



## Top 10 Tips For Songwriting

1. Do it everyday - Have a writing routine and make sure you stick to it. Lately I have got into the habit of writing something at the piano just before dinner - I find there's something about being hungry that makes me really creative! Saying that, It doesn't matter where you are. The great thing about songwriting is you don't have to be at the piano - in fact a lot of my songs were written in the car whilst driving. But this discipline of writing everyday means in time you will have collected a huge volume of songs or song ideas. The best songs will start to make themselves known because you'll want to keep singing them.
2. Don't forget your ideas - Make sure you keep a notebook with you at all times. This can be digital or paper or in my case both. When I started writing songs I'd record everything onto a cassette tape but now I use the Voice Memo recorder or the Track'd app on my phone.
3. Always be in songwriting mode - Observe the world around you and listen carefully to the things people say and how they say it. Also, your own thoughts, dreams and things you see and hear all around you are rich with potential song ideas, titles, rhythms or melodies.
4. Set yourself a challenge - Be strict on yourself. Write a song in a given time frame. Give yourself a topic to write about. Write a song that has loads of chords in it. Write using 2 chords only. Write a complete song a day for a whole month. If you always write on guitar try writing on piano or another instrument. These challenges will create some interesting songs!
5. Embrace technology - There are so many free music apps available. Try using the music you can create on these as a starting point for a song. It could be a drum pattern or a complete backing track. Try writing a song over the top. If you can afford it buy a drum machine or a synthesiser. See where the sounds take you.
6. Have high standards - Even if you're doing this for fun ask yourself - Is this lyric the best it can be? Is this melody memorable? Do I like this song? If not, don't be afraid to rewrite.
7. Experiment - Rules are made to be broken! When you've written a song why don't you try moving the verses around, start with the chorus, make the bridge section longer, insert an instrumental section, try a key change, get rid of the introduction, add an extra bar at the end of the second verse, add a pre-chorus, try slowing down or speeding the song up, try singing it in a different key(higher or lower). Obviously you don't have to do all of these things all at once in every song, but you can try it!
8. Sing out loud - Try singing the melody out loud. Is it memorable? If you sing it to your friends or family can they sing it back to you easily after one listen? If not, work on it until it's so catchy they can't get it out of their heads! Is the melody of the verses different from the melody in the chorus? If not try starting the chorus on a different note - see what happens. Look at the shape of the melody in the verses and make sure the shape of the chorus is different enough to stand out and be memorable.



9. Get rid of words you don't need - Often you will have a lot of words you don't need just getting in the way of the singing and melody i.e. just, so, that... Remove them and see what happens!

10. Co-write - Writing songs with others is great fun and can be very productive. But don't forget to listen to each other and respect them. Don't go with a blank piece of paper. Take your ideas note book with you. That way you'll always have something to work from. Recognise a good idea and don't be upset if your ideas don't get chosen. It doesn't mean they're bad ideas they just may not fit the song you're working on right now. Be passionate and enthusiastic and write great songs because you love writing and not because you want to be famous or rich!

For more information:

[www.songwritingcharity.org](http://www.songwritingcharity.org)