additional licensing.

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Since there are now so many different uses of production music, the licensing terms must reflect that. This is why most independent music libraries have their own terms and conditions of use of their music. It varies from music library to music library. That is to say if you intend to use RF music then check the terms of use!

Some music libraries still operate a pay-per-use (Needle drop) licensing system. At The Beat Suite we have tried our best to create a music licensing system that is easy to understand and fair to a range of users.

The Beat Suite allows all of our music to be used royalty free. We do however have a mass production license that deals with music that is duplicated in high numbers. This is for over 1,000 copies and covers any main platform such as computer games, CD, CD-ROM, DVD, Website templates and Video. We also operate a broadcast license for companies who use our music as part of broadcast production (TV, radio or film).



Where does the 'royalty' come in?

Broadcasters such as the BBC, Fox or Sky have to pay to broadcast music. This payment takes the form of a license that is issued by a performing rights organisation (PRO) such as PRS (Performing Rights Society) or ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers). PRO's administer licenses to music users on behalf of their members (music publishers, music libraries and musicians/artists).

Broadcasters notify the PRO's of which music they have used by completing 'cue sheets'.

A cue sheet is just a form that details the use of a piece of music within a broadcast. It outlines the name of the music, which programme it is part of and how the music is used, for how long, and how many times etc.

Cue sheets are submitted to the PRO's who then calculate how much money is due to each of its members (composer, music publisher or music library) depending on the use of the music.

PRO's then pay each of their members according to how much their music has been broadcast. This payment is known as a royalty. This is why even royalty free music is never truly royalty free.

It is law for broadcasters to have a broadcast license, it is this license that is paying the royalty.

What about using Commercial Music?

Sometimes production companies and other music users like to use commercial music on their projects but this can be very expensive and complicated. It takes a lot of time to find out the copyright holder and apply for the rights to use commercial music. Also, the administration job can be lengthy and hard work. On top of this the fee can be quite expensive!

To avoid disappointment and even having to remove music from a film or video project at a later date it is advisable to use royalty free music, since it is both easy to access and also always a cost effective solution.

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Royalty free music allows music users to use a piece of music that is just as well produced and composed as other types of commercial music but without the cost, time and effort involved.

What Musical Styles or Moods does Royalty Free Music Cover?

*"At Beatsuite.com
music can be instantly
previewed, purchased
and downloaded"*

These days RF Music is produced to a very high quality and covers every genre of music and mood. The extensive use of RF Music means that all types of music are produced to fit the job. RF Music covers everything from jazz, pop, dance, orchestral to rock and more!

The Benefits of Royalty Free Music

- It is easily accessible.
- Simple to license and download.
- Cost effective and saves time.
- Piece of mind knowing you are using music legally.
- Composed in all musical styles.
- Finished and mastered and ready to use.
- Can be used again and again.

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