THE ULTIMATE FREE MUSIC TECH RESOURCES GUIDE 2025-2026

midnight music

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WELCOME TO THE 2025-2026 GUIDE!

Welcome to the 13th edition of the Ultimate Free Music Tech Resources Guide and the 16th year of Midnight Music. Last year this guide had a big makeover and we received lots of positive feedback about the design and layout (thank you!).

I first shared a collection of useful free tech resources in a 2009 conference presentation titled Music Technology On A Shoestring. I went on to present that session a number of times and in 2012 I decided to gather all the free resources into a single document which I called The Ultimate Free Music Tech Resources Guide. A new edition has been published every year since then.

As always, a number of new tech tools have been added this year. You'll find them spread throughout the guide. There are around 25 in total and they appear across a variety of sections including Reference Tools, Rhythmic Patterns, Composing and Songwriting, Science of Sound, Virtual Instruments and others. Look out for the little "NEW" label next to each one.

This year we've also added a dedicated section for Coding which is a growing focus in educational technology. There are a number of fantastic free resources which will help you explore the intersection of coding, music and dance. Take a look at the Dance Party set of lessons on the Code.org website which use recordings of your students' favorite pop songs by original artists.

Unsurprisingly, the interest in AI tools continues to be high on the list for many teachers. It's worth keeping an eye on these because they are changing rapidly and improving all the time. Lately I've been impressed by the conversion of PDF sheet music to music notation by the AI-powered features in both Newzik and Soundslice.

If you'd like practical ideas on how to get the most out of the tech tools featured in this guide, I'd encourage you to subscribe to the Midnight Music YouTube channel where I'll regularly share tips and tutorials.

All the best with your music tech journey!

Katie Argyle
Midnight Music

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

FREE?

While most of the resources mentioned are completely free to use, some have paid upgrades which unlock extra features or services. If your budget allows, I recommend exploring the paid version. You'll gain access to more features, improved privacy controls and better ways to share or assess student work. You'll also support the software creators and the longevity of application.

LINKS

Each listing in this guide has a **clickable title**. If the link doesn't work, simply type the resource name into Google to search for it. All links are working at the time of publication, but occasionally websites disappear or change without warning! Also included are links to further reading, related podcast episodes and useful online training in case you'd like to dive deeper and learn more.

ONGOING ONLINE PD

HOW TO USE THESE FREE RESOURCES

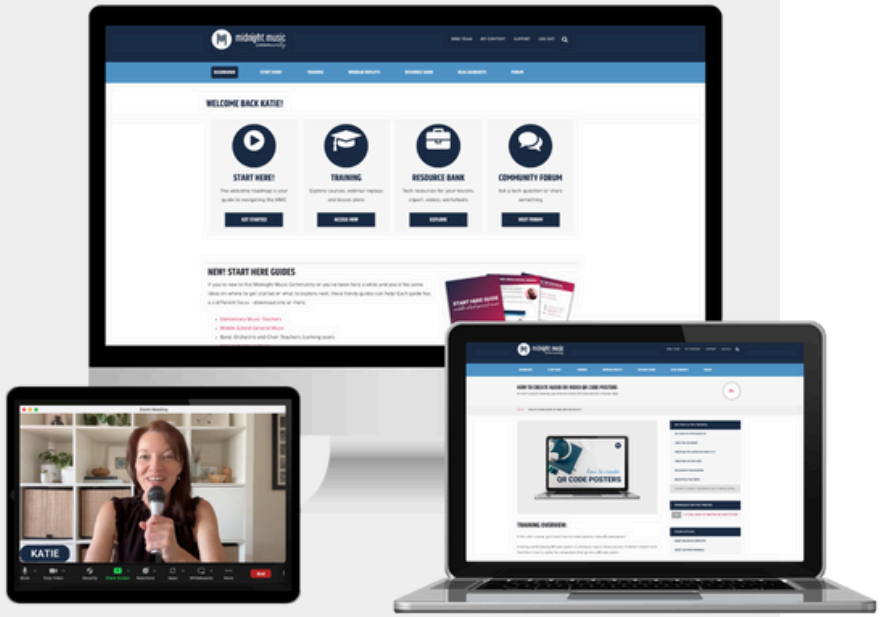
here's where to find help

This guide is full of useful resources, but many teachers want to know HOW to use them with their students. I'd LOVE to help you out!

The **Midnight Music Membership Community** is your go-to place for tech-focused professional development. Features include on-demand online courses, lesson plans, live webinars and a friendly, private members-only forum. Ask ANY tech question you'd like!

We've helped thousands of teachers since we launched in 2016 and we'd be delighted to help you too.

TRY THE COMMUNITY FOR JUST $1



ACCESSIBLE CREATIVITY TOOLS

The tech tools in this section explore the ways that creative pursuits such as playing, singing, drawing and responding to music can be made more accessible for everyone.

Using a combination of web-based technology, artificial intelligence and a webcam, these creative tools open up the possibilities for composing, analyzing and performing music by offering a diverse range of inputs.

Play a keyboard or trigger sound samples with your face, body, mouse, or keys, visualise what you hear with a variety of sound analysis tools, or create music by drawing lines and shapes with your face.

Apps with accessibility features can:

- eliminate barriers to participation
- offer alternative music making options
- help differentiate learning

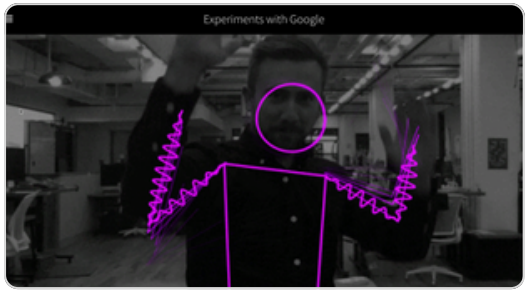
The great thing is that they can benefit ALL students.

Many of the free accessibility tools on the following page are part of the Google Creatability Experiments collection but we have two newcomers: CMPSR Swipe and The Song Wizard.

RECOMMENDED: SEEING MUSIC TUTORIAL

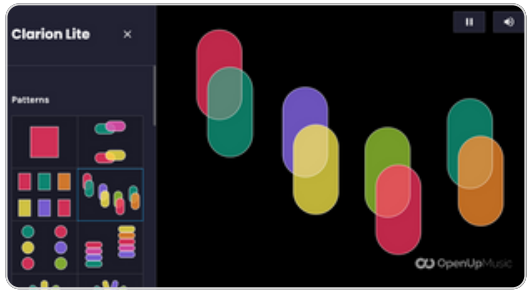
Composer Jay Alan Zimmerman shows how he utilizes the Seeing Music tool from the Google Creatability Experiments with a thorough explanation of the ways you can visualize sound.

Watch the video here.



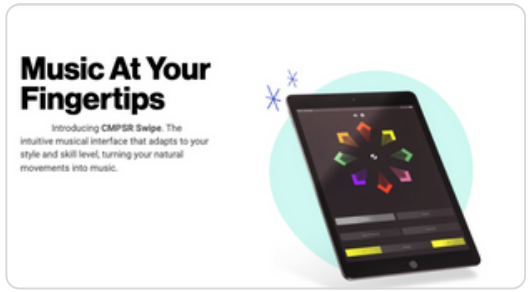
Body Synth

Body Synth allows you to play an instrument using body movement. Select a sound (guitar, synth, strings or drums), choose a chord and then move your body in front of your webcam to make sounds. There is also an experimental voice command option.



Clarion Lite

Clarion is an online instrument with pitches represented by bold colorful shapes on the screen. You can choose different layouts and the number of pitches shown by selecting one of the pattern options. Sounds are activated through body tracking via your webcam, or by using your computer mouse.



CMPSR: Swipe

NEW

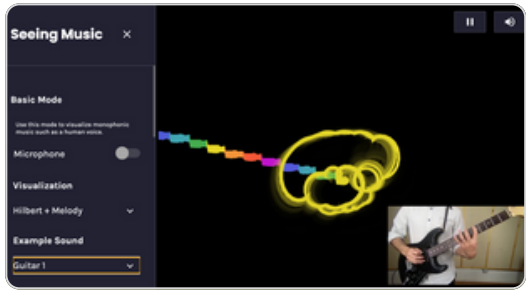
An inclusive app for tablets, phones, or computers—no extra hardware needed. Students tap, swipe, or even blink to play melodies and beats using the accessible Arrownotes system. Designed to engage all learners in creative music-making.

Keyboard

Keyboard is an on-screen keyboard that can be activated by body tracking via your webcam, with your computer mouse, or computer keyboard. You can choose the number of notes on the screen, the scale, the key, the playback sound and which body part to track (nose, wrist, elbow, knee, ankle).

Sampler

Play short music samples in a chosen genre by triggering sounds through body tracking. There are funk, orchestral, hip-hop, rock, synth, bluegrass and silly sound samples and you can also upload your own sounds.

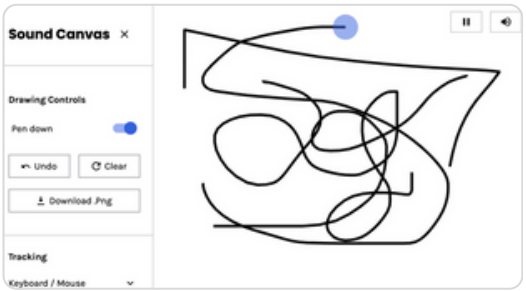


Seeing Music

Visualize pitch, waveforms and more with Seeing Music from the Google Creatability Experiments. Your voice is picked up via your computer microphone and as you speak or sing your sound will be shown visually on the screen. There are many visualization options. You can even display note names as you sing each pitch.

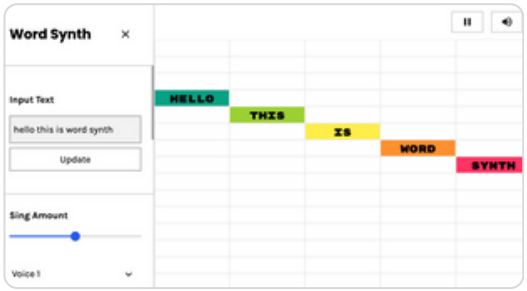
Song Wizard NEW

Using Boomwhackers and a smartboard or projector, students strike their tube when a colored ball drops and lights up. Includes song selection, tempo, volume, and accompaniment controls—great for hands-on, group music learning in elementary classrooms .



Sound Canvas

Sound Canvas lets you draw pictures that make sound. As the line gets higher on the page, so does the pitch. You can draw by using your computer mouse, or you can turn on body tracking. This would also work well when teaching young students about high and low, or graphic notation.



Word Synth

Type in a few words, select some pitches and hear Word Synth sing your sentence back to you. You can adjust the scale, key, "amount of sing" and the playback tempo.

READ

Google Creatability Experiments: Creative Music Sites for Special Needs Students

LISTEN

MTT95: Music Tech Apps for Special Needs Students

MTT96: Creating Sound Stories with Special Needs Students with Alex Rees - Visible Music

WEBINAR

ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE MUSIC TECH TOOLS

webinar replay

In this webinar we'll look at music websites, apps and other tech resources that can help to enable musical creativity with students of all ages and capabilities. Included are a range of free and paid apps, specially designed music tech gear and tips for using software and apps you already have.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- PD certificate provided

LEARN MORE

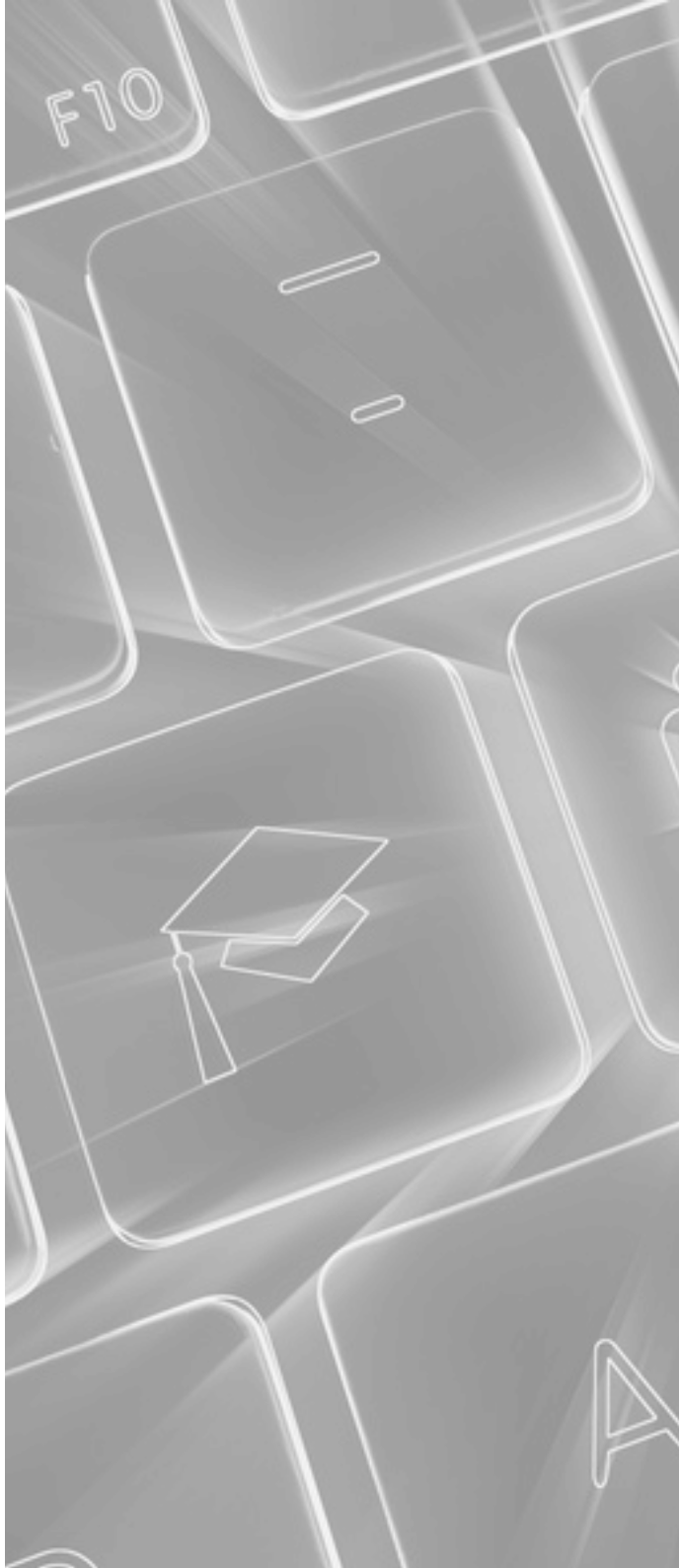
AI TEACHER PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS

If you find the right type of AI-powered productivity tools, it can be like having a personal assistant at your fingertips. These tools are designed to make your life as a teacher easier by handling tasks that would otherwise take up a lot of your time.

Whether it's organizing lesson plans, grading assignments, or even generating custom teaching materials, AI tools can often do the task very quickly and although they don't provide a "one click and it's done" scenario, they give you an excellent starting point.

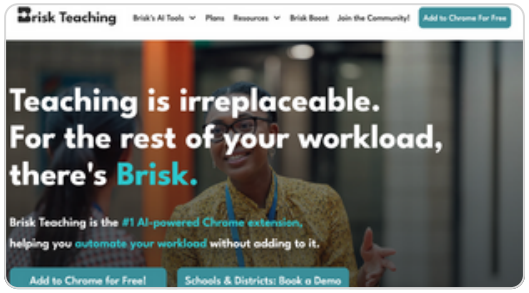
AI is very good at taking care of the repetitive tasks so that you can focus more time on the part of your job that only you can do - teaching and connecting with your students.

These AI tools are constantly learning and improving, making them an ever-evolving resource in your teaching toolkit.



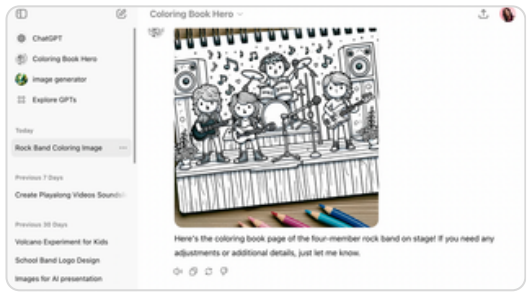
INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY: IDEAS FOR USING AI TOOLS

One of the barriers to using AI tools effectively is understanding what's possible. The solution is to see a wide variety of examples of use, preferably in the education and/or music education spheres. Open AI has suggestions on their Teaching with AI page and on their Educator FAQ page. The Teaching Channel also offers 50 ChatGPT prompt ideas and Team GPT lists useful tips in their 24 Best ChatGPT Prompts.



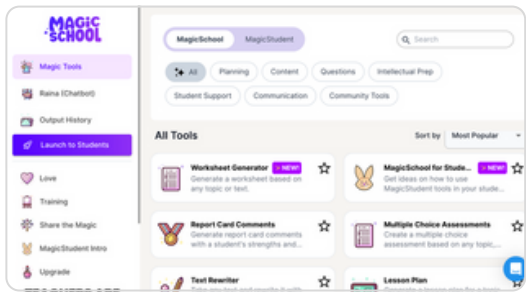
Brisk

A Chrome extension which integrates with Google tools and helps teachers to provide students feedback, create curriculum, produce quizzes, manage administrative tasks and translate text.



ChatGPT

ChatGPT - the advanced language model by OpenAI - can be an incredible productivity tool for teachers. You can use it as a personal teaching assistant that can help you with lesson planning, rubrics, crafting emails, differentiating lessons and creating teaching materials.



MagicSchool

An AI assistant for teachers that includes 60+ tools to help you plan lessons, write assessments, draft communication, differentiate student assignments and more. Includes a YouTube video question generator, a video summarizer and a song generator.

WEBINAR

ChatGPT Prompts To Save Music Teachers Time

webinar replay

In this webinar we'll explore how ChatGPT can act as your always-on-call personal assistant and help you save valuable time.

Discover practical ways to streamline lesson planning, generate creative lesson ideas, and handle administrative tasks more efficiently with the help of AI.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- PD certificate provided

LEARN MORE

READ

How To Write Better ChatGPT and AI Prompts For Music Teachers

ChatGPT & AI: An Optimistic Outlook For Music Education

5 Time-Saving Hacks for Music Teachers Using ChatGPT and AI

AI AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION

For the longest time, musicians have dreamt of having technology that could automagically produce sheet music by analyzing and transcribing an audio recording.

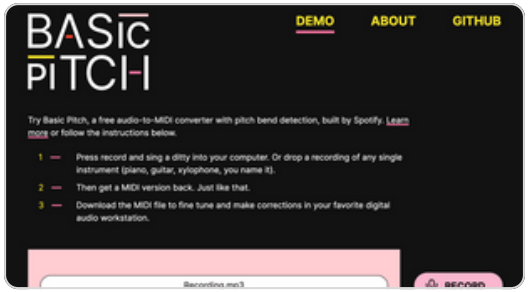
Although the technology exists, it's not perfect...yet. These tools use advanced AI algorithms to listen to an audio recording and attempt to convert it into written sheet music, with the aim of making the process of transcribing music faster.

Teachers and students are hopeful for an app that will generate transcriptions for use in lessons, rehearsals, or analysis. While the technology is not quite there yet, for many styles of music it can do a decent job with simple pieces, especially when there's only one instrument involved.

The best thing to do is to test the app out, but bear in mind, you may need to resort to the old-school method of careful listening and transcribing by hand.

HOW ACCURATE ARE THESE TRANSCRIPTION TOOLS?

