



tunecore®

— STYLE GUIDE —



WHY IS THERE A TUNECORE STYLE GUIDE?

It's simple! We want to make sure your release goes live as fast as possible and STAYS live after delivery so fans can hear and buy your music.

In order for your music to be available for fans, your release must meet the formatting requirements of each store we deliver to (iTunes, Amazon MP3, Spotify, etc.). The stores frequently remove releases that do not meet their requirements until the corrections are made.

To help you out we've created this handy TuneCore Style Guide. It explains how to best format your content to meet all store specifications. Don't worry, it's really easy to follow!

Even if you are a longtime TuneCore customer, we strongly recommend you read through this guide as the stores' policies may have changed since you last released music.

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Artist Name

What are the most common artist formatting errors?

1. **Your artist's FIRST release:** make sure you format your artist name EXACTLY as you would like it to appear in stores.
2. **NOT your artist's first release:** make sure your artist name is formatted EXACTLY how it was in previous releases. Otherwise, your artist's albums will not appear on the same artist page.
3. **Do not include:**
 - "also known as." or "A.K.A." names with your artist name
 - Additional information such as other bands the artist has performed with, what instrument the artist plays, etc.

Correct	Incorrect	Issue
Kanye West	Kanye West aka Weezy	Includes aka artist name
Nicki Minaj	N. Minaj	Incorrect spelling
Brandon Flowers	Brandon Flowers (From the Killers)	Includes band name
Herbie Hancock	Herbie Hancock (Pianist)	Includes instrument

What if I have more than one artist on my release, such as a featured artist or a collaboration between multiple artists?

Every album, single, and/or ringtone is **required to have a minimum of one primary artist**. However, you can have multiple primary artists and/or featured artists on an album or track.

Adding Multiple Artists on a Track

If you have multiple artists on your release make sure each artist is listed properly in its own creative field. If you need to add an additional featuring or primary artist at the TRACK LEVEL, click "Add Multiple Artists" on each song.



Song Title

Artist:

[Add Multiple Artists](#)

When you click ‘add multiple artists,’ you’ll see that you have two options:

1. additional primary artists
- OR
2. additional featured artists

If your track has multiple additional artists, DO NOT write each artist name on the same line. Each individual artist must be listed on his/her own line as either an additional primary or featured artist.

Additional primary artists will display with the main artist name.

For example:

Song Title: Party Time

Primary Artist: Joey Smith

Primary Artist: Steve Jordan

This will display in stores as *“Party Time” by Joey Smith & Steve Jordan*

Additional featured artists will display in the track name. The TuneCore system will do this for you automatically when you add a featured artist.

For example:

Song Title: Party Time

Primary Artist: Joey Smith

Featured Artist: Amy Bilco

This will display in stores as *“Party Time (feat. Amy Bilco)” by Joey Smith.*

INCORRECT EXAMPLES: Track with one featured artist:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

[Add Multiple Artists](#)



Song Title*

Primary Artist*

[Add Multiple Artists](#)

CORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with one featured artist:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

Preview of Title:

Featuring

[Add Another Artist](#)

INCORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with one additional primary artist:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

[Add Multiple Artists](#)



CORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with one additional primary artist:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

Preview of Title:

Primary Artist ▼

[Add Another Artist](#)

INCORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with two or more featured artists:

Featuring ▼

[Add Another Artist](#)

CORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with two or more featured artists:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

Preview of Title:

Featuring ▼

Featuring ▼

[Add Another Artist](#)



INCORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with two or more additional primary artists:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

Preview of Title:

Primary Artist ▼

[Add Another Artist](#)

CORRECT EXAMPLE: Track with two or more additional primary artists:

Song Title*

Primary Artist*

Preview of Title:

Primary Artist ▼

Primary Artist ▼

[Add Another Artist](#)

Adding Multiple Artists on an Album

If you need to add another artist at the ALBUM LEVEL, contact TuneCore Support via the help page: <http://help.tunecore.com> and we will enter in that information for you.

