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Careers in Music

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Making career decisions is an exciting task. There is so much to consider! Job requirements, necessary training, and potential earnings all need to be taken into account. If you are thinking about a career in music, this brochure will provide you with valuable information. It lists salary ranges, personal qualifications, required knowledge and skills, recommended precollege training, and recommended college education and other training for a wide array of music jobs. You are welcome to print this document for noncommercial use. A more in-depth look at music careers, as well as a directory of professional organizations, can be found in the book Exploring Careers In Music, Second Edition , published by MENC and available by calling 800-828-0229.

Find information about careers in:

- Music Education
- Instrumental Performance
- Vocal Performance
- Conducting
- Composing
- Music for Worship
- Music Business
- Instrument Making and Repair
- Music Publishing
- Music Communications
- The Recording Industry
- The Television and Radio Industry
- Music Technology
- Music Librarianship
- Music Therapy
- Performing Arts Medicine

	Opportunities for Employment and Approximate Salary Ranges*	Personal Qualifications	Knowledge and Skills	Recommended Precollege Training	Recommended College Education and Other Training
Music Education	**Early Childhood Music Educator** $6–$60/hour **School Music Educator** $19,000–$70,000/year **Music Supervisor, Consultant** $25,000–$70,000/year **Music Professor** $18,000–$150,000/year **University Music School Administrator** $26,000–$182,000/year **Studio Teacher** $10–$100/hour	Ability to work with people Ambition to continually study and improve Desire to help others learn Inspirational and patient personality Leadership qualities Musical talent	Administrative ability necessary for supervisor, university administrator, and studio teacher Broad cultural background Extensive music knowledge Keyboard skill Knowledge of National Standards for Music Education Performance skill on one instrument or voice Skill in teaching	Ability to read music Private instruction in piano and primary instrument or voice	*School Music Educator*: teaching certificate, bachelor's degree in music education *Music Supervisor/ Consultant:* successful experience as music teacher; advanced degree often required *Music Professor*: doctoral degree or equivalent training *University Music School Administrator:* successful experience as a professor *Studio Teacher*: degree not always required but equivalent training is necessary

* Level of expertise, geographic location, and other factors contribute to the wide range of salaries found in this brochure. In some cases, salaries can exceed upper limit given.

	Opportunities for Employment and Approximate Salary Ranges*	Personal Qualifications	Knowledge and Skills	Recommended Precollege Training	Recommended College Education and Other Training
Instrumental Performance	**Armed Forces Musician** $21,000–$77,000/year **Orchestra Musician** $300/week–$70,000/year **Small Ensemble Musician** (salary varies widely) **Concert Soloist** (salary varies widely) **Dance, Rock, or Jazz Band Musician** $150–$355/ performance **Clinician** $300–$5,000/ clinic	Ability to work with people Ambition to continually study and improve Musical talent Perseverance and initiative	Business savvy Knowledge of instrumental literature Skill in ensemble playing Skill in sight-reading, transposition, and improvisation Specialized skill in one or more instruments	Ability to read music Participation in instrumental ensembles Private instruction in primary instrument Solo performance experience	Music performance degree usually required
Vocal Performance	**Dance Band or Nightclub Vocalist** $150–$355/performance **Concert or Opera Chorus Member** $12+/rehearsal; $100+/performance **Concert Soloist** $450+/performance **Opera Soloist** $1,100+/performance	Ability to work with people Ambition to continually study and improve Excellent voice Musical talent Perseverance and initiative Showmanship	Business savvy Knowledge of foreign languages Knowledge of vocal literature Practical facility at the piano Skill in sight-singing and memorization Specialized skill in singing and interpretation of songs	Ability to read music Experience in singing solos Foreign language study Participation in vocal ensembles Private instruction in voice and piano Solo performance skill in singing	Music performance degree usually required