Although these tech tools claim to transcribe audio files with the click of a button, you will likely find that your results can be hit or miss. The technology is evolving rapidly but still struggles with polyphonic music and even single-line (monophonic) music is not always accurately transcribed. Check all results carefully and keep improving your own aural skills!

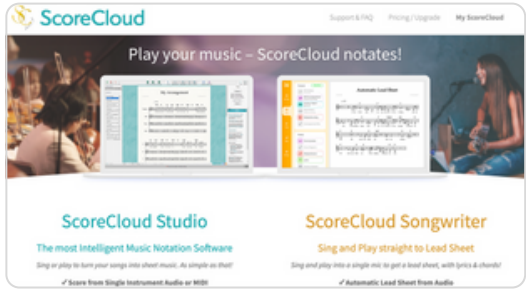


Basic Pitch

A free audio-to-MIDI converter built by Spotify. Press record and sing/play into your computer mic, or upload a recording of a single instrument like piano or guitar and Basic Pitch will convert the audio into a MIDI file. Once downloaded, you can import the MIDI file into your digital audio workstation to fix up and enhance.

Klangio

AI-powered audio transcription software for single instruments that can create notation, MIDI files and more. There are mixed results when using AI transcription tools and the best outcome is when the music is simple. Expect to fix up errors!



ScoreCloud

Play notes in via your computer keyboard or MIDI keyboard, or sing/play into your device's microphone and ScoreCloud will translate the recording into notation. As with all transcription tools, it's likely that you'll need to do some editing and corrections. ScoreCloud Studio is free for up to 10 saved songs with more songs and features via an upgrade.

★★★★★

"Amazing, informative and innovative, it makes me think why haven't I always been using these tools!"

Bekka Pericleous
webinar attendee

AI MUSIC GENERATION

New AI music generation tools are appearing all the time and they can invoke feelings of excitement, disbelief and horror all at the same time.

These tools can create new compositions, backing tracks, or even full pieces of music with just a few clicks.

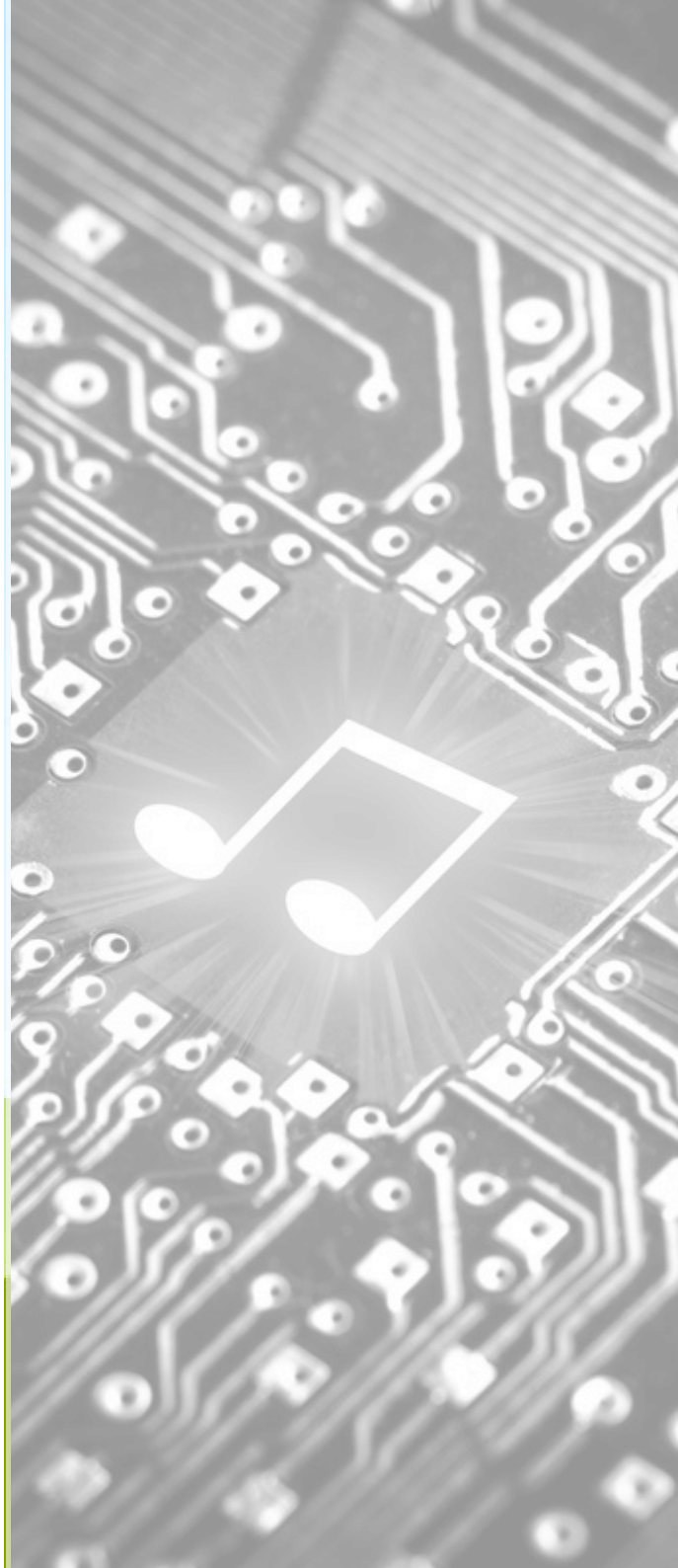
Provide the AI tool with a text prompt such as “write an upbeat barbershop jazz fusion piece about my dog Ella” and after a minute or so a multi-verse song complete with lyrics will appear before your eyes (and ears).

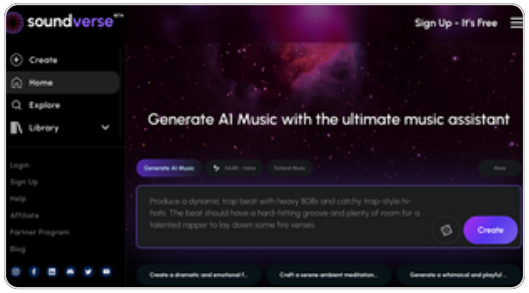
It can be useful to think of these AI music generation tools as an always-ready collaborator. Use them - with your students - to explore musical ideas in a variety of styles and genres.

One idea is to have students analyze what has been produced - does the music have an effective harmonic progression? Are there a variety of contrasting song sections? Does it sound “good”? What are the characteristics of country, rock, blues or jazz styles that the AI tool has incorporated into the end result?

A RAPIDLY-CHANGING LANDSCAPE

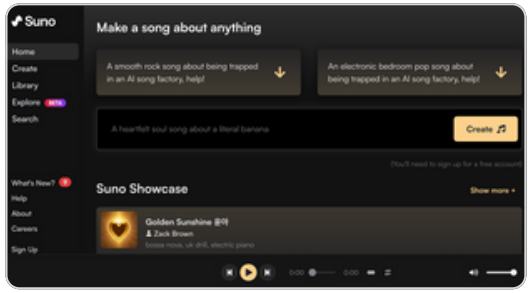
The number of AI music generation tools has exploded in recent months and the pricing of these tools changes frequently. The information we have included on the following page was correct at the time of publishing, but may change by the time you’re reading this!





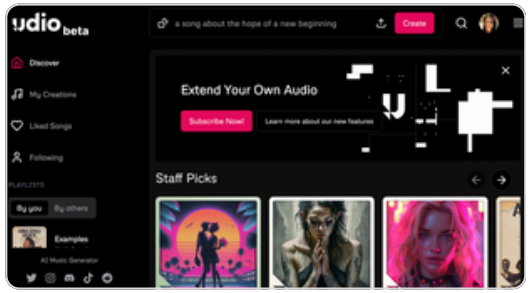
Soundverse

An AI text-to-music chat bot that has additional features such as stem separation and an arrange function which you can use to build your piece using blocks of sound.



Suno

Suno uses AI to generate a song from a text prompt. Describe the topic of your song and the musical style and Suno will generate two versions of your song, complete with sung lyrics. The free version allows up to 10 songs per day under non-commercial terms.



Udio

With Udio you can create a song from a simple text prompt by specifying a topic, genre, style and other descriptive words.

WEBINAR

AI FOR MUSIC TEACHERS - AN INTRODUCTION

webinar replay

In this "AI 101" webinar we discuss what AI is, how it can support teaching and learning in music and explore a range of AI tools.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

introducing the

MIDNIGHT MUSIC MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

The Midnight Music Membership Community is your music teacher's go-to hub for technology-focused professional development that was specifically created for music educators.

It's designed for teachers of all skill levels - from self-proclaimed 'technophobes' to intermediate and advanced tech users.

INSIDE THE MEMBERSHIP

what's included?

The Midnight Music Community features:

- step-by-step **training** for all skill levels
- world-class online **courses**
- live monthly **webinars**
- creative tech-based **lesson plans** ideas
- daily **advice** from tech experts

JOIN NOW:
$1 FOR 14 DAYS

An established education business

15+ years

Midnight Music has been delivering quality in-person workshops, online courses & webinars for over 15 years.

Midnight Music Membership Community

since 2016

Launched in 2016, the online Membership Community provides tech-focused training & support for music teachers.

What's included?

The Midnight Music Membership Community includes a broad range of training and support.

COURSES | LIVE WEBINARS | LESSON PLANS | PRIVATE FORUM | DIGITAL BADGES

Our members

700+ members

Midnight Music Community members represent more than 20 countries

Available professional development hours

360+ hours

There are over 360 hours of courses, webinars, tips and other training inside the Midnight Music Community and our library continues to grow.

PD certificates provided

Professional development certificates provided to members for completed courses & webinars.

Meet the founder

Katie Argyle is a qualified music teacher who has dedicated 15+ years to training music teachers in all things tech-related. She has a passion for helping people and her biggest thrill is hearing teachers say "I can use that idea in class tomorrow"!

AI STEM SPLITTERS

AI music stem splitters are a game-changer for music teachers who want to create backing tracks or learning tracks for students.

These tools allow you to upload an MP3 file and then separate an audio track into its individual components - vocals, drums, bass, and more. This gives you the flexibility to analyze each part separately or remove it from the song altogether.

You can then download and save the end result.

By removing vocals you can create your own karaoke-style backing tracks for students to sing along with. You can create customized practice tracks or use the split up tracks for remix projects.

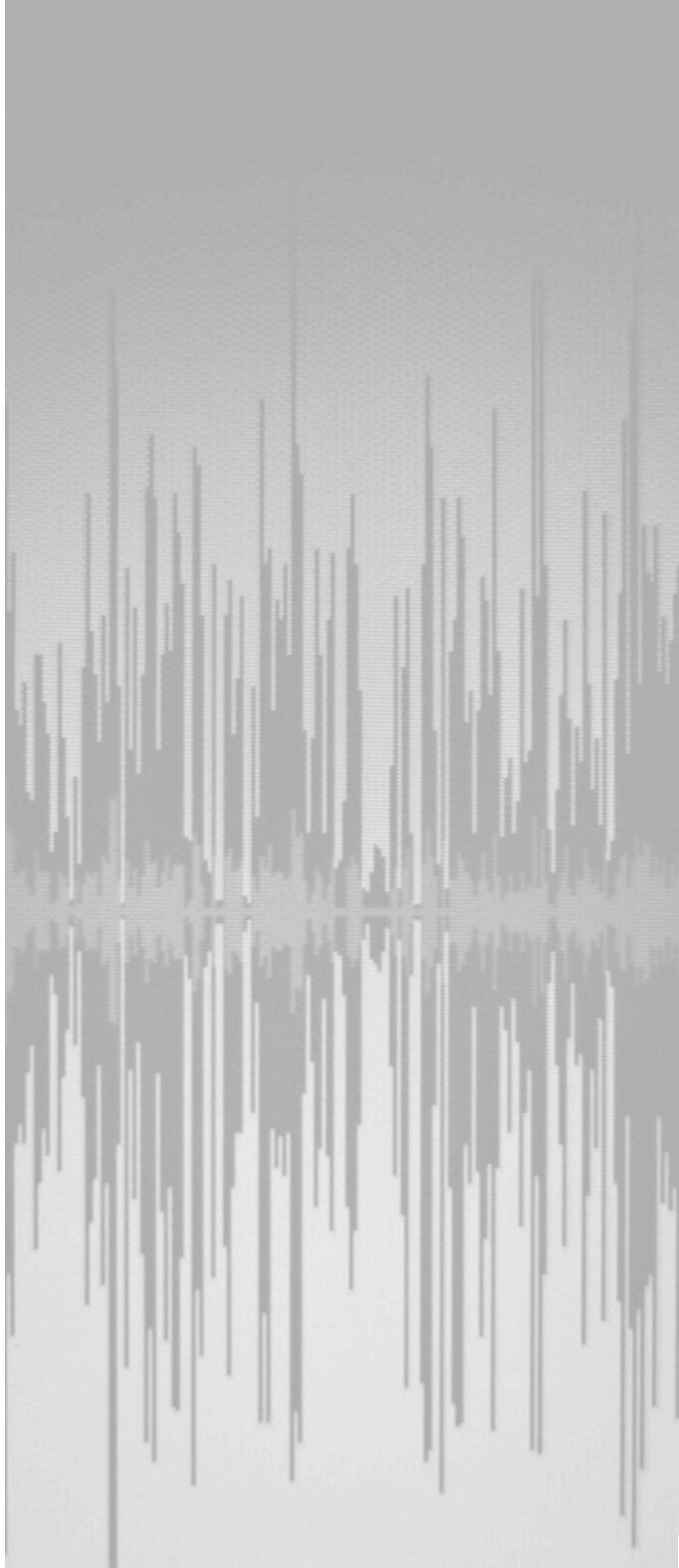
The results are not perfect. This is in part due to the effectiveness of the technology, but also due to the way the track was recorded and edited in the first place.

The best approach is simply to try it and see what happens.

TIP: RESULTS WILL VARY!

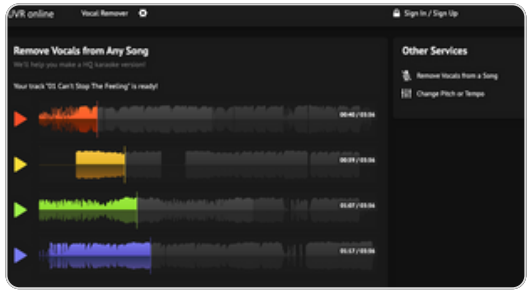
When using a tech tool to split an audio file into separate tracks, it's unlikely that you'll get a perfectly clean result. You'll often hear fragments of the backing in a vocal track and sometimes tracks will have a slightly odd tone, as if the musician is playing underwater!

The results work well for rehearsal purposes but may not be adequate for use as a backing track in a performance scenario.



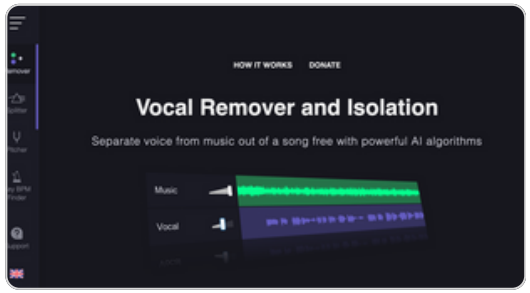
Moises

Moises uses AI to separate tracks in an audio file. Remove the vocal track, or isolate guitar, bass or drums, and export the results. Results vary depending on the file you upload, so test it well ahead of when you'll need it! Also includes transposition, tempo change features and more. A free account allows for 5 tracks per month, under 5 minutes.



Ultimate Vocal Remover

Ultimate Vocal Remover is a neat stem separation tool which is free to use for up to 10 minutes of audio in a 24-hour period. You can choose from a variety of AI models (each one has their own strengths!) and after processing, you'll be presented with separate vocals and backing tracks which you can download. There are options to keep or extract other instrumental parts from your track too.



Vocal Remover

Vocal Remover separates the vocals from a song that you upload. You can also split the song into 'stems' or individual instruments for further manipulation. The site includes other free audio tools like track cutter, audio-joining, pitch and tempo adjustment, and a key or BPM finder. Note that sometimes the Vocal Remover tool hits a limit and the site can be a little temperamental at times!

READ

Exploring Moises: An AI Audio Separation Tool

★★★★★

"I love that I've been able to get informative and applicable PD while still wearing my pajamas!"

Megan Keown
webinar attendee

ASSESSMENT, GAMES & QUIZZES

Incorporating assessment, games, and quizzes into your music classroom is a fun and engaging way to gauge student progress and reinforce learning.

These tools offer a variety of formats, from interactive quizzes that test music theory knowledge to games that challenge students to identify rhythms, notes, or instruments by ear.

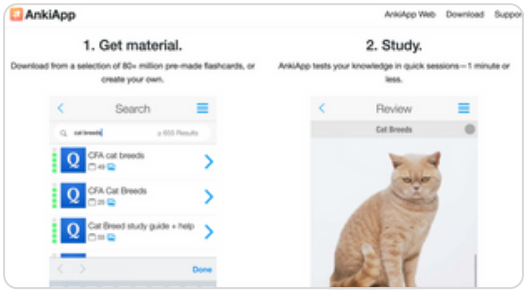
They make assessment less intimidating and more enjoyable for students, turning learning into a playful and interactive experience. Plus, these tools often provide instant feedback, which can help students learn from their mistakes in real-time.

Whether you're looking to add a competitive edge to your lessons or simply want to break up the routine with something fun, these tools can help keep students motivated and on track.

If you teach older students, take a look at Bandle. It's like a musical Wordle game where one instrumental part is revealed at a time (usually starts with just the drum part!).

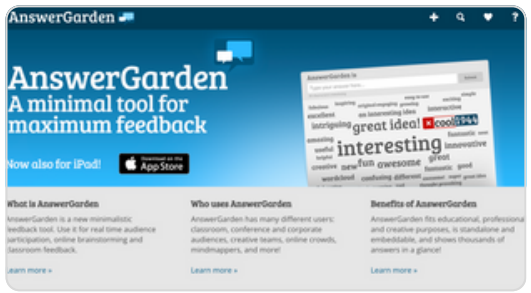
TIP: SAVE TIME WITH TEMPLATES

Many assessment tools are huge time-savers because you can use and re-use your games and quizzes multiple times. Consider setting up some templates - or copy and adapt existing assessments so you're not starting from scratch each time.



Ankiapp

This downloadable app for Mac, iOS, Windows and Android devices allows you to create your own flashcards with images, sounds, and text.



AnswerGarden

AnswerGarden is a “minimalistic feedback tool.” You type in a question for students, they visit your AnswerGarden page and answer the question. AnswerGarden will show their response in real-time. Great for visualizing student understanding or brainstorming a topic. Responses are shown in a word cloud format.

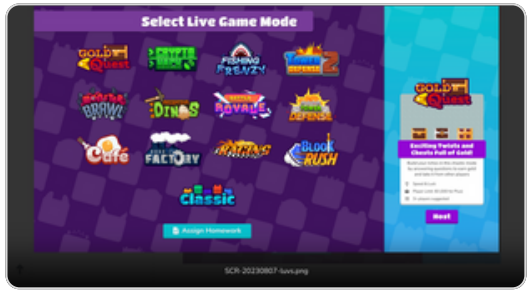
Bandle

NEW

A daily listening game where students guess popular songs by hearing one instrument at a time. Each added layer offers more clues, making it a fun way to train ears, understand texture, and build listening skills.