What if there is a different artist on every track?

If you have an album where at least four tracks have a different primary artist, this is called a **compilation album** or **various artists album**. You can indicate if



you are creating a compilation album on your album creation page by clicking “Yes” below:

Album Title*

Artist Name*

Compilation Album? No
[\(what's this?\)](#)

Yes (You'll add individual artists later)

When you create a compilation album, the text “Various Artists” will be entered into your artist field automatically.

You will need to enter the artist name on each individual track you create.



Album and Track Names

How do I write my titles?

The TuneCore system is set to an auto-cap format for album titles, track titles and artist names so that they meet the formatting requested by the digital stores. This is called “title case format.”

This means that if your titles are in English, Spanish or Portuguese, the first letter of each word must be capitalized except for the articles, coordinating conjunctions and prepositions listed below:

a	of	on	from	for
an	or	onto	nor	so
and	the	out	in	up
as	to	over	with	yet
but				

There are exceptions to this:

- The first and last word in a title must be capitalized.
- The first and last word in parentheses must be capitalized.
- Words before and after -, /, or : must be capitalized.
- “The” must be capitalized when it is the start of an artist’s name.

You will not be able to deviate from these rules because your release will not go live in some stores.

If you would like to make a change to the capitalization please email your request to TuneCore Customer Care here: <http://help.tunecore.com>. Please note, TuneCore cannot send your release to iTunes and other stores if it doesn’t meet their guidelines.

Can I use abbreviations in my title or artist name?

You can, but you must only use the following abbreviations:

#	&
DJ	feat.
Pt.	Pts.
TV	No.
vs.	Vol.

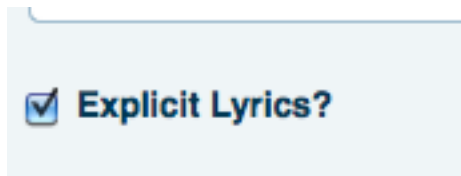
a.k.a (To be used only in titles—not in artist names)



Any deviation from these will not be accepted. If you have a question or concern about what you can or cannot include in your title and/or artist name, please contact TuneCore Customer Care here: <http://help.tunecore.com>. Please ask BEFORE you distribute (this ensures that your content goes live in a timely fashion!).

How do I mark my release as explicit?

If your release is explicit, mark it when editing your release information:



It will be left up to your discretion if your music should be marked as explicit. **However, if the content of your release is determined to be explicit in nature by iTunes (this includes artwork) and is not marked as such, this will result in your release not going live. Also, if you mark one track as explicit on your album, the entire album will carry the “explicit” tag.**

How should I choose my genre?

Only you know what genre best fits your music. If you are having trouble deciding, think about it this way:

If someone heard your song on the radio would it be on a country station or a rap station? Where would a physical copy of your release sit in a CD store? Would your CD be next to The Beatles? Whitney Houston? Think about it with those guidelines.

If you're unsure, try looking up a few artists on iTunes that have a similar sound to your own and see what genre they selected.



Cover Art

Your cover art is an extremely important part of your digital release, and it is important that you follow all the artwork formatting rules. Albums, singles and ringtones that don't meet these artwork specifications can severely delay the go-live process, so please read this section carefully.

Your cover art **MUST** be:

- A JPEG or PNG file
- A perfect square and at least 1600 x 1600 pixels, no larger than 3000 x 3000 pixels
- Best-quality RGB Color mode (including black and white images)

DO NOT include any extra information or text on your cover art.

Stick with the basics—artist name and album title. Any text that you have on your artwork must match your album title and artist name.

If your album is called “Jam With Me,” but your album artwork says “Let’s Party,” this will result in your album being blocked from sale.