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Conducting	**Choir**, **Orchestra, or Opera Conductor** $15,000–$275,000/year	Ability to work with people Dynamic and unique stage personality Leadership qualities Musical talent	Decisive and expressive baton technique Extensive knowledge of music history, literature, and orchestration Specialized skill on at least one instrument or voice Superior musicianship	Ability to read music Conducting music ensembles Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in piano and one other instrument	Undergraduate music degree Graduate music degree not always required, but equivalent training necessary, especially at professional level
Composing	**School Music Composer** (Commissions vary) **Art Music Composer** (Commissions vary) **Commercial Jingle Composer** $300–$50,000/ commercial **Television Show Composer** $1,000–$5,000/30-minute episode **Film Score Composer** $2,000–$200,000/film	Creativity Musical talent Perseverance and initiative	Business savvy Experience in playing an instrument and singing Extensive knowledge of music history, theory, literature, and orchestration Familiarity with computers, MIDI, and music notation software	Ability to read music Experience in composing and improvising Keyboard skill Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in piano and one other instrument or voice	College degree not always required, but equivalent training necessary; doctoral degrees commonly expected for teaching composition in higher education

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Music for Worship	**Organist** $9,000–$57,000/year **Choir Director** $5,200–$70,000/year **Cantor/Hazan** $75,000–$150,000/year	Ability to work with people Commitment to religion and religious music Musical talent Organizational skills	History of music and liturgy Keyboard transposition and improvisation Knowledge of languages, especially Latin and German Skill in sight-reading and open score reading	Ability to read music Foreign language study Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in piano	Choral and instrumental techniques Degree in organ or sacred music not always required but equivalent training and professional certification necessary Foreign language study
Music Business	**Music Dealer Sales Person** $13,000–$50,000/year **Music Dealer Manager** $17,000–$56,000/year **Marketing/Advertising Specialist** $28,000–$116,000/year **Music, Instrument, and/or Accessories Distributor** $19,000–$75,000/year	Ability to work with people Commitment to the music community Interest in music and business	Business savvy Skill in using computers Specialized skill and knowledge in one or more of the music industries	Experience in one or more of the music industries Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in instrument or voice	College degree in business or music business not always required but recommended
Instrument Making and Repair	**Instrument Maker** $15,000–$65,000/year **Instrument Repair Technician** $9–$55/hour **Piano Tuner** $15–$60/hour	Ability to work with people and alone Commitment to the music community Efficient work habits Physical and mental dexterity Self-discipline	Business savvy Familiarity with instrument(s) Knowledge of acoustics Technical skill	Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in instrument Shop, woodworking, metal working, or machine-use courses Work at a local music store	Music degree or technical degree or certification often required; also possible to acquire skills through apprenticeships

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Music Publishing	**Music Editor** $20,000–$60,000 **Notesetter** $15,000–$50,000 **Publishing Sales Representative** $20,000–$50,000 **Copyright/Licensing Administrator** $20,000–$60,000	Appreciation for music as a commercial product. Well developed musical preferences Interest in music publishing business	Business savvy Knowledge of composition and arranging process Knowledge of music theory, including notation, style, and form Understanding of copyright laws and licensing	Ability to read music Keyboard skills Participation in music ensembles Keyboard, vocal, and/or instrumental skills	Undergraduate music degree; for some positions, advanced music degree or a business degree may be required
Music Communications	**Publisher or Editor of Music Books or Periodicals** $24,000–$100,000/year **Music Reporter** $20,000–$150,000/year **Public Relations Specialist** $21,000–$141,000/ year	Ability to interact positively with public Desire to continually expand knowledge of music Interest in music and writing	Excellent grasp of grammar Excellent writing skills Knowledge of music theory, history, and literature	Ability to read music Participation in music ensembles Participation in school newspaper	College degree in one or more: music, journalism, public relations, business

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The Recording Industry	**Producer, Engineer/Mixer** (NA)** **Artist and Repertoire (A&R) Person** (NA) **Studio Arranger** (NA) **Music Copyist** (NA)	Adaptable Interest in music and business	Familiarity with various genres of music (classical, jazz, pop) Knowledge of music theory, arranging, and composition	Participation in music ensembles	*Producer, Engineer/Mixer:* Degree in sound engineering and an internship *A&R Person:* Degree in music business *Studio Arranger and Music Copyist:* Degree in music; knowledge of instrument capabilities, music notation, and computers
The Television and Radio Industry	**Radio/Television Commercial Musician** $227–$1,650/13-week cycle **Copyright/Clearance Administrator** (NA) **Music License Administrator** (NA) **Program Director (radio)** (NA) **Post Production/Scoring** (NA) **Music Adviser/ Researcher** (NA) **Disc/Video Jockey** (NA)	Ability to work under tight deadlines and intense pressure Ability to work with people Interest in music and the media Musical talent	Specialized skill and knowledge in one or more of the television/radio industries	Participation in school ensembles Work or intern at a school or community access radio or television station	College degree not always required but recommended; equivalent training necessary, especially in production-related areas