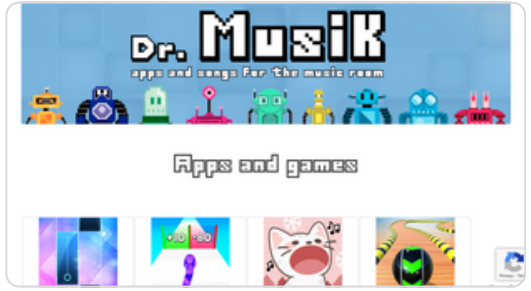
Bingo Baker

Create your own custom bingo cards that can be printed or used online on student devices. Share the game link with students and they can check items off digitally. Bingo Baker randomizes the game cards and also provides you with a call list. This simple tool is highly recommended!



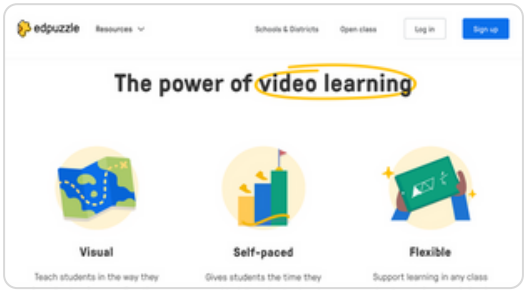
Blooket

Quickly create games and quizzes for your students. Create one set of questions and then use it across all the different game modes, and recycle questions so students experience reinforcement. You can also search for sets created by other teachers. Additional features in the paid version.



Dr. Musik

Over a dozen highly-engaging mini-games to play with sounds, melody, notation, rhythm and more. Many games include adjustable difficulty levels for different skill ranges. You'll see individual games from the site listed throughout this guide!



Edpuzzle

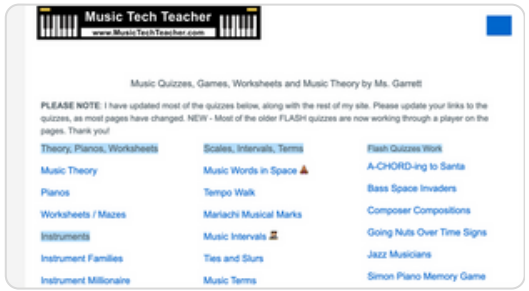
Overlay questions and/or narration on existing videos from YouTube, Khan Academy, TED or upload your own. You can add multiple choice or open-ended questions which appear during playback, and add comments, a voiceover, or an audio note to explain a concept. The free version allows for 20 video lessons.

Flippity

Make your own games and activities using data from a Google Sheet. There are lots of useful options including text or multimedia flashcards, a name picker, quiz show games, manipulatives, matching games, word searches, a digital badge tracker and more!

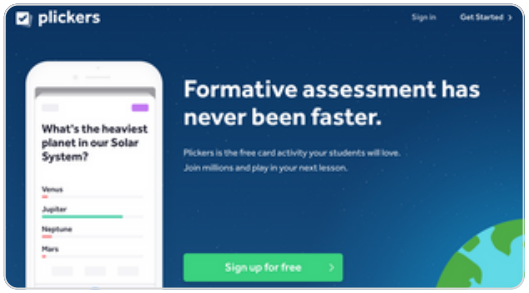
Mentimeter

Set up questions, quizzes, polls, multiple choice questions and word clouds super-fast. You can use it to get a quick response from students - via any device. Ask them to vote on a topic or brainstorm ideas and their answers appear in real-time. A great tool for workshops and conferences.



Music Tech Teacher by Karen Garrett

If you don't have time to make your own quizzes and games, you might find something useful on this site by music teacher Karen Garrett. Many of the games have been updated in recent years and most of the older Flash-based games are now usable through a player on the page.



Plickers

Set up multi-choice or yes/no questions which students answer by holding up their printed Plicker card (the direction in which the cards are held indicates their answer). You can scan the student cards quickly by using the Plickers app and results are recorded in your account. The free account is limited but worth trying out!

Socrative

A quiz and feedback tool that allows you to monitor learning and engage students. Includes a variety of activity types and student progress is tracked automatically. The free plan allows up to 5 quizzes and you can upgrade for additional features.

Wordwall

Wordwall is a fantastic quiz/game tool you can use with your students. Enter your content - such as a series of questions and answers, or items in specific categories - and then choose a game template to use. It's VERY easy to set activities up and the best thing is that you can easily repurpose your content by switching game templates.

READ

Free Music Tech Resource Highlight: Doctor Musik

Blooket: A New Take On Trivia And Review Games

LISTEN

MTT109: DIY Music Puzzles and Games Part 1 - Bingo

MTT110: DIY Music Puzzles and Games Part 2 - Crosswords

MTT111: DIY Music Puzzles and Games Part 3 - Word Search

WEBINAR

SUB LESSON PLANS THAT USE SIMPLE TECH

webinar replay

Discover engaging, low-prep lesson ideas that use simple free tech tools. The activities shown are suitable for non-musical subs or you can use them yourself!

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

join us inside the

MIDNIGHT MUSIC COMMUNITY

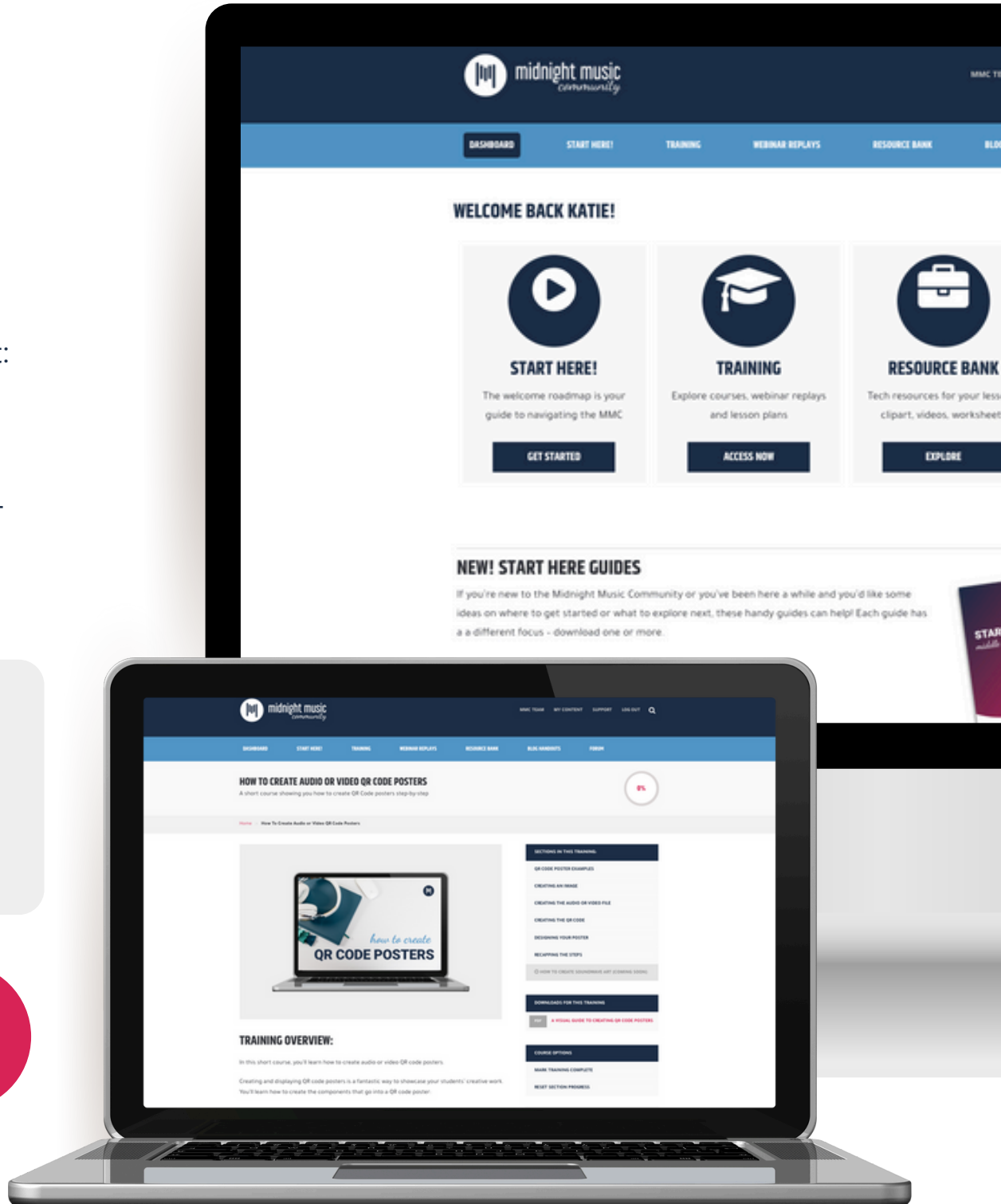
The Midnight Music Membership Community is your go-to hub for tech-focused professional development: step-by-step training, world-class online courses and creative lesson ideas.

It's designed for teachers of all skill levels - from self-proclaimed 'technophobes' to intermediate and advanced tech users.

"Every time I attend a training session with Midnight Music, I learn something new that I can apply in my classroom immediately!"

Kelly Stellwag
music teacher

SPECIAL OFFER:
14-DAY TRIAL JUST $1



AUDIO RECORDING & EDITING

Audio recording and editing tools are essential for any music teacher looking to capture performances, create lesson materials, or even guide students through the process of making and capturing their own music.

These tools allow you to record live audio, whether that's on a stage with multiple microphones or simply inside your classroom using your laptop and a built-in microphone.

The tech tools also give you the ability to edit audio as easily as you would edit a word document - remove song sections, shorten tracks, create a fade-out or add effects.

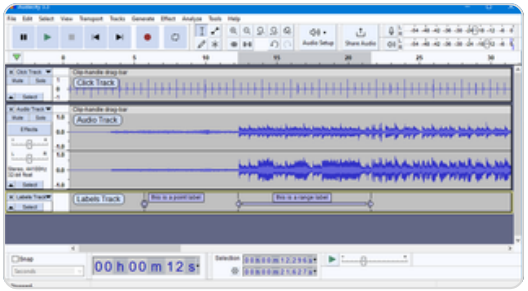
Whether you're putting together a podcast, recording student performances, or helping students create their own compositions, these tools make it easy to produce high-quality audio content.

They're also great for teaching students the basics of audio production, giving them hands-on experience and providing opportunities for creativity and learning.

BASIC AUDIO EDITING & RECORDING SKILLS: INCREDIBLY USEFUL!

One of the best things you can do as a music teacher is to learn basic audio recording and editing skills. It's not difficult (truly!) and you will use these skills time and time again.

Interested? Take a look at the Simple Recording & Editing With Audacity online course (includes professional development certificate). Also worth a read: 18 Creative and Surprising Ways Music Teachers Can Use Audacity



Audacity

Excellent free audio recording and editing software. Transpose a song, change tempo, create a medley, add fade-ins and fade-outs and use effects. Great for podcasting, digital storytelling, recording sound effects, recording musical performances and editing.

Audio Cutter

An easy-to-use online audio editing tool that allows you to cut an audio file. Useful if you want to chop the end or beginning of a track or add a fade-in or fade-out. You can save the resulting file in multiple formats, including as a ringtone.

Audio Joiner

Another simple online app from the 123apps website which allows you to join multiple audio tracks into a single track. You can easily add a cross-fade between tracks, or fade-out/in completely.

AudioMass

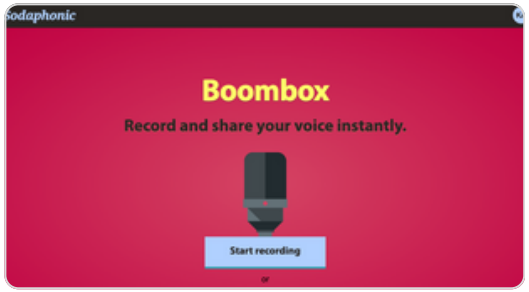
A basic web-based recording and editing software tool (like a simplified Audacity). It's useful when you want to cut off the end of an audio file, add a fade-in/out, insert or remove silence and so on. There are limited features but it's a great choice when you need something simple that works across all devices.

Audiotool

Create pattern-based music using hardware emulators. Includes drum machines, synths, effects units and more. Useful for teaching signal flow. Sign-in required.

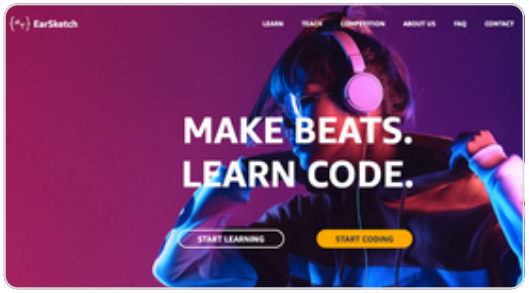
BandLab for Education

A digital audio workstation that works on Chromebooks, Macs and PCs. Use it to record music projects or podcasts. The EDU version has its own management system for assigning and receiving student work. Note: check whether your school or district will permit BandLab EDU to be used before going ahead with it in class.



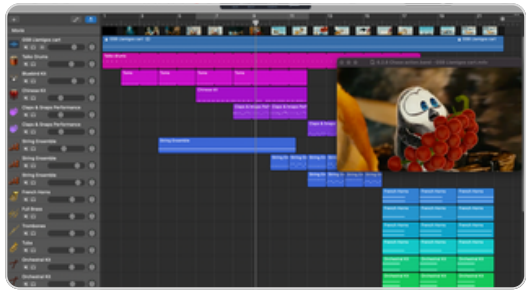
Boombox

Boombox is a part of the Sodaphonic site and it allows you to share any audio file as a link. Upload your MP3 to Boombox and you'll be given a link that you can send to your recipient. Set up a free account if you'd like to come back to your uploaded files later on.



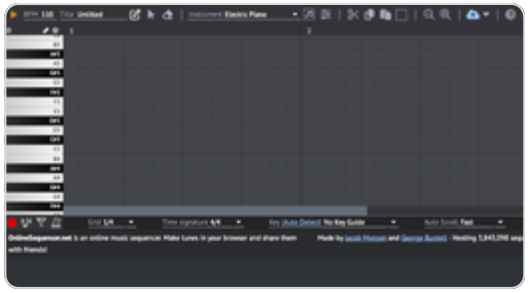
EarSketch

Make music by learning how to create and edit code. The community behind this project also hosts competitions to share musical codes to earn scholarships and grants for education and business. An excellent opportunity for cross-curricular assignments.



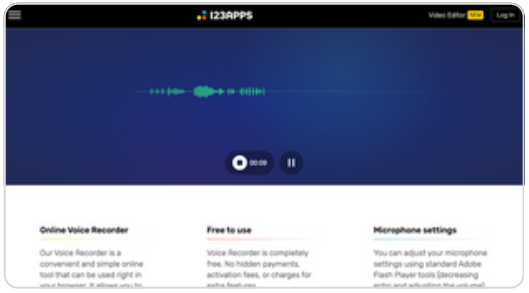
GarageBand

Mac OS digital audio workstation which comes free with your Apple device. GarageBand is easy to use for beginners but includes features that will suit more experienced users. There is an included loop library and a great range of instrument sounds. Works well for composition, recording and podcasting.



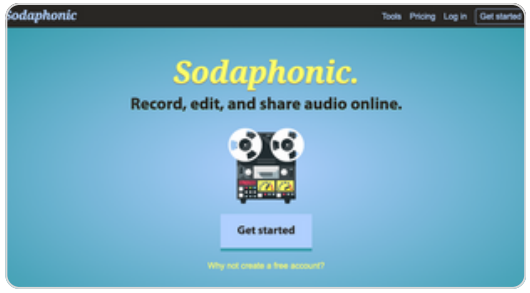
Online Sequencer

A simple online sequencer that utilizes a piano roll-type layout. You can add notes by clicking in the grid with your mouse and you can also play notes by using the keys on your computer keyboard. Includes a MIDI file import option.



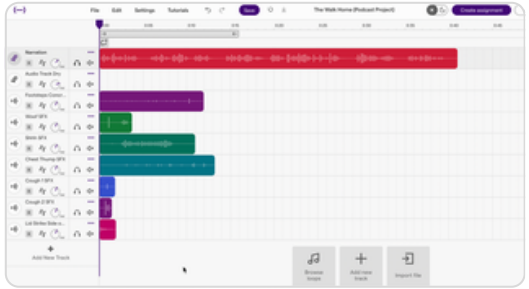
Online Voice Recorder

Use this simple online tool to record your voice and then crop the recording to the section you need. A good option for Chromebook schools who need a web-based tool for capturing student narration or to record podcasts.



Sodaphonic

This is an easy-to-use recording site where you can upload an existing audio file to edit, OR you can record a new audio file. The effects menu includes fade-in, fade-out, reverse, bleep it, and silence. Quick and easy editing.



Soundtrap

A fantastic online digital audio workstation that works on all devices. Create music or podcast projects, record and edit audio, use loops and virtual instruments. Note that only the "consumer" version is free and is best for personal or tertiary student use. It requires users to be 13+ and may not be suitable for your school. A paid EDU version is also available and is COPPA/FERPA compliant (and well worth it if you work with K-12 students).

Twisted Wave

Twisted Wave is online audio recording and editing software. It's a good alternative to Audacity if your students have Chromebooks. It works in the browser, but you can also download a desktop version for Mac or an iOS version for iPhones and iPads. The free version is limited to files up to 5 minutes in length and you can purchase a subscription to increase that limit.

GARAGEBAND, SOUNDTRAP & BANDLAB LESSON PLANS AND TEACHER TIPS

online course

A beginner-friendly online course with step-by-step tutorials for the teacher PLUS student lesson videos for 6 full units of work. Includes film scoring, video game music, found sounds, podcasting & more.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- PD certificate provided

LEARN MORE

ONLINE COURSE

CLIPART AND OTHER IMAGES

Clipart and free images can be incredibly useful for creating engaging and visually appealing teaching materials.

Whether you're designing worksheets, creating presentations, or putting together flyers for a school concert, having access to a range of high-quality, music-specific and non-music images can save you time and make your materials look polished and professional.

There are a number of places you can find ready-made music-themed clipart, instrument pictures, notation elements, hand-signs, fingering diagrams and chord diagrams which will make your music resource creation more time-effective.

In addition, there are some fantastic photo websites that offer royalty-free, public domain or Creative Commons licensed images which you can use to add a touch of creativity to your resources and promotional materials.

TIP: EXPLORE THE CANVA ELEMENTS LIBRARY

Although the design software Canva has not been listed in this section, it is often one of the best places to find useful clipart, photos, stickers and GIFs.

These are all included inside the Canva elements library and if you have a Canva For Education account you can access the pro elements for free.

Big Notation Library

Midnight Music's collection of notation images for worksheets, posters, presentation files, Canva or interactive whiteboard software. There are individual image files of notes, clefs, rests and other notation graphics with transparent backgrounds.

Body Percussion Clipart Library

Downloadable body percussion images in a range of skin tones that you can use in your teaching materials. If you're a member of the Midnight Music Community you can also access the Canva templates for these images in case you want to make adjustments.

Boomwhacker Image and Sound Library

Downloadable Boomwhacker images and audio files for each pitch. Useful for creating teaching materials. Includes individual Boomwhackers images and a group Boomwhacker image with transparent backgrounds.

Clip Art by Phillip Martin

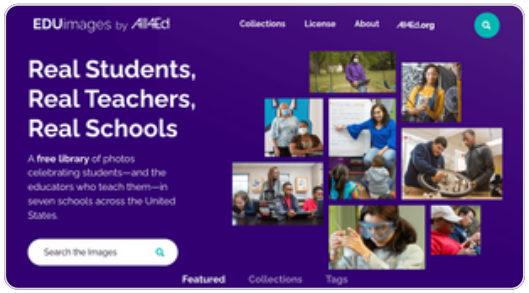
Gorgeous array of cartoon images for use by schools. Includes a Peter and the Wolf picture, a range of instruments of the orchestra and many other music-related and non-music images.