Your cover art must **NOT**:

- **Have extraneous text that does not match your release information.**
- Be blurry, pixelated, or have any other quality issues.
- Be cut off—meaning have cut off text or images.
- Promise content that the album doesn't contain. For example, it should not say “Includes DVD” or “Includes Lyrics.”
- Contain email or web addresses, any contact information or pricing.
- Contain stickers or other items from a physical release—it cannot appear to be a scanned version of a physical CD cover.
- Suggest that your release is a physical product. Avoid text like “CD,” “DVD,” “Disc” or text about the digital product like “Digital Exclusive” or “Digital Version.”
- Have any reference to iTunes, Amazon, Spotify or any other digital store—do not include logo or text.
- No words that suggest temporality, like “New” or “Latest Release.”
- Have any blank space, such as a white border on one or more sides.
- Be pornographic.
- Contain Nazi symbolism.



Soundtracks

A soundtrack is an album of tracks from a film, television show, musical, play or video game. The tracks can be original scores or songs selected and featured in the project. Listed below are some rules about formatting your soundtrack album.

Soundtracks and scores for movies, TV, and musicals must include wording in the title that indicates the version of the soundtrack or score. This should be enclosed in parentheses. The wording that appears on the cover art should be mirrored on the album or track title.

EXAMPLES

Version	Example
Original Motion Picture Soundtrack	Battleship (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)
Original Score	The Hunger Games (Original Score)
Music Inspired By the Film	Chico & Rita (Music Inspired By the Film)
Original Off-Broadway Cast	Seussical (Original Off-Broadway Cast)



Karaoke and Tribute Albums

If you are distributing karaoke, tribute or cover songs, there are several very specific rules to follow. The stores do not want any content that could be misleading to the customer. Be careful when using original performing artists' names. They should NEVER be in the artist field of your release.

I'm submitting a karaoke track, how can I be sure I'm following formatting rules?

Just follow the steps below:

1. Make sure the original performing artist is NOT listed in the artist field—the only artist you want to list is the karaoke or tribute band.
2. You can include the original performing artist in the track title, but it should be formatted like this: "Title (Originally Performed By...) [Karaoke Version]" or "Title (In the Style of...) [Instrumental Version]."
3. Don't use "Karaoke" as your artist name—this is too generic. You can have an artist name that incorporates the word "Karaoke" like "The All Star Karaoke Group."
4. Make sure your track titles indicate that this is a karaoke song, and does not have leading vocals. "Title (Karaoke Version)" or "Title (Instrumental Version)."

I'm submitting a cover song, how can I be sure I'm following formatting rules?

Just follow the steps below:

1. Make sure that you have permission and/or the proper license from the original owner of the song to release your version digitally.
2. Don't include the original performing artist anywhere.
3. Your release should be formatted like this: "Title" or "Title (Cover)".
4. Make sure you have the rights to distribute your song! [More information can be found here.](#)



Why can't I credit the original artist? Isn't that wrong?

Nope—if you take a look at cover songs by major artists, they NEVER list the original performing artist. Take a peek in iTunes at Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You" or Johnny Cash's "Hurt." Both songs are cover songs, but they don't list Dolly Parton or Nine Inch Nails in the track title.

Important Information on Cover Song Payments

If you cover another artist's work it is your responsibility to pay the mechanical royalties to the songwriter. [Click here for more information](#)

I'm submitting a tribute album. How can I be sure I am following formatting rules?

Just follow the steps below:

1. Make sure you list *only* the performing artist in the artist field (do not include the original artist in this field)
2. Make sure both your cover art and title, don't imply that the music is performed by the original artist or from the original album. Here's how to be sure you don't do this:
 - The word "Tribute" must be larger than the original artist name on the cover art
 - The original artist name must not start the title
 - Examples: "Whitney Houston: A Tribute to the Hits" *is* NOT acceptable
 - The Hits: A Tribute to Whitney Houston" *is* acceptable



New Versions of Albums, Medleys, Hidden Tracks & Vs.

I am distributing a new version of a previously released album. What do I do?

