

MUSIC

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

EDUCATION

Teaching
Research
Private lessons

K-12 schools, public and private
Colleges and universities
Conservatories
Daycare centers
Recreation centers
Children's music programs:
 Franchises
 Local
Studios
Self-employed (private instructor)

Research state requirements for teaching certificate for public schools and acquire certificate.
Earn a graduate degree to teach in higher education. Specialize in an area (e.g., music theory, composition, music history)
Gain performance skills in multiple instruments and or voice.
Gain experience working with children through volunteer or part-time work experiences.
Join the National Association for Music Education as a collegiate member.
Develop business relationships with schools and/or music stores to increase client base.

PERFORMANCE

Instrumental
Vocal

Orchestras:
 Philharmonic
 Symphony
 Chamber
Armed Forces bands and orchestras
Small ensembles
Dance bands
Concert soloist
Clubs and restaurants
Church choirs
Community choral groups
Opera companies
Musical theaters
Ballet productions
Recording industry
Radio, television, and motion picture industries
Cruise lines

Develop musical talent and skill.
Obtain formal training to acquire necessary skills, knowledge, and ability to interpret music.
Demonstrate ambition and showmanship.
Join campus bands and choruses, and other community performing acts.
Seek competitions, apprenticeship programs, and workshops to gain experience and recognition.
Be aware of and participate in open mic nights.
Auditions are generally required to join bands or get jobs. Create a demo recording to submit to agents or music companies.
Consider moving to a large city with more opportunities such as New York City, Los Angeles, Nashville, Las Vegas, or Chicago.
Network with people in the industry to learn about potential jobs.
Recognize that opportunities are very limited and most performers have other careers.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

CONDUCTING

Directing
Planning
Leading
Musician selection

Orchestras:
 Philharmonic
 Symphony
 Chamber
Armed Forces bands and orchestras
Choral groups
Opera companies
Musical theater companies

Develop superior musicianship and leadership.
Acquire extensive experience in performing groups.
Develop a variety of vocal and or instrumental skills.
Develop advanced site-reading skills.
Learn other languages such as French, German, Latin, and Italian.
Gain acceptance into a conductor-training program or related apprenticeship.
Understand that opportunities are extremely limited.

COMPOSING/ARRANGING

Composing
Arranging

Self-employed
Record companies
Publishers
Muzak
Motion picture and television industries
Production companies
Orchestras:
 Philharmonic
 Symphony
 Chamber
Opera companies
Musical theater groups
Ballet troupes

Knowledge of composition, harmony, arranging, and theory are important.
Skill on multiple instruments and or voice are necessary.
Become familiar with all types of music productions.
Learn how to use electronic instruments and synthesizers.
Develop computer publishing expertise.
Attend music conferences and workshops.
Seek grants and awards through foundations, e.g. one from the National Endowment of the Arts.
Understand that many composers have other careers.

MUSIC LIBRARIES

Services to faculty, students, and patrons
Reference
Circulation
Collection development
Research
Technical services:
 Acquisitions
 Cataloging
 System Automation
 Indexing/Abstracting
 Archives
 Digital Preservation

Colleges and universities
Conservatories
Public libraries
Radio and television stations
Motion picture studios

Develop computer and research skills.
Gain thorough knowledge of music and musicology.
Earn a master's degree in library/information science.
Work in a campus or public library to gain relevant experience.
Develop good organizational and technology skills.
Learn to understand foreign languages, particularly Italian, Latin, German, and French.
Join the Music Library Association.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

COMMUNICATIONS (BROADCASTING)

Music and program direction
On-air performance
Promotion
Voice overs
Copyright/Clearance administration
Music license administration
Music editing, production, and composing
Sound mixing
Post production
Research

Radio and television stations
Virtual reality sound environments (e.g., internet sites, software creators)

Take classes in communications or broadcasting.
Work at on-campus radio station.
Complete an internship at a television or radio station.
Develop computer-related skills such as software development and programming.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Audio technician
Boom operator
General director
Music video producer
Recording engineer
Set-up
Recordist
Rerecording mixer
Sound engineer
Sound technician
Sound/Production mixer
MIDI engineer
Stage manager
Transcribing
Copyrighting