Custom Cursors

Custom Cursor is a Chrome extension that allows you to change your mouse pointer into a little picture, which makes it more prominent. Download this set of music-themed images that you can use with the Custom Cursor extension.

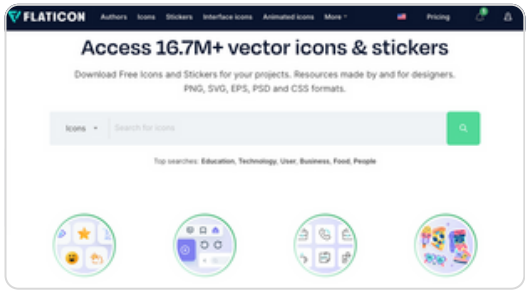
Digital Badge Images

Here's a big collection of digital badges that you can use with your students. This download includes badges for recorder, ukulele, guitar, drumming, and musical elements. Midnight Music Community members also get access to the editable Canva file version.



EDUimages by All4Ed

Photos of students and teachers from seven US schools that have been made available for nonprofit organizations, news outlets, educators, and others to use in publications, presentations, websites, blogs, social media, and other noncommercial purposes. Images supplied with permission.



Flaticon

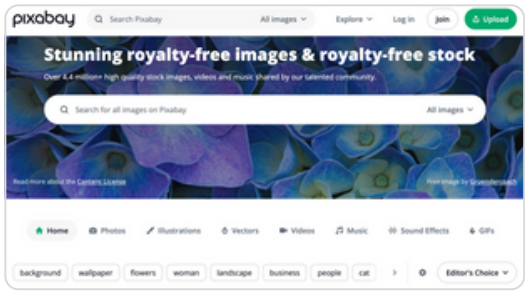
A huge collection of icons and stickers in both static and animated formats you can use when creating teaching materials. Attribution is required if you're on the free plan.

Guitar Chord Image Library

Midnight Music has a collection of guitar chord diagram images that you can use when creating teaching materials. Each diagram is a separate image with a transparent background.

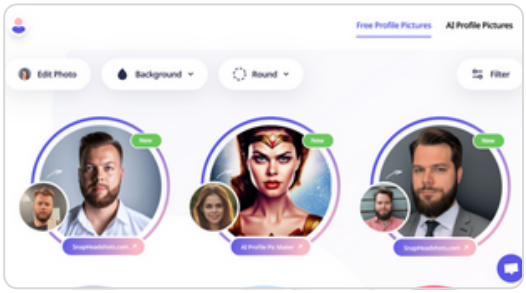
Kodaly Curwen Solfa Hand Signs

A collection of individual solfa hand sign images with transparent backgrounds that you can use to create posters and other teaching materials. There are 3 skin tone variations, Boomwhacker colors, black and white versions and more - a total of 70 images!



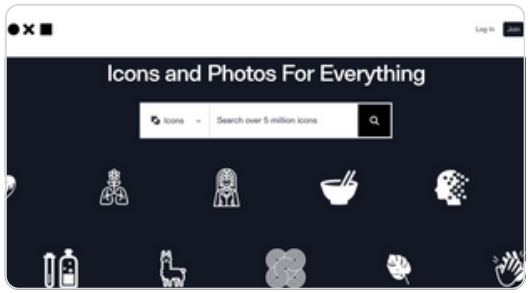
Pixabay Images

A go-to place for photos and graphics, the images on Pixabay are in the public domain. There's a great selection of music and non-music-related photos and illustrations. Also includes audio, video and sound effects. Create a free account so you can save your favorites.



Profile Pic Maker

Upload a photo of yourself to Profile Pic Maker and the app will automagically remove the background of your photo and present you with lots of beautiful profile picture versions. You can play with different colored backgrounds, gradients and more.

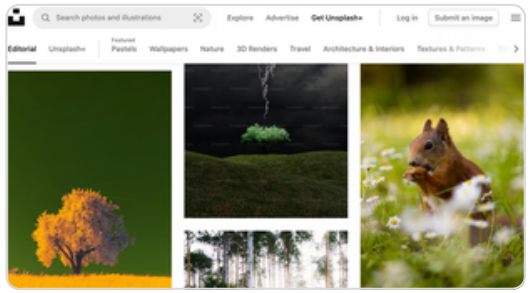


The Noun Project

Free icons for you to use in worksheets, posters and other projects (attribute the creator). Type into the search bar at the top to find useful icons. Try “music,” “audio,” “instruments” or “recording.”

Ukulele Chord Image Library

A collection of ukulele chord diagram images that you can use when creating teaching materials. Each diagram is a separate image with a transparent background.



Unsplash

Beautiful free images and vector illustrations for use in your teaching materials.

WEBINAR REPLAYS

GOOGLE SLIDES FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

webinar replay

Learn how to use Google Slides to create your music teaching materials such as drag-and-drop activities, play-along videos, choice boards, games and more.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

GOOGLE SLIDES ADVANCED TIPS

webinar replay

Move beyond the basics in this follow-up webinar which covers advanced topics for Slides including using templates, master slides, add-ons, animations and GIFs!

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

CODING

Coding can bring together creativity, logic, and music-making. For students, learning to code in a musical context can offer a fresh, hands-on approach to composition, improvisation, and performance. It can also build transferable skills like problem-solving, sequencing, and critical thinking in a practical way.

The resources in this chapter let you and your students explore music creativity through coding, whether by generating beats, writing melodies, creating interactive dances, or even building virtual instruments.

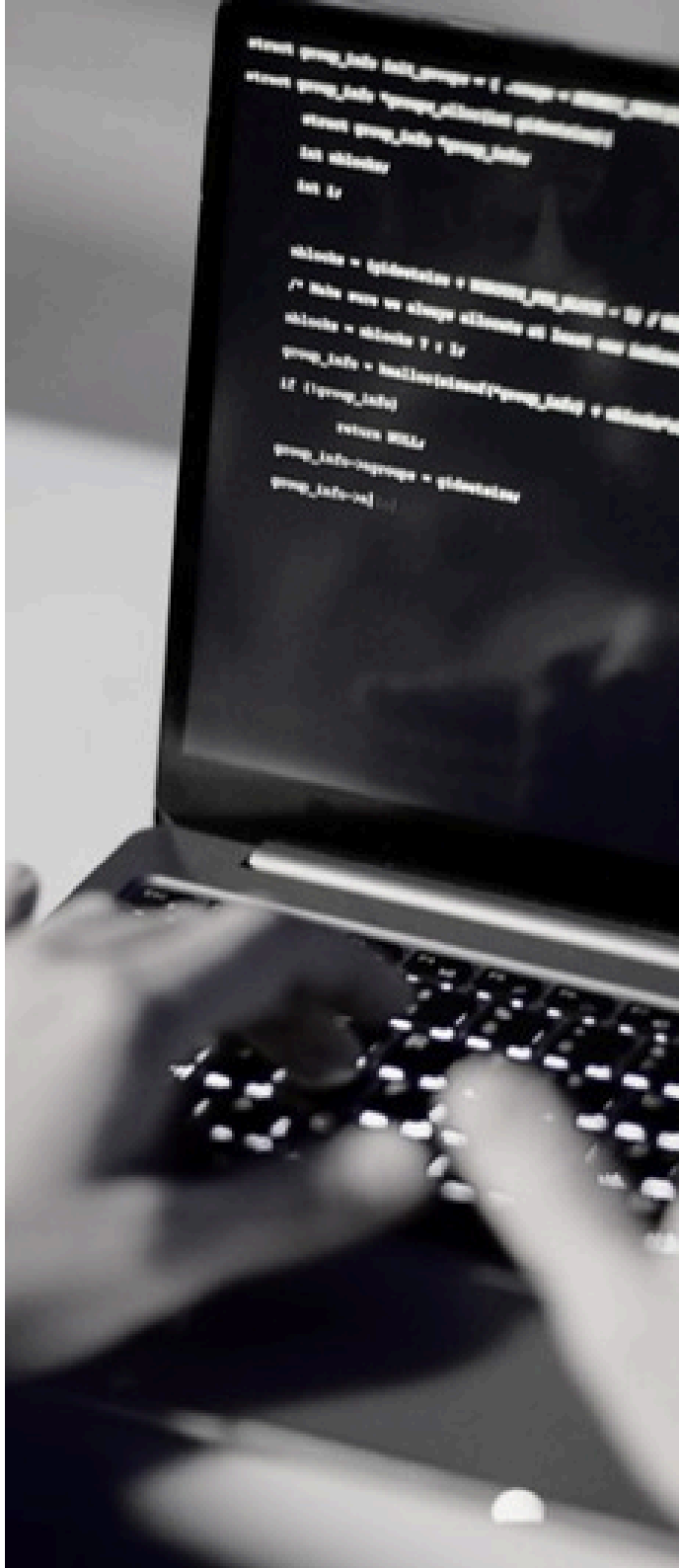
Many of these tools are beginner-friendly, making them perfect for classrooms where students have no prior coding experience, while still offering depth for those who want to dive deeper. Students learn by snapping together visual code blocks or writing simple lines of code.

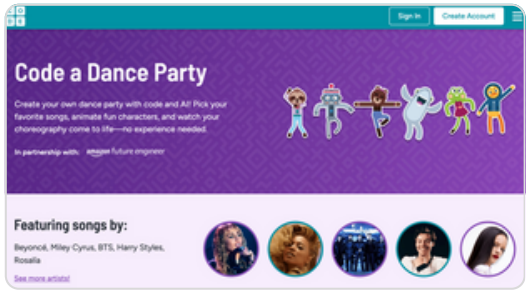
The best part is that you and your students don't need to be coding experts to get started. Most of the tools in this chapter are designed for beginners, so you and your students can jump straight into experimenting.

Whether you're aiming to boost problem-solving skills, include more STEAM activities, or simply try something different, these coding resources can be an engaging activity for all age groups.

TIP: PLAY WITH SCRATCH!

Scratch is one of the most versatile free coding resources. Use it to compose, create virtual instruments and more. Here's a useful tutorial from the Black Girls Code YouTube channel: How To Code A Song

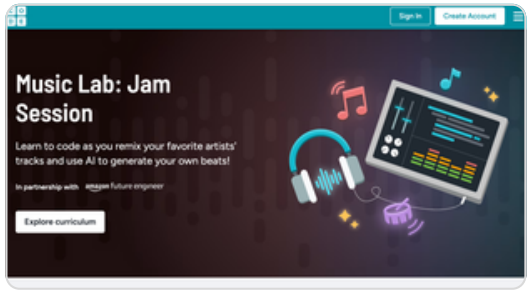




Dance Party

NEW

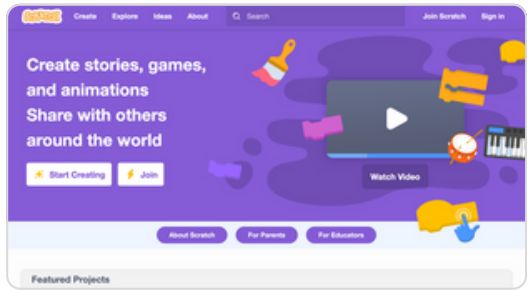
Students use simple drag and drop code blocks to make animated characters dance to a popular song. The songs are REAL recordings of artists like Olivia Rodriguez, BTS, Arianna Grande and Harry Styles. Full tutorial and lesson plan included.



Music Lab: Jam Session

NEW

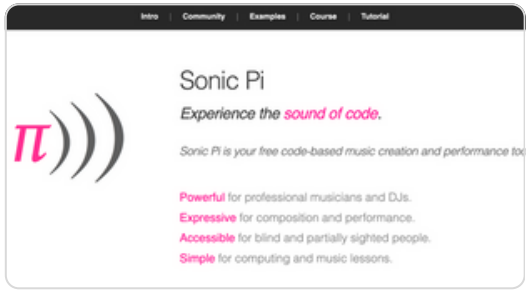
Create remixes of songs by well-known artists by coding with blocks. Includes a series of tutorials, a full lesson plan with teacher's guide and additional resources. Definitely worth exploring!



Scratch

NEW

Hugely popular easy-to-use coding software that lets you build instruments, interactive musical stories and more through drag and drop blocks of code.



Sonic Pi

NEW

Sonic Pi makes coding music fun and accessible. Students write simple code to create loops, beats, and melodies, learning programming and music together. Perfect for STEAM projects and creative coding in middle and high school.

COMPOSING & SONGWRITING

Composing and songwriting tools can help students keep track of ideas, generate chord progressions, sketch out musical thoughts and guide melody writing.

By providing a platform for students to experiment with melodies, harmonies, and lyrics, these tools can encourage them to create their own original music.

Whether your students are beginners or more advanced, these tools offer features that can help them develop their skills, from generating chord progressions to providing instant playback of their compositions.

This section offers something for teachers of all age groups - from elementary music through to high school. Musical composition, experimentation and improvisation can start at any age and these tools can offer a great way for students to express themselves, explore creativity and record their musical ideas.

TIP: ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY BY IMPOSING CONSTRAINTS

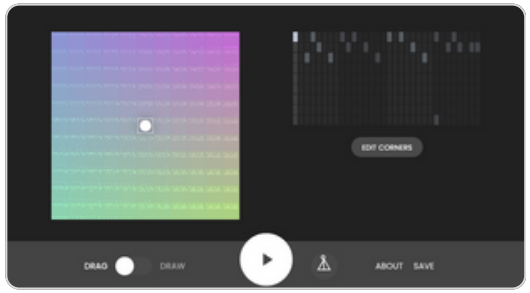
One of the best ways to encourage students to compose is to impose constraints: use just two notes, or compose with only the sounds from a pen. For an extensive list of more than 650 creative prompts that involve constraints, take a look at the Disquiet Junto by Marc Weidenbaum - a project that has been encouraging music-making since 2012 and then take a look at these ideas for using it with your students.

Arpeggios - Chrome Music Lab

Play chords and arpeggios on a brightly colored wheel. Great tool for songwriting with students. Can be used to create and test out effective chord progressions.

Assisted Melody

A Google Arts & Culture Experiment. Enter the notes of a melody through the on screen keyboard, or by clicking on the staff. Click the Harmonize button and the site will use AI to generate harmony in the style of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven.



Beat Blender

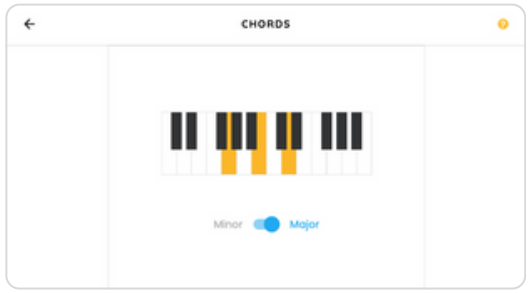
Engage with rhythm in a completely new way by drawing lines and shapes over a sequence of beats to create a new track. Also allows you to change styles of beats within the shape and move between them.

Chord Player - OneMotion

Sketch out chord progressions and hear them played back in a style of your choosing. Play the provided chord progression at the bottom of the screen and drag alternative chords into each slot. Use the Instrument, Style and Scale menus across the top to adjust the output.

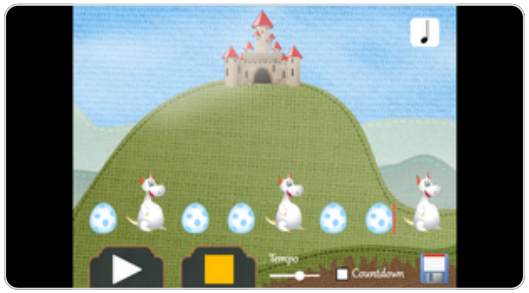
ChordChord (legacy)

Although a paid AI version of ChordChord has now been released, this free legacy version is still available. Generate some chords then play them back. Adjust the style, tempo, key, drum pattern and the chords themselves. Use as a composition starter, or a sketchpad for ideas.



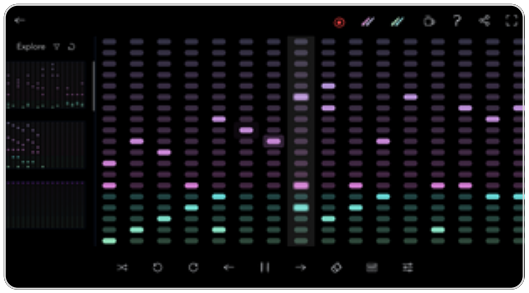
Chords - Chrome Music Lab

An online keyboard which will play a major or minor triad based on the single (tonic) note you play on the screen.



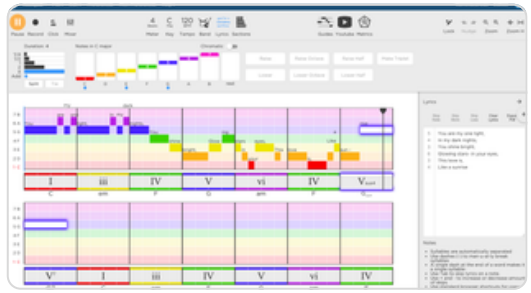
The Dragons Choir - Dr. Musik

Click on eggs at the bottom of the screen to "hatch" dragons that create a rhythmic pattern. You can play the rhythmic pattern or use the second play button to hear the accompaniment.



DrawBeats

An attractive looking step sequencer which includes both percussive and melodic sounds. There are options to change the scale, number of octaves and division of the beat. It's like a slightly more advanced version of the Chrome Music Lab Song Maker.

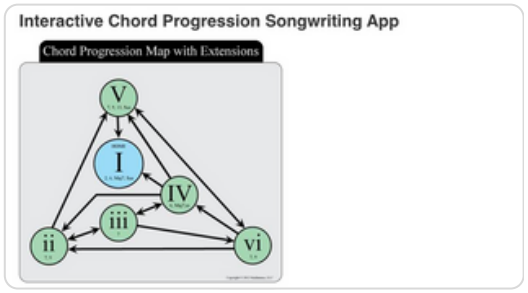


Hookpad - Hooktheory

A graphic-style sequencer for building chord progressions and melodies. It can also suggest effective chords and offer assistance with melody writing (hover your mouse over a chord to see which notes make up that chord). A great songwriting tool for middle and high school students. Extra features in the education account.

La Machine à Chocolats - Dr. Musik

Compose a melody that travels along a conveyor belt to be played. Also includes a longer note editor. Notes correspond to boomwhacker colors.



Learn How To Write Songs: Tools

Some excellent songwriting tools on this site. Spark your creativity with the melody shape generator, random rhythm pattern generator, rhyme scheme generator, daily chord progression and much more. Perfect for middle school and high school students.

Mario Paint Music Composer

Choose a character from the top of the screen (each one makes a different sound) and click on the staff to add the sound to your composition. You can change the time signature, accidentals and snap settings at the bottom of the screen.

Melody Maker - Chrome Music Lab

Click or tap on the grid to create notes and then press play to hear your melody. You can change the tempo with the slider and experiment with duplicating your melody using the copy button. Useful for melody writing and a good precursor to the Song Maker.

RhymeZone

An easy-to-use search engine that helps you find rhymes, near-rhymes, definitions, antonyms, synonyms, common phrases and more for lyric writing of songs, raps, and other word-based activities.

Signal

NEW

A clean, browser-based MIDI editor with a simple piano roll. Students can compose, edit, and export MIDI files right in their browser—perfect for learning sequencing, arranging, and experimenting with digital composition without installing software.