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	Opportunities for Employment and Approximate Salary Ranges*	Personal Qualifications	Knowledge and Skills	Recommended Precollege Training	Recommended College Education and Other Training
Music Technology	**Multimedia Publisher** (NA)** **Sound and Video Editor** (NA) **Technology-based Music Instruction Designer** (NA)	Creativity Interest in music and computers Musical talent	Familiarity with various genres of music (classical, jazz, pop) Knowledge of digital technology Music composition or arranging skills	Familiarity with computers and MIDI Participation in music ensembles	*Multimedia Publisher* and *Sound and Video Editor:* Degrees in music and computer information science *Technology-based Music Instruction Designer:* Degree in music education; experience teaching music; computer study
Music Librarianship	**College, University, Conservatory**, **Public Library**, **or Orchestra Librarian** $18,000–$45,000/year	Ability to work with people Interest in music, books, recordings, and research	Knowledge of copyright and performance rights Thorough knowledge of music and musicology Working knowledge of German and French	Ability to read music Participation in music ensembles	Bachelor's degree with major in music history or theory (at least one year graduate study in musicology also preferable) Graduate library degree

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	Opportunities for Employment and Approximate Salary Ranges*	Personal Qualifications	Knowledge and Skills	Recommended Precollege Training	Recommended College Education and Other Training
Music Therapy	**Hospitals, Psychiatric Facility** $20,000–$62,000/year **Special Education Facility** $22,000–$42,000/year **Clinic for Disabled Children** $15,000–$70,000/year **Mental Health Center** $21,000–$65,000/year **Nursing Home** $17,000–$65,000/year **Correctional Facility** $23,000–$58,000/year **Private Practice** $18,000–$77,000/year	Ability to work with people with disabilities Compassion Emotional stability Enjoyment of people and desire to improve their physical and mental health Musical talent Physical stamina	Facility on piano, guitar, or other instrument Knowledge of behavioral and physical sciences Skilled in adapting music for people with special needs Skilled and versatile musician	Ability to read music Keyboard skill Participation in music ensembles Private instruction in an instrument or voice	Bachelor's degree in music therapy, including six-month internship
Performing Arts Medicine	**Performing Arts Medicine (MD, Physical Therapist)** $50,000–$100,000/year	Enjoyment of people and desire to improve their physical and mental health Interest in music and science Physical stamina	In addition to medical knowledge, familiarity with musicians and medical problems that musicians commonly have	Participation in music ensembles Volunteer work at a medical facility	Medical school; preferably specializing in performing arts medicine

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This brochure was compiled with the assistance of the following organizations:

American Composers Forum
American Federation of Musicians
American Federation of Television and Radio Artists
American Guild of Musical Artists
American Guild of Organists
American Music Conference
American Music Therapy Association
American String Teachers Association with National School Orchestra Association
American Symphony Orchestra League
Association of Performing Arts Presenters
Broadcast Music, Inc.
Chamber Music America
Church Music America
Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association
International Association of Electronic Keyboard Manufacturers
International Association of Jazz Educators
Meet the Composer
Music Critics Association of North America
Music Distributor Association
Music Industry Conference
Music Library Association
Music Publishers Association
Music Teachers National Association
NAMM: International Music Products Association
National Association of Band Instrument Manufacturers
National Association of Pastoral Musicians
National Association of Professional Band Instrument Repair Technicians, Inc. (NAPBIRT)
National Association of Schools of Music
National Music Publishers Association
National Piano Foundation
Opera America
Performing Arts Medicine Association
Piano Manufacturers Association International
Piano Technicians Guild
Recording Industry Association of America
The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers
The Cantors Assembly

United States Air Force Band
United States Army Band
United States Coast Guard Band
United States Marine Corps Band
United States Navy Band

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