

AARP Senior Planet  
Lunch and Learn  
Tuesday, February 13, 2024  
Rick Planos, guest instructor

## Online Music

Greetings, I'm Rick Planos, AARP member, AARP volunteer, and music fan. Today we are going to talk about online music plans, what they offer, and what you can get additionally for a paid plan versus a free plan, and how to get started with ease. I have had many hours of enjoyment with online music, and it doesn't take a lot of technological expertise, nor does it have to cost any money. I have to say that between the podcasts we spoke about last week, and the online free music resources we are talking about today, I never listen to the radio anymore. I get a huge variety of things that are tailored to my likes. I can watch it if I want, I can use it as background sounds if I want, and in many versions, you can 'see' the words on a screen. Today I am sharing with you from Evanston, IL. I am sitting in my apartment 3 blocks from the hospital I was born in, near Northwestern University, in the town that invented the ice cream sundae!

I do want to preface this by saying I am a volunteer, these are my personal viewpoints and opinions, and none of this is representative of AARP, Senior Planet, OATS, or any other organization. I am a volunteer sharing my thoughts today. This in no way represents, promotes, or degrades any political agenda, religion, race, or beliefs. I'm not selling anything or trying to sell anything. I look forward to making this an interactive session, I've built in time to discuss, and I hope this can be a productive, respectful, learning opportunity for all of us. The notes will be provided afterward by Dave and Zeke, and I'm always open to getting feedback so if it is ok with them, I'm fine with sharing my email which is [rick@rickplanos.com](mailto:rick@rickplanos.com).

Generally, I'm an Apple guy, as I have all Apple devices, but Apple Music is no longer free. I have it because I got it as part of a package deal. So, we will discuss them later. I'm going to start with free options because if you are a beginner at this, I suggest you start with something free to decide how much you like it. The biggest difference between free and paid options are:

1. Your ability to listen ad-free without any interruptions.
2. Your ability to download and save copies.
3. Your ability to customize for artists, music types, or playlists.
4. Your ability to share songs, playlists, etc.

Any questions so far?

There are many options in services, but here are ten that are highly regarded, and all free. Generally, you go to the website, answer a few questions, set up a password and you are good to go instantly. Note they will ask for your age and birthdate to ensure you are 21 or older, so don't be put off by this. Also note that if you do not sign in, the service will not 'learn' your likes and dislikes which disallows some of the nicer stuff like suggesting playlists or new artists.

1. YouTube Music
  - a. YouTube is increasingly popular as a service as they stream commercials, replays of TV bits, music videos, and even create their original shows. It does have ads in the free version.
2. Jango
  - a. Jango allows for a lot of customization, you don't need to set up an account, but you cannot share your stations.
3. Spotify
  - a. Spotify is one of the more popular sites and I use them a lot despite not agreeing with some of the political views of their artists. They have all types of music and work on almost all devices, and they have podcasts as well. One bummer is you can only skip a select number of songs in the free version.
4. Sound Cloud
  - a. Always gets new stuff quickly and doesn't have quite as large of a library as other services. They do allow you to upload for free on many new artists which most services do not.
5. Pandora
  - a. They are a big name and have a big variety. You can skip any track you want if you watch the ads on the free version. But here you cannot skip tracks on playlists unless you watch a video ad. You can also communicate through the app that you 'like' a certain track and it will match other similar tracks for you.
6. TuneIn
  - a. You can listen to radio stations from all over the world here, over 100,000 unique ones.
7. Mixcloud
  - a. Has professional DJ mixes. Negatives doesn't allow skipping and has lots of ads.
8. AccuRadio
  - a. Unlimited skips, no account needed, and has very specific and unique genres. But does have ads.
9. iHeartRadio
  - a. live local radio, you do not need an account and can upgrade through pay-for options. But you can only skip x number of songs per day.
10. Freefy

- a. Includes lyrics for some songs and gets its music somehow from YouTube.

Questions

# Online Music Terminology

Playlist-a collection of songs, curated by artist, music genre, event, or concept.

Example: Taylor Swift, Country, Dance Party, Christmas Songs, Reggae

Favorites- songs, playlists, artists, albums you have marked that you liked. These are played more often

Skip-songs or artists you don't like. Most systems will remember this and not play them ever again or at least less frequently

By You- preferences you have chosen. Most systems will analyze your choices and anticipate your likes

By Spotify (or other App)- playlists or suggestions they choose without looking at your preferences. For example, Most Popular Holiday Songs

Library- songs that you "own" or have downloaded. Generally, only possible with paid membership

Paywall- options or materials you cannot access without paying

Shared- songs, albums, or playlists available to others. Note you can also mark Your selections private and not visible to others.

Browse- look at curated selections by type

Search- look up a specific artist, soundtrack, or song