Song Maker - Chrome Music Lab

An extended version of the Melody Maker and a favorite with educators everywhere! Tap on the grid to create notes and then press play to hear your composition. You can adjust the song length, change time signature, increase note range and more. You can also change the tempo and instrument sounds.

WEBINAR

16+ CREATIVE LESSONS FOR SONG MAKER

webinar replay

Need some fresh ideas for the Chrome Music Lab Song Maker? This webinar includes new, creative, fun and often surprising lesson plans to suit all age groups!

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- PD certificate provided

LEARN MORE

MIDNIGHT MUSIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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CREATING TEACHING RESOURCES

Creating engaging teaching materials can be time-consuming, but with the right tech tools, you can make the process faster and more efficient.

These tools can create a range of resources including worksheets, word art images, presentations, crosswords, instrument fingering diagrams, interactive tutorials and even video games.

They often come with drag-and-drop interfaces and pre-designed elements, making it easy to create professional-looking content without needing advanced design skills. By streamlining the resource creation process, these tools can definitely save you time.

You'll find a mix of music-specific and general education resources in this section, the most popular of which is Canva - the online design software which is used by teachers of all subject areas.

CANVA TIPS AND TUTORIALS

Popular design tool Canva is a must-have free tech tool. Eligible teachers can apply for a Canva for Education account which includes the Pro elements and features at no cost.

Looking for Canva tips? Explore these articles:

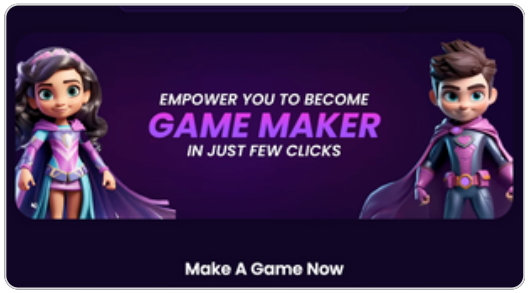
- Learn how to create a one-page Canva website
- Discover game-changing AI features here and here
- Create professional-looking digital and physical concert programs
- Explore 25+ ways to use Canva to create teaching resources

Adobe Express

Adobe Express is an all-in-one media creation tool. You can create images, videos, documents and marketing materials. Adobe Express includes many templates and AI-powered features including Text To Image and Generative Fill. K-12 schools can access most pro features for free.

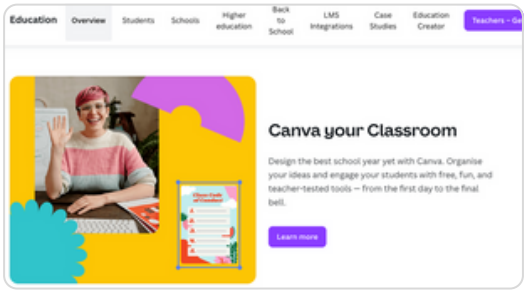
Blush

An online design tool for creating customized illustrations for your presentations and other teaching resources.



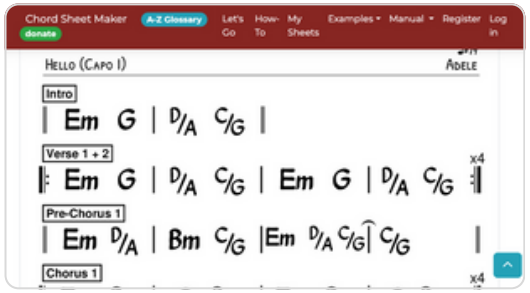
Breshna.io

Create your own video games without any coding! It works a bit like Canva - you choose a game template then customize the background, avatar and the content. Publish your game and share the link with students. Students don't need to log in to play the games that you've created.



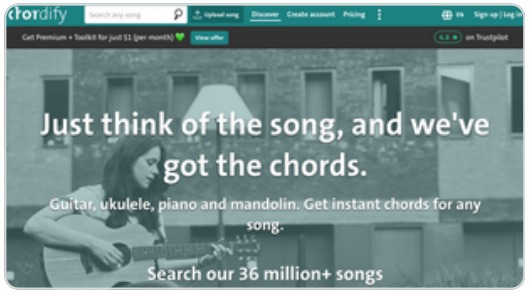
Canva

Hugely popular and incredibly useful design tool for creating your own teaching materials. Includes an extensive library of images, clipart, icons, fonts and templates. New features are added all the time. Educators can sign up for a free account which has all the benefits of the pro account.



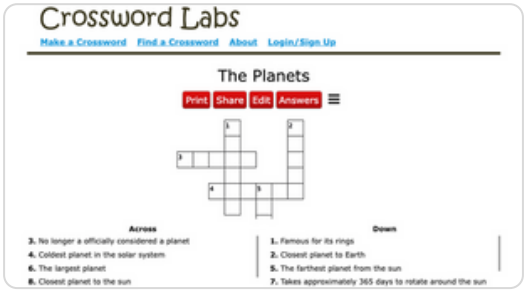
Chord Sheet Maker

A simple way to create decent-looking chord charts! Note that you can't include lyrics. You export the chord chart as a PDF.



Chordify

A free-to-try tool (which then becomes a premium service) that allows you to search for any song on YouTube, Deezer, or SoundCloud and extract the chords. The chords are then displayed karaoke-style for you to play along with the track in real-time.



Crossword Labs

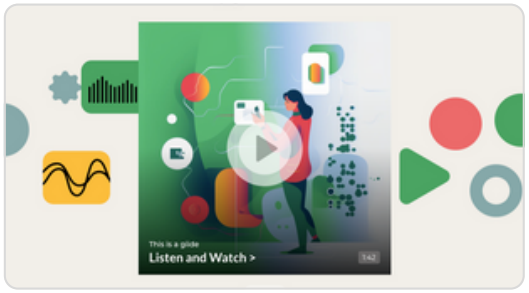
Make your own crosswords! Enter a list of words and clues and the crossword will be generated automatically. You can select a layout from multiple options. Students can complete the crossword online, or by filling in a printed version.

Fingering Diagram Builder

Create fingering diagrams for a range of woodwind instruments including flute, recorder, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. Click on the circles to add the fingering and then download the diagram as an image file to add to your resources.

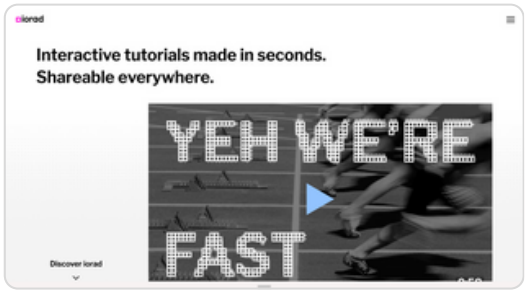
Fococlipping

A simple image background remover with additional tool options to replace the background, add shadows, and adjust the image with basic tools and filters.



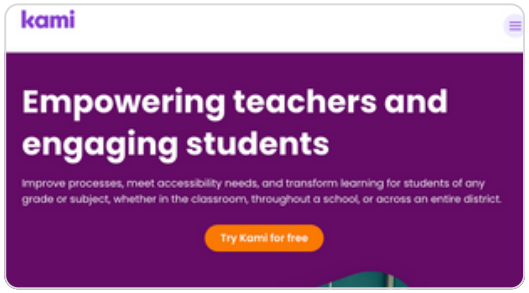
Giide

A free (with paid upgrade) service which allows you to make interactive slides that sync with audio. Great for increasing interaction within a presentation.



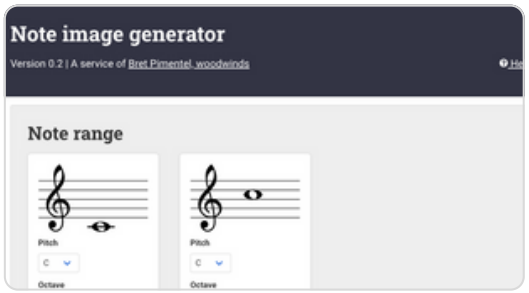
iorad

Create interactive tutorials that point out different parts of the screen for the viewer. Access it free with a personal account where all tutorials are automatically made public. Teachers who want to upgrade can access education pricing. This is very cool and worth a look!



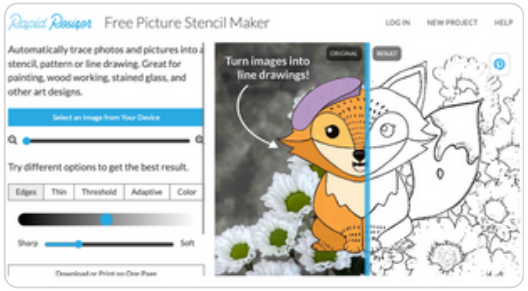
Kami

Convert your paper or PDF worksheets into interactive digital versions that students can fill out and submit back to you. Includes a variety of question types (multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blanks, long answer). Upgrade for audio and video comments & integrations with learning management systems.



Note Image Generator

Create your own images of single notes on a staff with a clef. Select a note range, the sharps and flats and how large you'd like the images to be. Download the images in a zip file. Very useful for creating manipulatives, drag-and-drop activities or worksheets.



Picture Stencil Maker

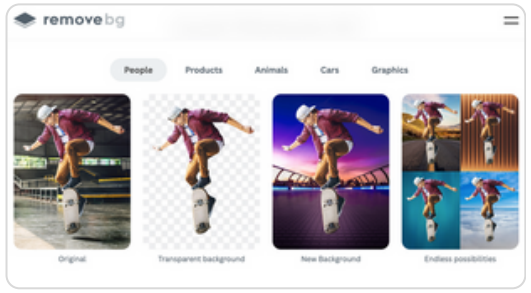
Make your own coloring pages. This stencil maker will automatically trace photos and pictures into a stencil, pattern, line drawing, or sketch.

Polypad by Amplify

Bright, colorful digital manipulatives intended for math but many of them include music and sounds. For example, Fractions show the subdivisions of each note value. Press Play to hear each set of fractions while viewing the note values. Also worth a look are the Numbers & Games and Applications sections.

Practice Journal Templates

Practice journal templates that you can provide to your students to help them stay on track. There are some handy tips for practicing effectively too!

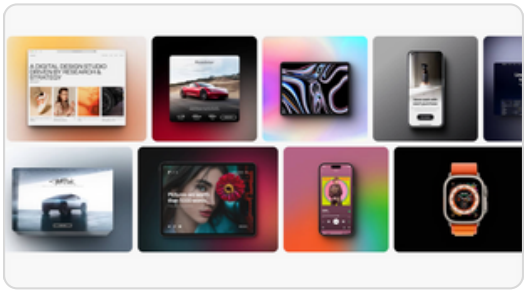


Remove.bg

Ever needed to remove the white background from an image to make it transparent? Remove.bg will do that instantly. Simply upload your photo, watch it remove the background and download the new transparent version.

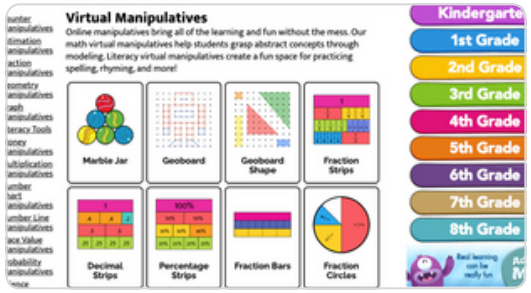
Rhythmstix Chordmaker NEW

Handy online chord image generator that creates clear, easy-to-read chord diagrams. Create the chords you need for a song and then download the image files to use in your teaching resources, or print out a PDF reference for students.



Shots.so

This one is a little niche, but if you ever need to create the type of fancy mockup images you see on software or product websites, then this tool is a good option. Upload an image and it will create the mockup for you automatically.

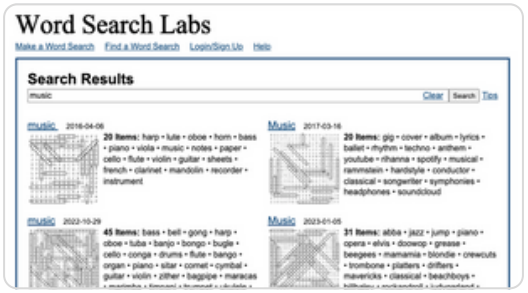


Virtual Manipulatives - Toy Theater

Designed for math teachers, there are some useful tools in here for ALL teachers- including virtual timers, spinners, dice and more.

Word Art

Type in a list of words and click a button to see them transformed into word art. There are LOTS of options: a variety of template shapes, fonts, colors and symbols. This an excellent way for you or your students to create artwork for the classroom or for presentations.



Word Search Labs

Make your own word search. Create a list of words and enter them into a box. The word search will be generated automatically. Students can complete the puzzle online, or by printing it out.

ONLINE COURSE

CREATE BEAUTIFUL TEACHING RESOURCES WITH CANVA

online course

Learn how to design gorgeous and functional teaching resources with the education community's favorite design tool Canva! Create 6 projects and discover tips and tricks along the way.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
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DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS

Digital portfolios are an excellent way for students to document their musical journey and showcase their progress over time.

These platforms allow students to collect and organize their work, including recordings, compositions, performance videos, and reflections on their learning experiences.

For music teachers, digital portfolios offer a valuable tool for tracking student growth and providing personalized feedback.

They also make it easy to share students' work with parents or use it as part of the assessment process.

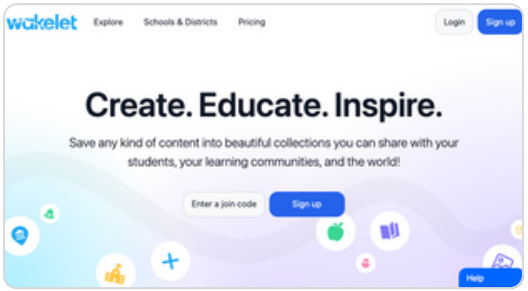
By choosing the right platform, students can incorporate multimedia artifacts such as audio, video, images and text into their portfolios.

Keeping track of progress over time through a digital portfolio is also a very effective way to prove authorship of creative work and to help combat the potential incorrect use of generative AI tools. Plus, they're a great way to keep everything organized in one place, making it easy to review and reflect on students' achievements throughout the school year.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS IN ACTION: A WAKELET EXAMPLE

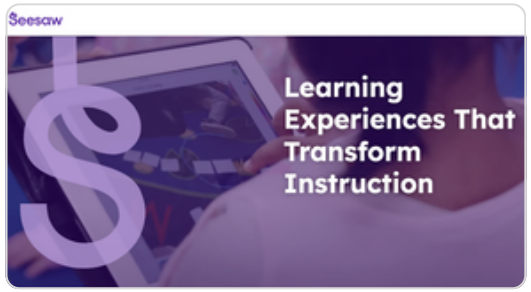
Wakelet is a useful solution for creating student portfolios that include multimedia such as images, videos, audio and text.

Discover how one teacher was able to show the story of student learning in her music classroom with Wakelet.



Wakelet

Collect, organize, curate and share different types of multimedia including links, documents, videos and more. Perfect for students to use for digital portfolios and for teachers to use to organize resources.



Seesaw

Classroom platform for capturing and sharing student learning. Teachers can create interactive activities and students can respond in their learning journal using a variety of multimedia. You can upgrade to access more features. Works well with most age groups but is very popular with teachers of young students.

Google Sites

Free website builder from Google. It's a perfect solution for student digital portfolios because the website structure offers a lot of flexibility. Students can include all types of multimedia and take advantage of the organization features. Sites can also be used to create a class or music department website or serve as a "home" for your teaching resources.

WEBINAR

WAKELET IN MUSIC EDUCATION

webinar replay

Learn how you can use Wakelet to organize digital resources, create digital portfolios, practice journals, listening diaries and more.

LEARN MORE

ONLINE COURSE

SEESAW FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

online course

In the Seesaw for Music Teachers online course, you'll learn how to get started with Seesaw, step-by-step from an experienced elementary music teacher. Discover the best tips for creating engaging and interactive multimedia activities that students love, how to manage student work effectively and more!

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime

LEARN MORE

DJ SOFTWARE

By exploring DJ software you can expand the creative possibilities for students in your music classes.

Students can explore the art of mixing, remixing, beat-matching and creating new sounds. Although these tools can be user-friendly, if you or your students need guidance and tips, there are a number of YouTube videos available to help you out.

Note that some DJ software requires you to have your own library of music, while a number of the web-based options use music from online sources like YouTube or subscription-based music libraries. It's also important to check the music that is utilized by the software to make sure it's school-friendly.

Whether you're introducing students to the basics of beat-matching and looping or letting them experiment with creating their own tracks, learning DJ skills offers a hands-on approach to learning about music production and live performance.

TEACHING STUDENTS TO DJ

There are a number of resources that will help you teach students to DJ, but if you'd like a starting point, Phil from the Digital DJ Tips YouTube channel has a How To Teach Your Kid To DJ article with walkthrough video, plus a follow-up titled My Ten-Year-Old Girl Just Played Her First DJ Gig - Here's What Happened.

Mixxx

Advanced free open source DJ software for Mac, Windows and Linux. Includes BPM & key detection sync, controller support, sound effects, vinyl record control, and more.

Serato Lite

The Lite version of the pro-level Serato DJ software. Comes with Practice Mode that doesn't require any hardware. You can purchase hardware (like a DJ controller) later and students can continue using Serato DJ Lite until they're ready to move on to pro software.

Virtual DJ

A free (for home-use) software for Mac or Windows, which includes a stand-alone DJ mixer, plug & play auto-detection of devices, basic video and audio mixing, and real-time separation of track audio. Requires you to use local music files or online subscription music services.

YouDJ For Education

YouDJ lets you try your hand at mixing two YouTube music videos together. Lots of fun and not as easy as it looks! This EDU version of YouDJ is a great beginner option and has school-safe lyrics.

EAR TRAINING

Ear training is a fundamental skill for any musician, and the most effective way to improve is to practice over and over...and over!

This is where technology excels: it can provide an unlimited number of exercises in multiple categories which can be repeated endlessly.

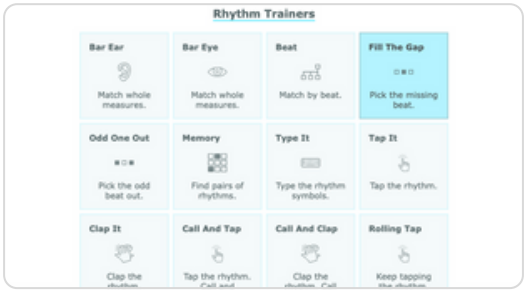
Ear training tools can also make it fun for students to develop their aural skills. Whether they're practicing interval recognition, chord identification, or rhythmic dictation, ear training tools provide exercises that can be tailored to different skill levels.

Many of these tools offer interactive exercises with instant feedback, helping students learn on the spot. They can also save you time by auto-grading the exercises.

As a music teacher, you can use these tools during classroom instruction - in whole-class activities or set up as a tech station. They can also supplement your lessons and provide students with an option for independent study.

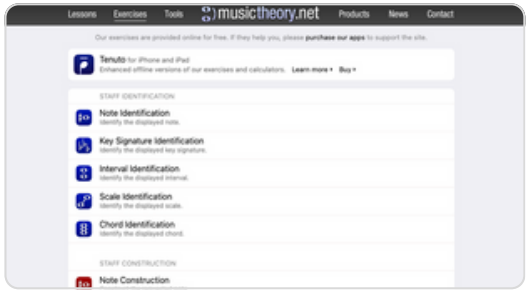
TIP: MIX IT UP!

It's a good idea to use a variety of the available tech tools with your students when it comes to ear training. Each one has it's own strengths and weaknesses and by using a combination of apps and websites you'll keep things fresh for your students and cover a range of skills in the process.



