

# Songwriting

alla Ian Crombie 01-2007

## Finding Ideas:

- Keep a journal, especially of ideas you have at night or just when you wake up. Keep the journal by your bed. Oh, keep a small recording device with you always.
- Write about stuff you know about. Check your diary for additional ideas
- Write it all out first – “ride the wave” – it’s easier to write when you are feeling the emotion. Later, go back and form it into a song and revise.
- If stuck, read over what you have already done over and over before you go to sleep. When you wake up, you’ll probably have the answer.
- Watch other people. Observe people at the airport at a coffee shop, etc, and write about their experience.
- Write the title first and then go off that.
- Write a paragraph about the song, pick the first piece of action and then go from there.
- Write about something you care about.

## Song formatting:

### VERSE

- It tells the storyline
- Song needs to progress through the story through the verses
- 2<sup>nd</sup> verse: if stuck, try changing time tense
- Rule of twos: line 1 and 2 can have the same melody – line 3 should change it up

### CHORUS

- Should be the centerpoint of the song. Everything points to it.
- Melodically it is often the highest point in the song
- It answers the verse.
- Must be catchy

### BRIDGE

- New melody
- Often lyrically it is like looking down at the whole picture

## Revising:

- Certain words “sing” better than others. Try them out.
- Once done, experiment with it.
- Finish the song, even if you don’t think it is one of your best. It’s important to go through the process.
- Follow your own vision, but ask for the opinions of people you trust.
- Pay attention to the tempo
- Pauses can add drama – the audience pays attention to what’s next.
- The first line is very important – be sure it grabs attention
- Choose the right key for your song
- Collaboration can be good, too. Will help your song be easily understandable.
- Give yourself deadlines, so you have to work on your music.

## The Business:

- Put yourself out there. The best songs are the ones in which you really expose yourself.
- It’s a tough industry. Use your connections, make connections, stay dedicated and focused.
- If sending a demo, be clear about what you are: 1) Singer; 2) Singer/Songwriter, or 3) Songwriter.
- Guide your own career. Surround yourself with people you respect and that respect you
- If a little label is excited about you and a big label is just so-so about you, go with the little one
- The Internet is a great way to get your stuff out there.

## In short:

Write, write, write. Record everything; write everything. Remember, you have to write the bad songs, to get to the good ones. Just keep at it. There’s not just one way to do it. Do whatever works for you!

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