Local bands
Regional bands
Production companies
Theater groups
Orchestras
Armed Forces
Radio, television, and motion picture industries

Shadow an individual who is in the music industry in an area of interest.
Volunteer in community or school productions.
Gain expertise in the areas of musical and technical knowledge, sound board, and sound equipment.
Take courses in areas such as broadcasting, engineering, or computer science to learn technical skills.
Complete an internship with a recording company or other relevant organization.
Research seminars, workshops, and professional associations that could provide useful information or contacts.
Check trade journals and association bulletins for possible employment.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

MUSIC INDUSTRY/BUSINESS

See also What Can I Do With a Major in Music Business

Publishing and editing

Producing

Recording

Engineering

Manufacturing

Talent acquisition

Artist/Talent representation

Promotion/Media relations

Publicity

Administration

Marketing

Booking

Product management

Business management

Retail sales

Production recording studios (most located in New York City, Los Angeles, and Nashville)

Music management groups

Agencies

Music and record stores

Instrument manufacturers

Complete an internship at a record company. Take business courses to work in management or administration.

Take journalism, public relations, and communication classes to work in areas of promotion.

Gain sales experience for marketing. Learn to interact well with people and develop persuasion tools.

Knowledge of electronics, audio engineering, and recording are required for production.

Work or volunteer at a campus or local radio station.

Join organizations involved with bringing events and entertainment to campus.

Work at a retail record store to learn about the industry.

Volunteer to help promote a local or campus band with their promotions and bookings.

Gain a broad knowledge of music and the industry. Build a strong network of contacts.

Develop skills such as negotiation, assertiveness, the ability to recognize talent, and working under pressure.

Consider a law degree to understand contracts.

HUMAN SERVICES

Music therapy

Hospitals

Special education facilities

Mental health centers

Nursing homes and senior centers

Rehabilitation centers

Correctional facilities

Private practice

Outpatient clinics

Schools

Take courses in psychology, social work, or education.

Earn a master's degree in music therapy and seek credentialing as a Music Therapist - Board Certified (MT-BC). Alternatively consider a master's degree in counseling with experience in expressive therapies.

Gain experience through volunteer opportunities or summer work in rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, etc.

Demonstrate a genuine interest in helping people.

Learn to work well with all types of populations.

Develop a broad array of musical talents.

Join the American Music Therapy Association

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STRATEGIES

MISCELLANEOUS

Music journalism
Law
Music analysis

Music-related publications
Magazines and newspapers
Entertainment or music focused Internet sites
Entertainment law firms
Production companies

Take courses in journalism and English.
Write articles for the campus newspaper.
Prepare for law school and earn a law degree (J.D.)
Develop the ability to read and transcribe well.
Gain knowledge with use of digital music analysis.
Consider Moving to a larger city where more opportunities exist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Majoring in music provides students with a sense of aesthetics and an understanding of human expression valuable to many employers.
- Develop competencies in business management, computers, marketing, or other areas to broaden range of employment possibilities.
- Finding positions in the music industry requires a combination of talent, training, connections and some luck. Perseverance is required!
- Develop a variety of skills. Become "multitalented."
- As an undergraduate, gain as much experience as possible, paid or unpaid, through college and local organizations. Seek internships or volunteer positions with relevant organizations. Audition with local musical groups, choirs, or orchestras.
- Confidence, personality, a positive attitude, and a love of music are important to success in many arenas of music. Learn basic tools of self-promotion. Create a YouTube channel and post performance videos.
- Some jobs may require you to join unions or guilds. Research the industry to learn which ones are appropriate.
- Performers often travel frequently and must be flexible regarding their work schedules. It is important to consider how this will fit with your work and lifestyle values.
- Move to a larger city such as Los Angeles, New York, Nashville, or Chicago to find more job opportunities.
- Conduct information interviews with people who work in the industry. Attend related professional conferences or events to network.