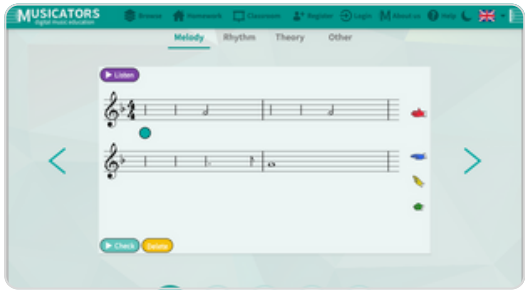
4four.io

Over a dozen rhythm mini-activities, ear trainers, and rhythmic games to boost engagement with rhythm and musical notation.



Ear Training Exercises

A set of customizable ear-training exercises from musictheory.net including Keyboard, Note, Interval, Scale and Chord Ear Training. You can also use the Exercise Customizer for Teachers to send your students a link with your chosen parameters.



Musicators

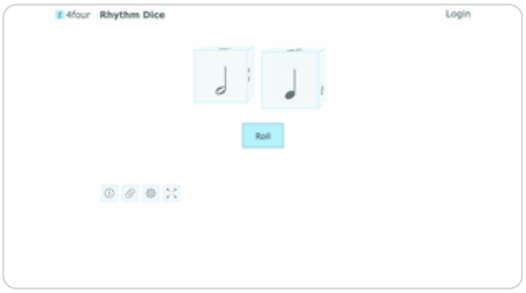
Create self-grading drag-and-drop Kodaly-based activities for your students: melodic and rhythmic dictation, listening activities and more. There is also a library of pre-made exercises.

Practice Solfege

Interactive solfege tool that allows you to select a key from the circle of fifths and hear the pitches of the chosen scale sung in solfa (using moveable do). There is an image of the hand sign underneath each note. You can also challenge yourself by sight-singing the randomly generated melody at the bottom of the page.

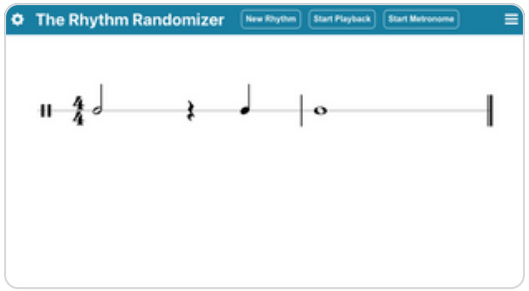
Rhythm Decryptor - Dr. Musik

Listen to the rhythm being played and identify it out of four possibilities.



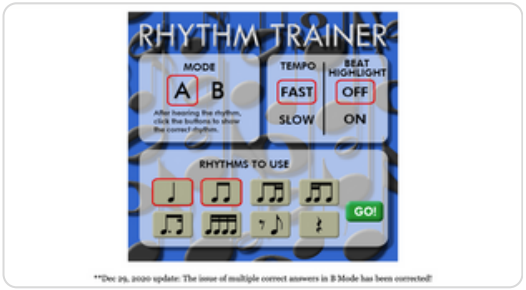
Rhythm Dice - 4four.io

Roll the dice to build different random rhythms or use as a fun sight-reading activity with students.



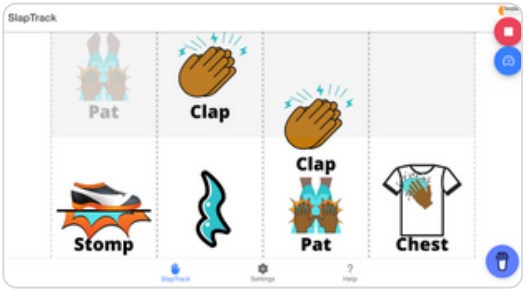
Rhythm Randomizer

Rhythm Randomizer lets you generate rhythms for sight-reading practice. You can set the time signature, rhythmic elements, measures, playback tempo and metronome. You can also use it to generate rhythm images for worksheets and presentations.



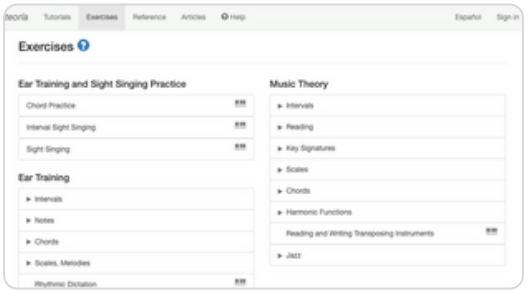
Rhythm Trainer

A free rhythm training site where students can practice identifying rhythms in two ways - either by clicking on the components of the rhythm they hear, or by seeing a rhythm on the screen and identifying the correct matching audio file.



SlapTrack

Body percussion playalong! This is a cool tool that shows body percussion images that you can play along with. Easily create an interactive body percussion activity with different movements, speeds, and opportunities for improvisation.



Teoria Ear Training

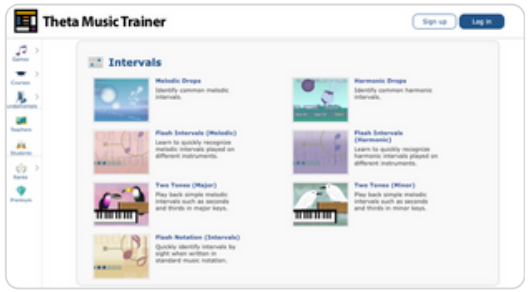
A series of free ear training exercises. Choose the settings for your exercise and then get started. You can sign in to save your scores.

The Forest of Instruments - Dr. Musik

Travel through a forest to encounter different instrument sounds. Identify the instrument being played to progress through the story and rescue the magical creatures.

The Sea of Rhythms - Dr. Musik

Perform different rhythms as a class or individually through body percussion or on instruments to collect treasure. Works best as a guided activity with students and the teacher.



Theta Music Trainer

A range of good quality, innovative games (around 50!) for ear training and music theory. The first 3 levels of each game are free, and you can purchase a subscription to access higher levels. The site keeps track of your progress and suggests areas for improvement. Game categories include sound, pitch, tonality, intervals, melody, harmony and rhythm.

Virtual Percussions - Dr. Musik

Click to play different virtual percussion instruments or use your computer keyboard. Also includes a "name that instrument" sound identification game and a call & response activity.

READ

Free Music Tech Resource Highlight: 4four.io

Free Music Tech Resource Highlight: Dr. Musik

Fun ideas - Rhythm Randomizer

WEBINAR

TOP 10 RHYTHM READING APPS

webinar replay

Take a fresh look at rhythm apps and websites that have been around for years and discover a number of new apps that you might not have seen before.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

FREE LESSON PLANS & PD

There are a number of useful free lesson plans and guides that incorporate or utilize technology if you know where to look.

This first part of this section features a selection of free lesson resources from the Midnight Music website. Many include downloadable resources such as worksheets, quizzes, lesson outlines and links to related websites and apps. Included is a selection of free Midnight Music webinars which allow you to earn a professional development certificate of attendance.

The second part of this section features interactive lesson resources from other websites. Use them to supplement your own teaching materials, or include them in your substitute teacher resource collection.

USING FREE LESSON MATERIALS

Free lesson plans, resources and other teaching materials can be incorporated into your lessons in many ways. They can be used as supplementary materials, they can be used “as is,” or simply as source of inspiration.

You can also adapt the ideas presented: simplify the activity, add extensions or change the software or app used if needed.

As always, make sure to check the entire lesson or activity through (and do the project yourself!) before using it with your own students.

FREE MIDNIGHT MUSIC LESSONS

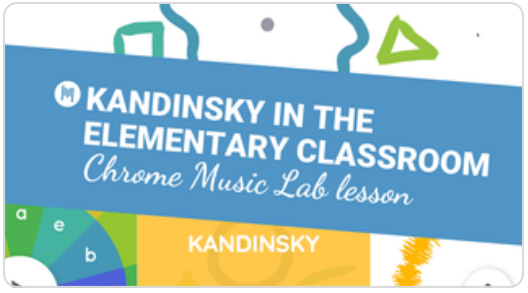
50+ Lesson Ideas for Chrome Music Lab

C Major Phrases on Shared Piano in Chrome Music Lab

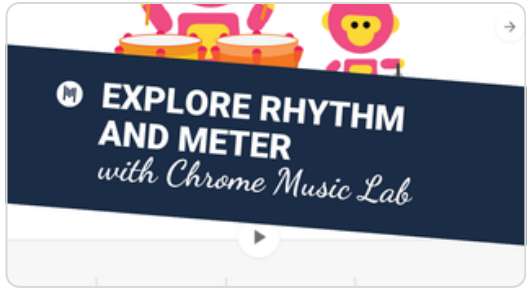
Holiday Season Chrome Music Lab Song Maker Lesson

Star Wars Chrome Music Lab Song Maker Lesson

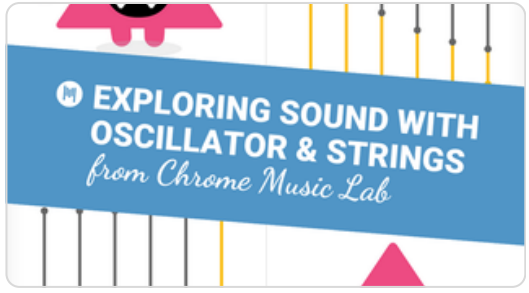
Halloween Chrome Music Lab Song Maker Lesson



Using Chrome Music Lab's Kandinsky in the Elementary Music Room



Explore Rhythm and Meter with the Chrome Music Lab



Exploring Sounds with Chrome Music Lab's Oscillator and Strings

[Rap My Name Free Lesson]

[What's in a Name? GarageBand for iPad Free Lesson]

[Musical Me: An Easy Back-To-School Free Lesson]

[Scoring a Film Clip in GarageBand, Soundtrap & BandLab Free Guide]

[Creating Film Music: A Step-By-Step Manual]

[Halloween Activity: Live Film Scoring With Elementary Students]

[The Guide to Composing Music for Video Games]

[Composing Music for Video Games: Free Guide and Project Outline]

[Composing a Leitmotif in Flat or Noteflight Free Lesson]

[How to Write Blues Lyrics Free Lesson]

[Transforming the Blues Free GarageBand iPad Lesson]

[Restyling the Blues: An Engaging Back-to-School Activity for BandLab]

[Teaching Beatboxing Basics with Incredibox Free Lesson]

[How to Beatbox: Boots 'n Cats and Other Simple Sentences]

[How to Record a TikTok Harmony Builder in Soundtrap, BandLab or GarageBand]

[Using Incredibox to Introduce Remixing Free Lesson]

[The Found Sound Challenge Free Lesson]

[Reverse-Engineering a Drumbeat Free Lesson]

[Unusual Musical Instruments: An Adaptable Free Lesson]

[Clapping Music by Steve Reich Free Rhythm Lesson]

[The Musical Olympics Free Choice Board-Style Lesson]

[Emoji Quiz Holiday Songs Edition Free Download]

[Better Than The Original? Free Listening Lesson] NEW

★★★★★

"How much do I love having found you?!!! Your YouTube video on how to create flashcards has allowed me to create 4 levels of a piano curriculum series.

The pace and detail of your videos are so perfect. You always directly teach the subject, again, answering questions before they arise and I never find myself thinking, 'just get to the point.'

I just discovered your website and I can't wait to see what else I can learn from you."

Jeffrey Pettijohn
music teacher

FREE MIDNIGHT MUSIC WEBINARS

5 Fantastic Designs Teachers Can Create Using Canva Free Webinar

In this free webinar, we'll look at 5 fantastic ways teachers can use Canva: from creating beautiful teaching materials or promotional posters with a twist, to motivational digital badges, quick, easy videos (yes, videos!) or GIFs.

Innovative Ways to Use Wheel of Names in Music Class Free Webinar

Wheel of Names is a customizable spinning wheel: change colors, add notation images, music symbols, emojis or text. This webinar will explore innovative activities for performing, practicing, revision, composition and more.

Music Teachers: Organize Your Digital Life! Free Webinar

Let me guess…your computer desktop is littered with documents so you don't lose them, you have files stored all over the place, there are 17 tabs open in your browser and you STILL can't find anything when you need it? Let's get on top of it all!

5 Simple Video Editing Skills for Music Teachers Free Webinar

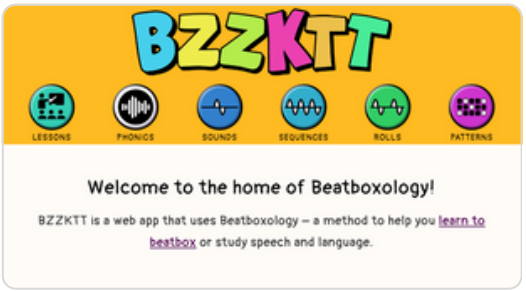
Having a few basic video editing skills in your repertoire can be incredibly useful. In this free webinar, we'll look at 5 simple skills music teachers can learn which will apply to any video editing software.

★★★★★

"Put the Midnight Music subscription into your budget. The annual subscription allows music teachers access to the best PD [Professional Development] there is!"

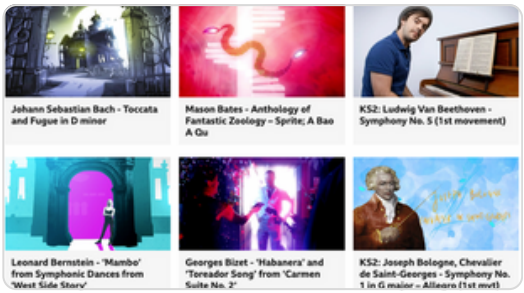
Alana Frankum
member

MORE FREE LESSON RESOURCES



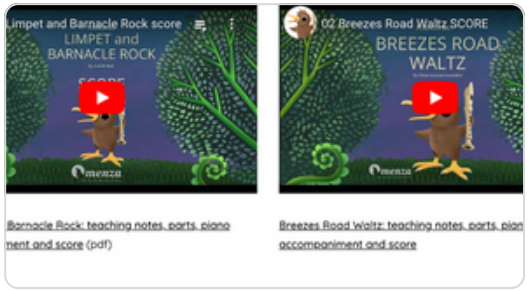
BzzKtt Free Interactive Beatboxing Lessons

An extensive, well-organized resource for learning how to beatbox. If you're interested in teaching your students beatboxing skills, you MUST check this out. There are a series of lessons, audio examples, a unique notation method, videos and more.



BBC Ten Pieces

A growing collection of resources to help you teach well known, unique or groundbreaking classical pieces. Includes lesson plans, teaching materials and orchestral and choral arrangements you can use with students.



Kiwicorder Free Recorder Compositions with Teaching Resources

Kiwicorder is a set of 13 compositions for beginner to more advanced recorder players by Judith Bell and Michael Bell. Each piece has easy descant parts and parts for more experienced players. Learning outcomes, play-along videos plus audio demos and backings are included.

Learning Music

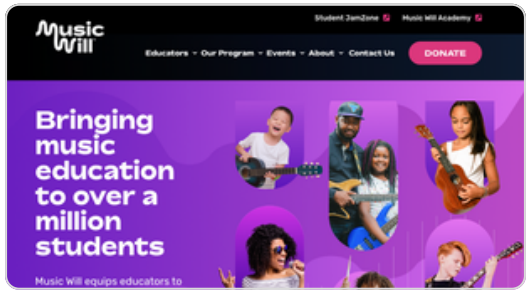
Learn the basics of music-making with this series of interactive step-by-step lessons by Ableton. Covers beats, notes, scales, chords, basslines, and melodies and uses popular music to illustrate examples. Perfect for independent student work. Tip: the menu button at top left will reveal the full list of modules and lessons.

Learning Synths

Learn how synthesizers work with this series of interactive step-by-step lessons by Ableton. Perfect for independent student work, or for teachers who need to brush up on the basics of sound synthesis. Tip: click on the menu button at top right to see the complete list of lessons

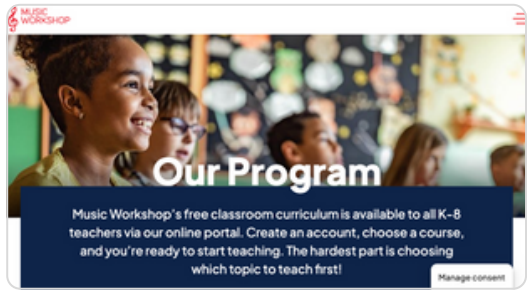
Melodic Development and EDM Lesson Resources - Shed the Music

A free sample unit of work from the Shed the Music curriculum which features Soundtrap (could be adapted to other software). Use the tabs to navigate through background materials, interactive resources, examples, listening exercises and a creative project.



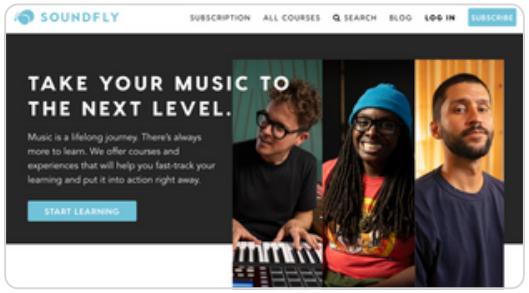
Music Will

This nonprofit organization shares a variety of free teaching resources. Includes some lessons that require instruments and others that do not. The lessons cover basic skills for guitar, bass, keyboard and uke. The non-instrument lessons feature body percussion, hip-hop basics, composition and GarageBand.



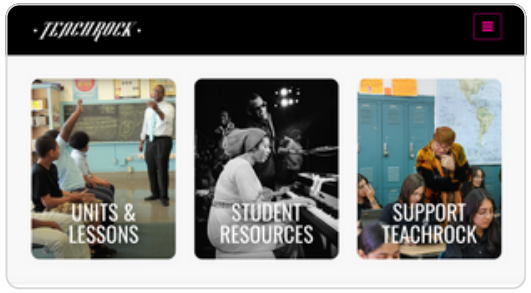
Music Workshop

Video lessons and accompanying worksheets for grade K-8. Covers musical genres, instruments and careers. Fully supported by donations and grants.



Soundfly

A range of music production courses which are perfect for middle and high school students. Categories include Produce, Write, Play, Hustle and Discover and there are free courses in each category, with additional courses available via subscription.