You will want to properly differentiate the two versions. The new version should reference one of the following:

- *Live*
- *Remastered*
- *Bonus Track Version*
- *Soundtrack from the Motion Picture*
- *Soundtrack from the TV Series*
- *Score*
- *Radio Edit*
- *Remix*
- *Acoustic Version*
- *Demo*
- *Instrumental Version*
- *Re-Recorded Version*
- *Karaoke Version*
- *The Making of*

Be sure that your title matches your cover art

Version	Example
25 th Anniversary Edition	Stay Hungry (25 th Anniversary Edition)
Re-Recorded Version	Gold (Re-Recorded Version)
Remastered	Led Zeppelin II (Remastered)
Live	At Folsom Prison (Live)



If your title has multiple references, adhere to the following guidelines:

- The first reference must appear in (parentheses)
- The second and all following references must appear in [brackets]
- The general ordering convention that should be followed is:
 - 1) Title
 - 2) Sub-title
 - 3) Remix information
 - 4) Featuring artists
 - 5) Additional information

EXAMPLES

Correct:

Pursuit of Happiness (Night Own Remix)[Tribute to Kid Cudi]

I want to distribute a medley. How should it look?

- Each listed song in the medley must be spaced and separated by a forward slash.
- If the word 'medley' or a title for the medley itself is included, it should either precede the songs and be followed by a colon, or follow the songs and be contained in parentheses.

Version	Example
Song A / Song B / Song C	Long Tall Sally / Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On / Mama Don't Dance
Medley: Song A / Song B / Song C	Medley: Long Tall Sally / Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On / Mama Don't Dance
Medley Title: Song A / Song B / Song C	Opening Medley: Long Tall Sally / Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On / Mama Don't Dance
Song A / Song B / Song C (Medley)	Long Tall Sally / Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On / Mama Don't Dance (Medley)



I have a hidden or silent track. Is that okay?

A silent track must be clearly labeled. You can do this with parentheses after your title.

Version	Example
Hidden Track	Late (Hidden Track)
Ghost Track	Mandy (Ghost Track)
Silent Track - No Audio	Interlude (Silent Track - No Audio)

Does your release include two separate artists and the words “Meets,” “Presents” or “vs.?”

- When using “Meets,” “Presents” or “vs.” to describe the relationship between two artists, this information must be formatted in the track title using parentheses or brackets.
- The artists must be listed separately — each in their own creative field.
- A non-performing presenting artist must NOT be credited as a Primary artist.
- The artist name should only be included in the album or track title.

Track Title	C'mon (Tiesto vs. Diplo)
Track Artists	Primary Artist: Tiesto
	Primary Artist: Diplo
Track Title	Dancing (Original Mix) [Libi Meets J Smith]
Track Artists	Primary Artist: Libi
	Primary Artist: J Smith
Album Title	Ace Hood Gutta (DJ Khaled Presents Ace Hood)
Album Artist	Primary Artist: Ace Hood



Singles, EPs and Albums

Singles

If you distribute a single song under 10 minutes or an album with 2-3 tracks under 10 minutes, the title will automatically include “- Single” in the title in iTunes.

In order to meet Apple's requirements, an album that contains 1-3 tracks, with each track being less than 10 minutes, will automatically be identified as a single. The term “- Single” will automatically appear in iTunes after the album title. Albums that do not meet the above criteria will not be identified as a single.

EP

In order to meet Apple's requirements, an album will automatically be identified as an "EP" in iTunes and show as " - EP" after the release title if it meets the following criteria:

- 1-3 tracks, one or more tracks with a running time of 10 minutes or more, total running time less than 30 minutes
- 4-6 tracks, with a running time of less than 30 minutes

Questions?

If you have any questions about formatting your music for the digital stores or anything related to TuneCore's service, check our **Help Section**.

Most general information can be found here: <http://help.tunecore.com>

Contact TuneCore Support

We can be reached anytime and will get back to you within one business day or faster! Email us by submitting a ticket through the “contact us” link:

<http://help.tunecore.com>