

Types of Music Licenses

- **Synchronization (Sync) License**

When you need it: If your video/audiovisual work has someone else's song or musical piece, you must get this license, even if you are performing it. This is the most popular type of license purchased for adding music to videos and other audiovisual materials.

- **Master License**

When you need it: If your video/audiovisual work has someone else's existing Master Recording (e.g. the first recording of a song or other musical piece; generally the studio owns and controls this recording, but motion picture producers sometimes obtain these types of licenses. *Not likely* that you will need this for a DIY video).

- **Print License**

When you need it: If your video displays the song lyrics and/or music notes.

- **Public Performance License**

When you need it: If you plan to play your video, audio recording, or perform someone else's music at a public event or space.

However, if you play/perform this music at a restaurant, bar, theater, university, or retail store, business owners or institutions are usually responsible for obtaining "blanket" music public performance licenses from one to three of the major music collective rights agencies.

- **Mechanical or Compulsory License**

When you need it: If you also plan to release someone else's song in an audio-only format, such as on CDs and digital release (e.g. iTunes).

Bands who cover other music artists' music (i.e. cover songs) pay for these types of licenses. Covers are the most obvious example of why a music artist might need a mechanical license, but publishing sheet music of someone else's song/piece is also a reason to obtain a mechanical license. If you are only creating an audiovisual product (e.g. videos), you **do not** need this license.

- One agency, the [Harry Fox Agency](#), is responsible for issuing licenses for reproducing recordings of musical compositions. This license is primarily used for creating covers of others' music on recordings (e.g. CDs, MP3s, records, etc.)