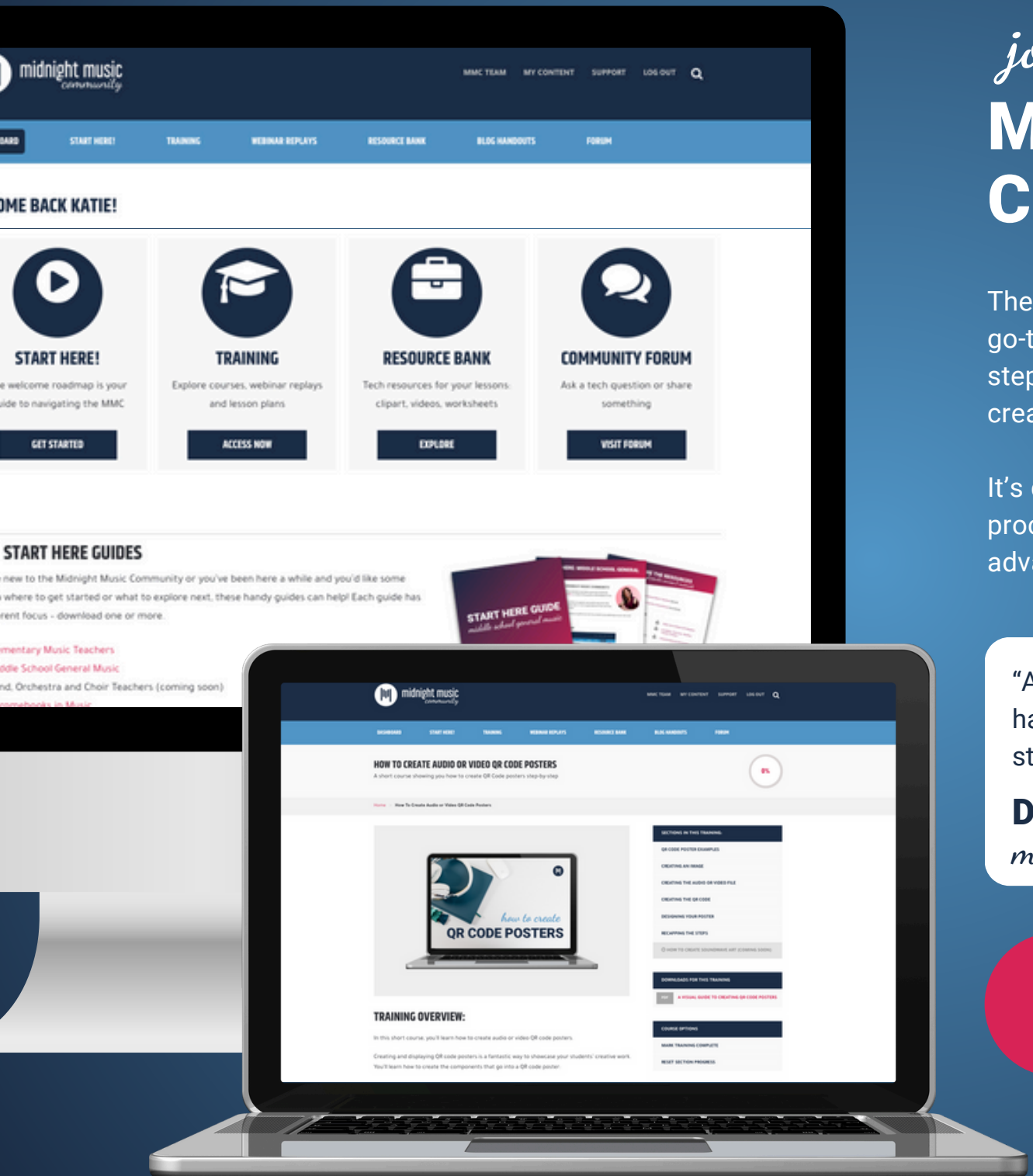


TeachRock

An extensive collection of lessons and activities that use the history of popular music and culture to help teachers engage students. Lesson plans are developed by experts and there are many cross-curricular tie-ins. TeachRock is completely free.

TED-Ed Lessons

TED-Ed lesson feature TED Talks with accompany animations that can be used in classes. TED-Ed includes an interactive tool that can be used to add questions, discussion topics and follow-up resources. You can also use the platform to set up your own video lessons using any other video on YouTube.



join us inside the

MIDNIGHT MUSIC COMMUNITY

The Midnight Music Membership Community is your go-to hub for tech-focused professional development: step-by-step training, world-class online courses and creative lesson ideas.

It's designed for teachers of all skill levels - from self-proclaimed 'technophobes' to intermediate and advanced tech users.

"After teaching music for 30 years, Midnight Music has helped me refresh my lessons & excite my students."

Deborah Gutowski
music teacher

SPECIAL OFFER:
14-DAY TRIAL JUST $1

IDENTIFY NOTES ON THE STAFF

Being fluent with the notes on the music staff is crucial part of reading music and with the right tech tools, learning the notes can also be an engaging and interactive experience.

There are a range of websites and apps available that are designed to help students of all levels quickly and effectively memorize the notes on the staff through a variety of exercises and games.

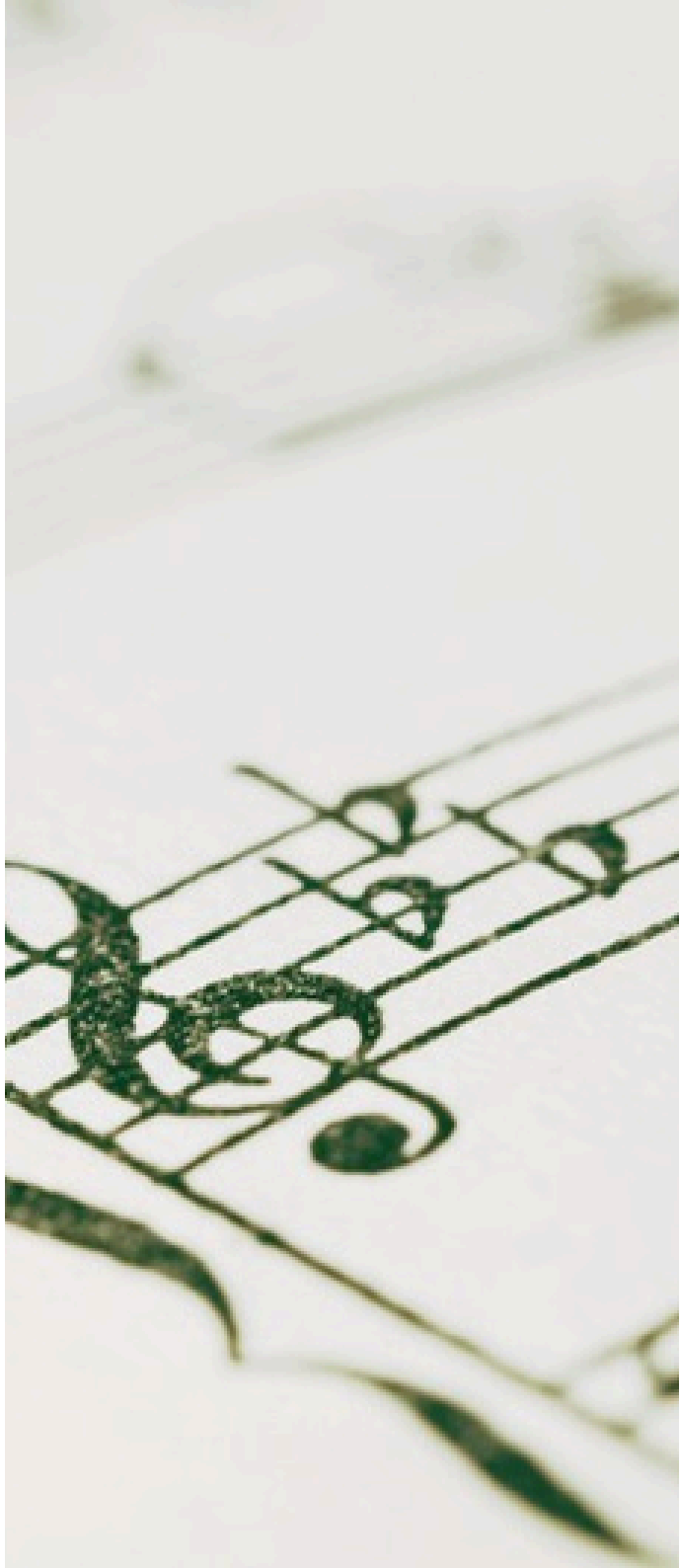
Many of these platforms offer customizable quizzes, flashcards, and interactive games that make the learning process fun.

These apps are invaluable for providing targeted practice, tracking student progress, and identifying areas that need more attention. There are options for beginners just starting out with reading music and for more advanced students looking to sharpen their skills.

SPOTLIGHT ON DR. MUSIK

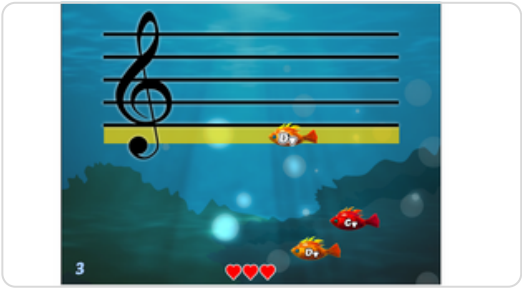
The Dr. Musik website - created by elementary music teacher Thierry Simard - is a treasure trove of interactive music games and activities.

The site includes four different staff reading games. Apple Picking and Aquarium are for young beginner students, The Robot Factory is a Staff-Wars style game in which students build robots when they correctly identify notes and the most innovative one is Staff Dungeon (perfect for older students) which is an adventure-style puzzle game.



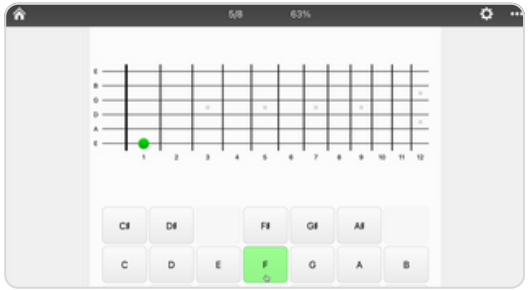
Apple Picking by Dr. Musik

Click and drag different note-named apples from the apple tree to their place on a treble or bass clef staff.



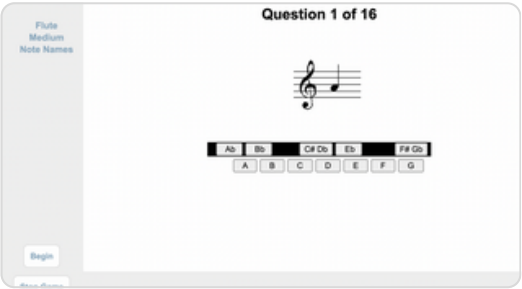
Aquarium by Dr. Musik

Click and drag different note-named fish to their place on a treble or bass clef staff before they swim across the screen.



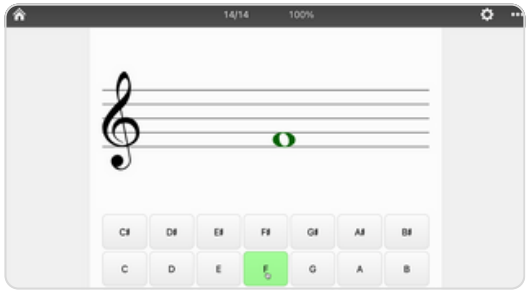
Fretboard Note Identification Trainer

Identify notes on the fretboard by selecting the answer at the bottom. You can customize the exercise (ie. leave out some notes) by using the Customize menu at the top right of the screen. There are options to turn the timer and score on or off.



Music Racer

Race the clock to name notes of the staff, identify fingerings for your instrument or define music terms.



Note Identification Trainer

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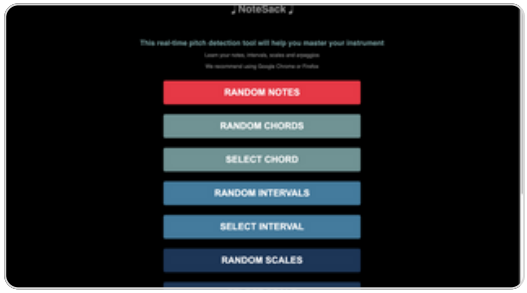
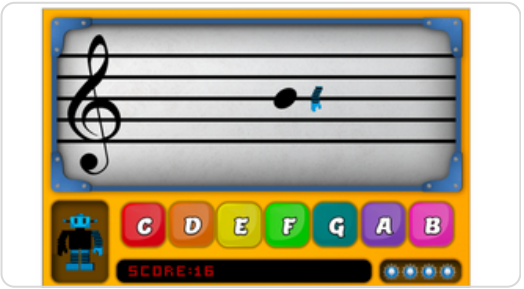


Notesack

Identify notes, chords, intervals and scales by playing them on your instrument. Notesack listens to your instrument as you play and lets you know whether you've played the note, chord, interval or scale correctly.

Staff Dungeon by Dr. Musik

Navigate through different levels of a medieval dungeon by naming notes on the staff.



The Robot Factory by Dr. Musik

Identify notes that appear on the screen before the note reaches the clef. Can use letter names or solfa. Correct answers earn robot body parts! Build robots and box them up when complete.

WEBINAR

TOP 10 NOTE NAMING APPS

webinar replay

Discover the best note naming apps for your students. Learn how to customize settings and explore a range of note identification modes.

- inside the Midnight Music Community
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

MANAGE YOUR CLASS

In this section, you'll find a handful of free tech tools to help you manage your class and run lessons smoothly.

The popular Classroom Screen is one that is loved by teachers of all subject areas and can help manage student behavior, provide access to a handy timer and display important information at a glance for you and your students.

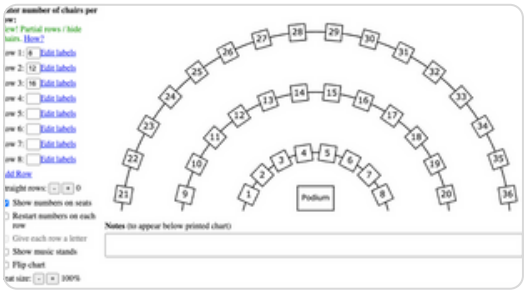
The Band/Orchestra Seating Chart tool is a fantastic resource for creating customized ensemble seating plans with music stand placement and it can also be used for choirs.

Lastly, the random name selectors - like the popular Wheel Of Names - offer ways to choose students or upcoming activities. You can also keep students engaged by using them to make warm-ups, drills and rhythm exercises fun. If you'd like to discover fun ways to use Wheel of Names, you can watch a free webinar replay (see below).

INNOVATIVE WAYS TO USE THE WHEEL OF NAMES

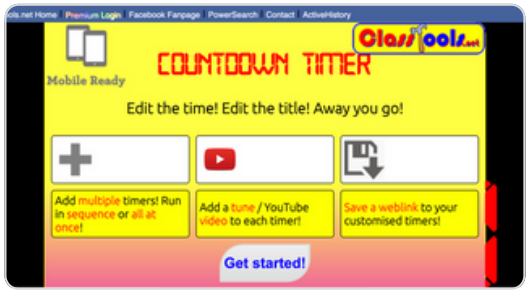
free webinar

WATCH NOW



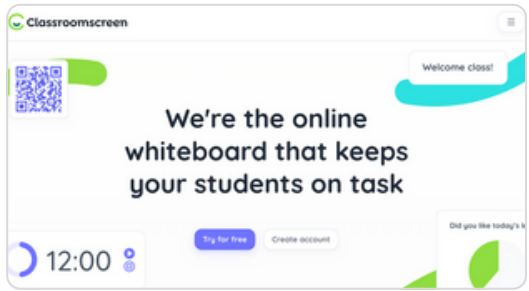
Band/Orchestra Seating Chart

Build your own band/orchestra/choir seating chart plan. Get started by entering the number of seats for each row. Add labels, show or hide music stands and color-code sections. You can share your chart with a link, download a PDF version or save it for later. Super-useful tool!



Countdown Timer

Countdown timer with background music option. Choose a soundtrack from the drop-down menu. Options include Mission Impossible, Hawaii 5-0 and Star Wars (among others!).



Classroom Screen

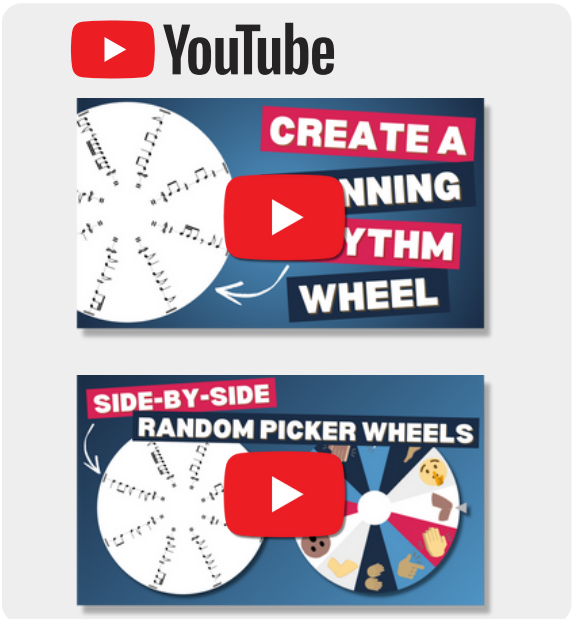
A customizable whiteboard-style screen which you can use to save your voice, manage student behaviors, display a clock, run a class poll, select students from a list, show a timer and more. The basic account is free and you can upgrade for additional features.

Random Name Picker

A simple customizable wheel of fortune-style student picker.

Wheel of Names

An excellent wheel selector tool you can customize in LOTS of ways. You can use it to randomly pick students for activities, choose the next song to sing, etc. You can add text items to each segment or upload images.



MUSIC DISCOVERY & HISTORY

If you've ever wanted to explore different music styles with your students, there are a number of useful websites that can help you out.

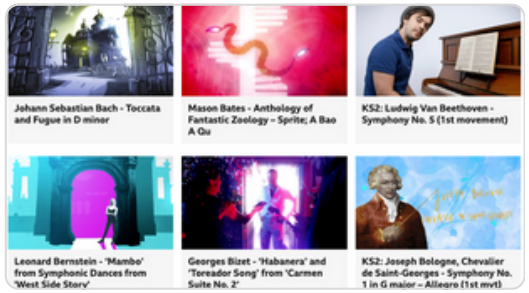
These resources provide a wide array of musical genres, from classical and jazz to rock, hip-hop, and world music, offering students a chance to discover and appreciate a diverse range of styles.

Many of these platforms feature interactive timelines, audio samples, and videos. Some include virtual instruments and composition activities that allow students to create their own music inspired by the genres they study.

Highlights include the BBC Ten Pieces collection which takes you on a deep-dive into a well-known or unique piece of music and includes lesson plans, teaching materials and even student-friendly arrangements and the Who Sampled website which explores songs that have been sampled and songs that include samples of other songs. Eye-opening and fascinating!

SPOTLIGHT ON BBC TEN PIECES

The BBC music education initiative Ten Pieces aims to "open up the world of classical music to 7-14 year olds and inspire them to develop their own creative responses to the music." Free teaching resources, engaging short films, lesson plans, and arrangements are provided for a large collection of well-known and unique classical, film and contemporary pieces. The growing collection currently consists of 40 pieces. Definitely worth a look!

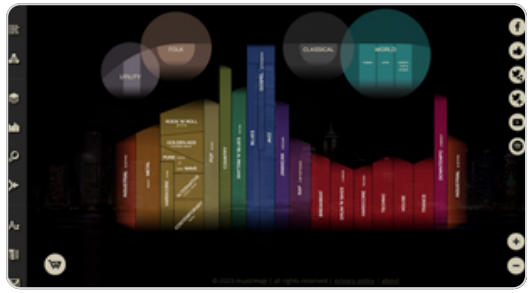


BBC Ten Pieces

A growing collection of resources to help you teach well known, unique or groundbreaking classical pieces. Includes lesson plans, teaching materials and orchestral and choral arrangements you can use with students.

Every Noise All At Once

From techno to deep opera, if you are looking for a specific musical genre, you will most definitely find it on this site. Search by artist for a sample of their work, or search by genre for a sample of that “sound." This site is INCREDIBLY comprehensive.

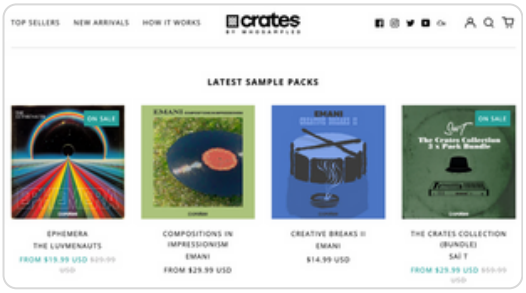


Musicmap

Explore music of different genres through this music map. Zoom in on different areas to see very specific styles. You can read about the styles, plus see a list of example songs that you can also listen to on Spotify or YouTube.

