

Music

A lot of us enjoy singing or playing an instrument, but only a minority have the ability or opportunity to earn a living as a performer. Working in music isn't just about performing though, there are opportunities in areas such as:

- Broadcasting.
- Composing.
- Journalism.
- Music industry support work.
- Music technology and musical instrument technology.
- Music therapy.
- Sound recording.
- Teaching.

Performing	<p>Orchestral work - There are two types of orchestra: contract orchestras, such as those of the BBC and opera/ballet houses, and orchestras that are brought together as the need arises. Some orchestral players spend several years with a contract orchestra, while others work as freelancers. Some session work is available for recordings, backings and jingles.</p> <p>Military bands - The armed forces each have their own schools of music.</p> <p>Electronic music - The demand has increased for musicians specialising in electro-acoustic music. Most of the work is for TV, film and theatre companies, though electronic instruments are being used more frequently in modern classical music. A number of universities offer relevant degrees in music technology, for which a good background in mathematics, as well as music, is needed.</p> <p>Pop/rock - Most pop musicians begin as amateurs, making a name for themselves as a live act and/or on the internet. They also send in demos to record companies. Little formal training is available, though some colleges offer options in popular music.</p> <p>Musicians and singers - Musical ability, dedication, stamina and the ability for self-promotion are essential for anyone aiming to become a performer, whether musician or singer. Musicians and singers in popular music work in a variety of venues, such as pubs and clubs, and perform on their own or in a band. Popular music includes rock, pop, hip hop and R&B. Classical musicians and singers usually have a long period of training, either at a music college or at university followed by postgraduate study at a music college. After that, they usually make themselves known to a music club, festival organiser, broadcasting company, orchestra or choral society, etc. Entering competitions can often help to gain recognition. Few people achieve fame as soloists. When starting out, many young musicians accept a mixture of solo, choral/orchestral and ensemble work, although some find full-time work in an orchestra or chorus. The small number of operatic companies in Britain limits operatic opportunities.</p> <p>Conductors - Only a handful of people earn a good living as a music conductor. Most train initially on an instrument, often keyboard, and may attend a postgraduate course or summer school in conducting. Many first gain experience with amateur orchestras/choirs. As well as an extensive knowledge of the music, conductors must be able to form a good relationship with an orchestra or choir.</p> <p>Jazz - There are jazz festivals and a number of jazz clubs, mainly in the London area. Many jazz musicians have to supplement low earnings with session work. A limited number of universities offer degree courses in jazz.</p>
-------------------	--

Composing	<p>It seems to take longer to become established in composing than in any other type of musical career. Many composers have to supplement their earnings in other ways, often by performing or teaching. Most composers have trained as performers; composition rarely forms a major part of undergraduate courses in music, but is offered as a special subject by some music colleges and universities, mostly at postgraduate level. Initially, the main sources of income for concert composers are bursaries, awards and competitions. Media composers are commissioned to work for film, television and video production companies. They get paid royalties as well as a fee.</p>
------------------	---

Teaching	To teach music in a state-maintained secondary school, you need a teaching qualification as well as a musical education. Most secondary schools employ at least one music specialist. In primary schools, the class teacher is expected to cover most, if not all subjects, but may be helped by a visiting music specialist. It is possible to become a primary teacher specialising in music. Some teachers work as instrumental teachers in a number of educational settings, and might also offer private tuition. In theory, anyone can set up as a private teacher, but most have one of the recognised qualifications offered by music colleges. There are also opportunities for music teachers in universities and colleges of higher and further education.
-----------------	---

Music therapy	Music therapists use sounds and music to help people with physical, mental, social and emotional difficulties. Music can help people to explore their personalities and experiences, communicate feelings and develop confidence. Music therapy is not about teaching music or judging the client's musical ability. Instead, it is about using music freely to explore feelings and express emotions. Depending on the client's needs, music therapists could be working with them one-to-one or in a group. To become a music therapist, you must complete a recognised postgraduate course in music therapy.
----------------------	---

Music industry support work

Administration - Opera and ballet companies, orchestras, concert halls and festivals all need administrators. Some opportunities occur with agents, who plan careers for their artists, find work for them and arrange contracts. There are opportunities with Arts Councils, the Regional Arts Boards and local authorities, some of which run multi-activity arts and leisure centres. A professional music qualification is useful, but not essential. Some people gain experience as volunteers before getting paid employment.

Publishing - The music publishing industry today is a mix of large multi-national companies (mainly in pop music), most of which are related to record, film or entertainment companies and electronic manufacturers. There are also independent firms who publish every type of music. The industry doesn't employ a lot of people, but there could be openings in clerical positions, mainly in copyright or royalty accounting departments. There are also jobs that require special training or ability. These are in areas such as promotion, editorial, sales and distribution, or legal work. People who work in the Artist and Repertoire (A&R) department of a publishing company sometimes have a music degree. Those in public relations (PR), sales and marketing may have an arts degree, plus a marketing diploma or PR qualifications. In contracts and royalties, legal training is usually necessary.

Librarianship - The major orchestras, opera companies, broadcasting companies, music schools and publishers all maintain specialised music libraries. Larger public libraries have separate music departments with a specialist librarian in charge, and even quite small libraries have music sections. National museums and libraries contain large collections of musical material. Most music libraries of any importance employ only qualified librarians, but a musical background, such as a music degree is obviously an asset.

Music technology/musical instrument technology - The demand for musical instruments supports a number of manufacturers and craftsmen/women in designing, maintaining and repairing them. Musical instrument technicians usually specialise in a particular type of instrument, such as keyboard, strings, woodwind, brass or electronic instruments.

Designers of electronic instruments, studio equipment and music systems probably need to study for a degree such as music technology. Several colleges offer courses in musical instrument technology. Students should have some music ability and relevant technical skills in woodwork, electronics and metalwork. Piano tuning courses are also available for those with a good musical ear.

Sound recording

Sound recording engineers record music and other types of sound performance in a recording studio or on location. This often involves spending a lot of time enhancing (improving) and fine-tuning the quality of particular sounds. Maths and Science or Physics at GCSE are useful to have, though industry experience is considered just as important. There are a number of relevant further and higher education courses.