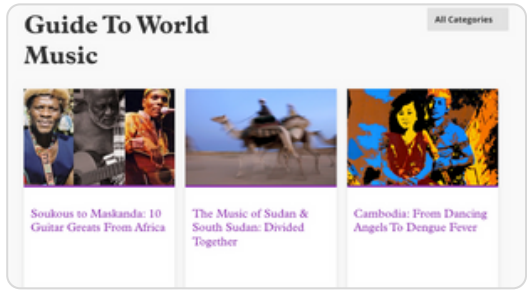
Radiooooo

Explore music of different countries and eras: click a location on the map and choose a decade to listen to a random music selection. Best suited to older students since you never quite know what you're going to get!



WhoSampled

Explore song samples - or songs that have been sampled! Search for a specific song and discover which samples have been used in that song. Select the sample to hear a side-by-side comparison with the original. This site is not suitable for young students (explicit lyrics).



World Music Network

This guide uses a world map to help you find music styles, popular artists, and traditional instruments from all over the world.

MUSIC THEORY

Music theory websites and apps can be invaluable when it comes to understanding the foundations of music and there are resources available for a broad range of students' ages - from elementary through to high school.

Many of the sites include lesson information, explaining the concepts first and then providing exercises, games and drills to reinforce the learning.

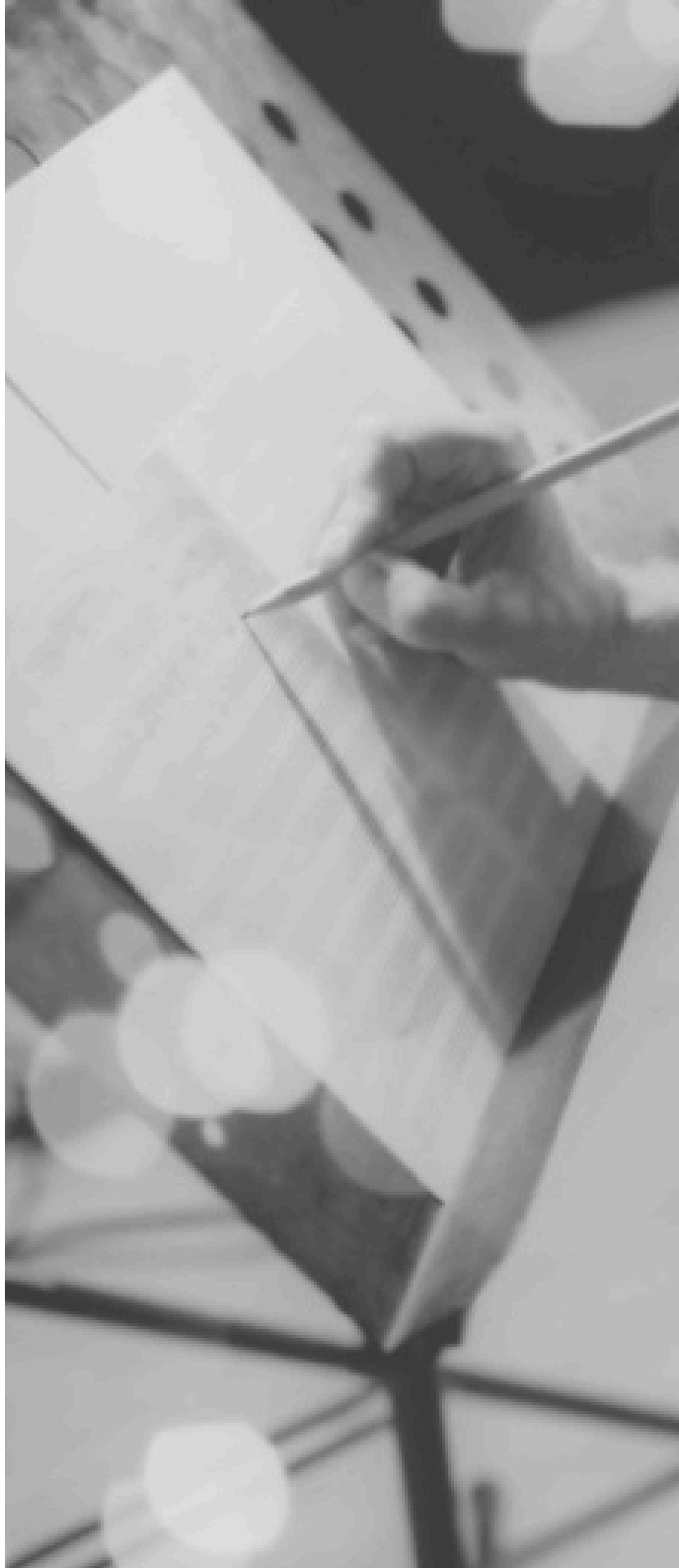
A broad range of topics are represented, including note naming, scales, chords, intervals, rhythm and harmonic analysis and there are interactive lessons, exercises, quizzes and visual aids that reinforce key concepts.

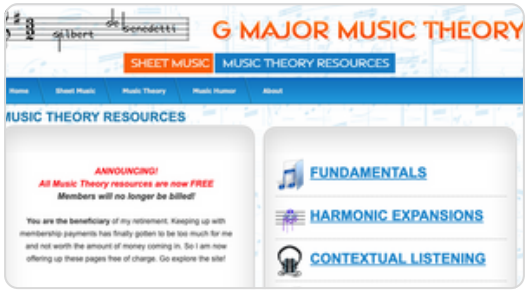
One of the best options in this category is musictheory.net which also has a (paid) mobile app version. It includes clear, easy-to-follow lessons and a series of exercises which you can customize and save.

If you work with younger students, newcomer Noteful is bright, colorful and definitely worth a look.

TIP: SET UP CUSTOMIZED THEORY EXERCISES AND SHARE THEM VIA A LINK

Musictheory.net is one of the most popular free music theory sites for teachers and students alike. Did you know that you can save time by setting up customized exercises for your students? Select specific parameters for the exercise (note values, clefs, rhythmic values, etc.) and then send students the special link.





G Major Music Theory

A music theory website covering fundamentals, listening activities and dictation.

Musicards: Music Theory Flashcards

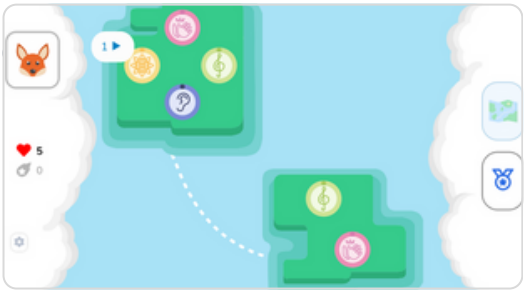
Flashcards for note names, key signatures, intervals, triads and more. Roll your mouse over the card to reveal the answer. You can generate new questions with a click.

Musictheory.net

Step-by-step music theory lessons and interactive exercises. Teachers can create tailored exercises for students using the Exercise Customizer for Teachers. Choose exercise settings and then send your students a special access link.

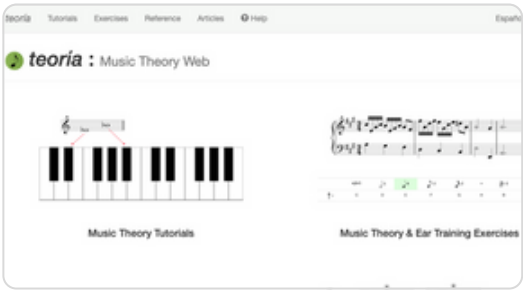
Muted.io

A collection of useful interactive music theory tools. Fair warning - there's A LOT to explore here! Take a look at the Cheat Sheet page, where you can select a key and then see the collection of scales, modes, diatonic chords, intervals, scale degrees and more in that key.



Noteful

Music theory tutorials, exercises, references and articles. Offers good control over settings for ear-training exercises. Includes an analysis section with works by Bach, Chopin, Debussy and Schumann.



Teoria

Music theory tutorials, exercises, references and articles. Offers good control over settings for ear-training exercises. Includes an analysis section with works by Bach, Chopin, Debussy and Schumann.

NOTATION SOFTWARE

Notation software is a must-have for both teachers and students alike and these days we are spoiled for choice.

It's possible to create music notation on almost any device and there are both cloud-based options as well as the more traditional desktop versions.

As a teacher you might need to create your own arrangements, transcribe existing pieces or prepare short examples for teaching materials.

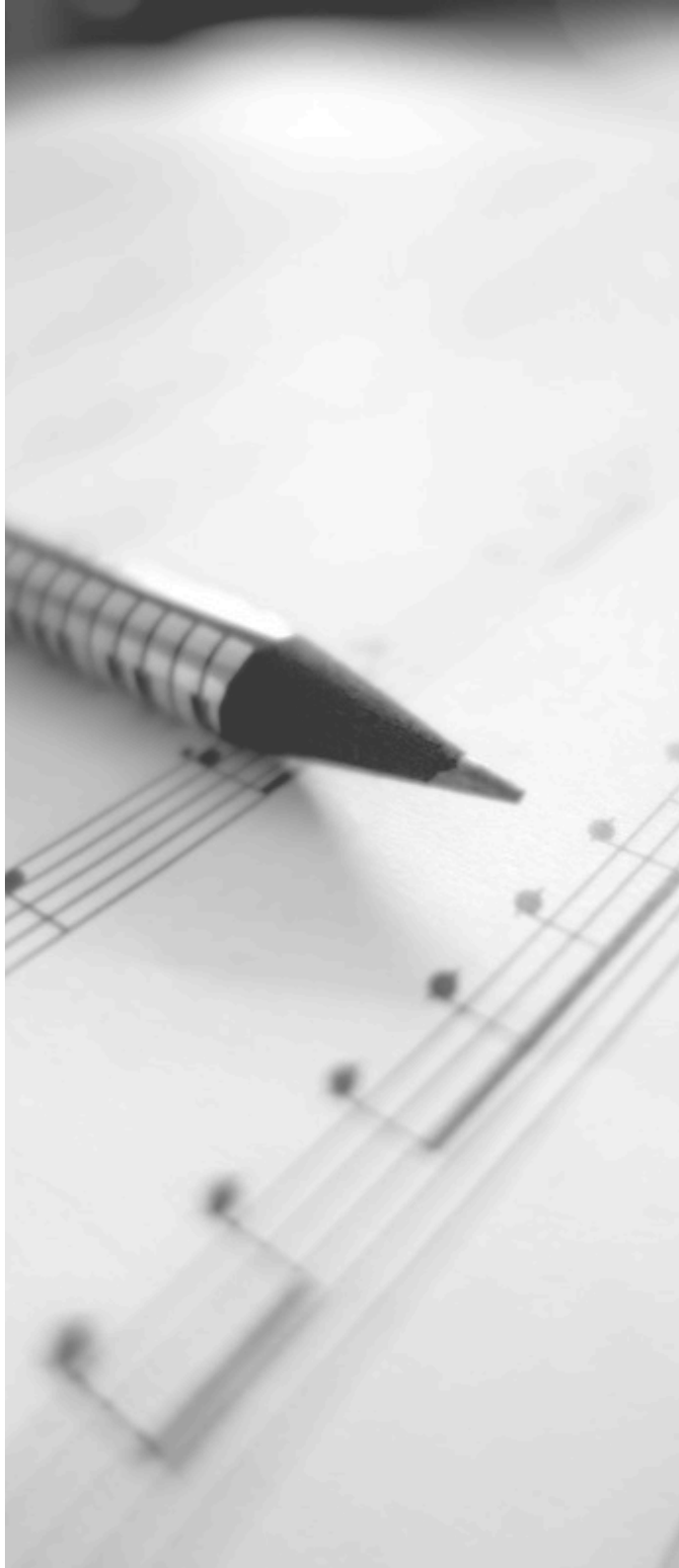
Students can use notation software to develop their composition skills, demonstrate their understanding of key musical concepts and receive aural feedback by hearing their original music played back to them.

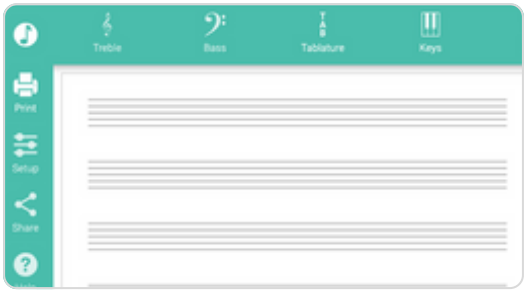
IMPORTANT NOTE:

Two popular cloud-based notation software solutions have been included in this guide - Noteflight and Flat - because they both offer free "consumer" versions.

It's important to note that these consumer versions have a minimum age requirement (at least 13+ but it varies by product and by country). The consumer versions are best suited for use by the teacher, or by senior students.

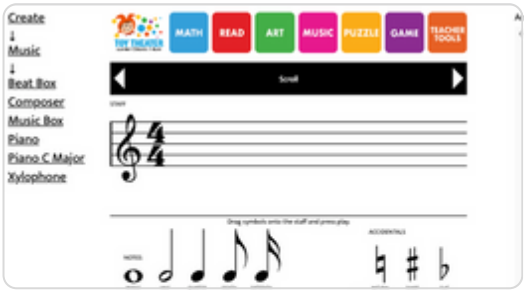
If you'd like to use them with your students, explore the paid education versions which offer a private environment, integration with other platforms and other education-specific features.





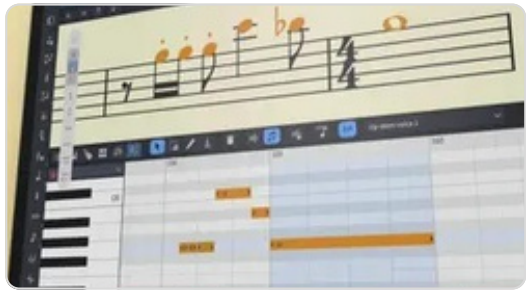
Blank Sheet Music

Create your own custom-designed blank manuscript paper: you can print the paper as is, keeping the default settings, or set up your own custom manuscript paper by using the options in the menu across the top.



Composer - Toy Theater

VERY simple on-screen notation editor. Compose a short melody and play it back.

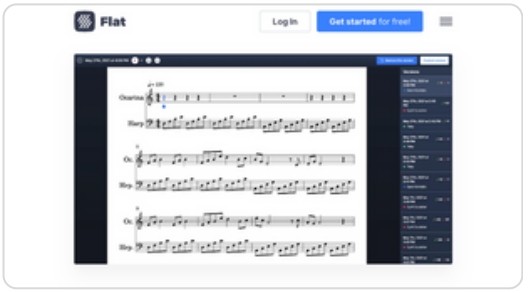


Dorico For iPad

An iPad app version of the Dorico notation software. The free version gives you access to 8 players/staves but if you register an email address you can write for up to 12 players/staves. An additional subscription will unlock more features including unlimited staves.

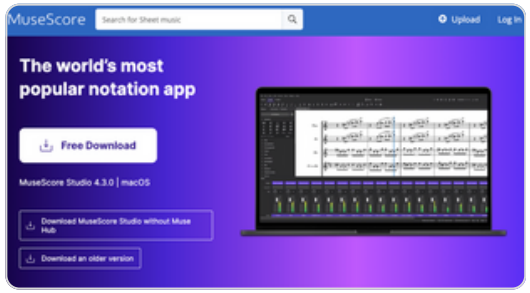
Dorico SE

Free, limited desktop version of the Dorico notation software. The free version gives you a maximum of 8 players/staves (with the option of doubling).



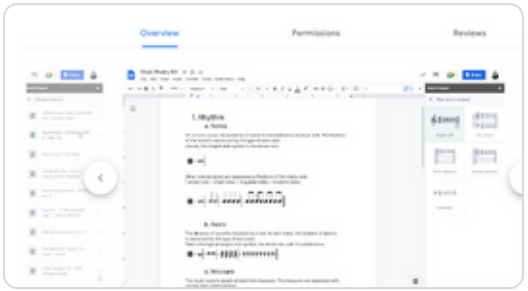
Flat.io

Online notation software. This free version has some limitations and is only available to students 13+. There is also a paid EDU version which integrates with Google Classroom, Moodle, Edmodo and other online platforms and can be used with students of all ages.



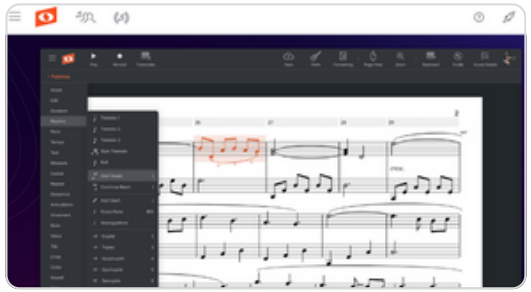
MuseScore

Notation software for Windows or Mac (not Chromebooks or iPads). Create scores with unlimited staves, key changes, time signature changes, lyrics and so on. Note entry is via computer keyboard or MIDI keyboard (step-time entry only). Includes an online score-sharing facility which you can make private for students.



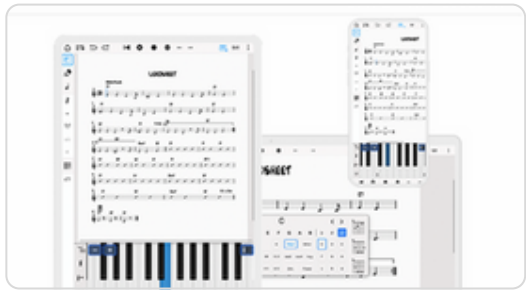
Music Snippet

Music Snippet (formerly Flat for Docs) is a free add-on for Google Docs and Google Slides which allows you to create notation snippets right inside your document. Useful for creating worksheets and slideshows which feature notation.



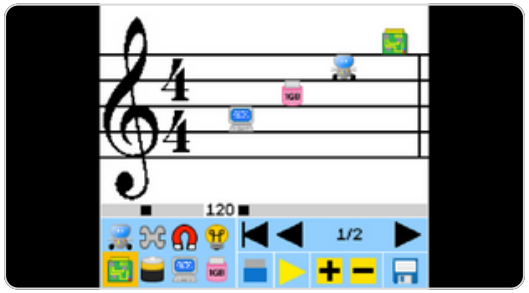
Noteflight

Online notation software. The free version has some limitations and works best for individuals who are 13+. If you choose to upgrade to the paid education version (Noteflight Learn), you can use it with students of all ages. Also integrates with Soundtrap.



Notion Mobile

A free cross-platform app. No restrictions on the number of staves. It comes with the Notion standard orchestra sample set and there is an optional in-app purchase for extra sounds and handwriting recognition. This additional Feature Bundle can be unlocked across all platforms by signing up for a PreSonus Sphere membership.



Robot Composer - Dr. Musik

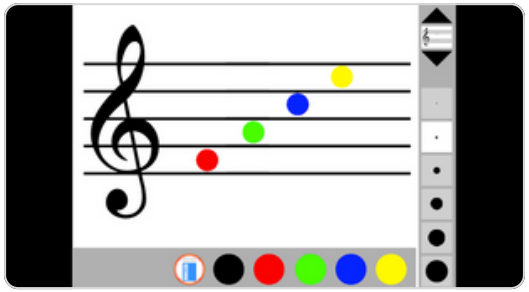
Click and drag different robot parts to the staff to create new sounds, chords, effects, and melodies.

Sibelius First

A free version of the notation program Sibelius with limited features, the main one being that you can only write for a maximum of four parts/staves. Can be useful for students who have simple notation requirements and want to try out a professional-standard software program.

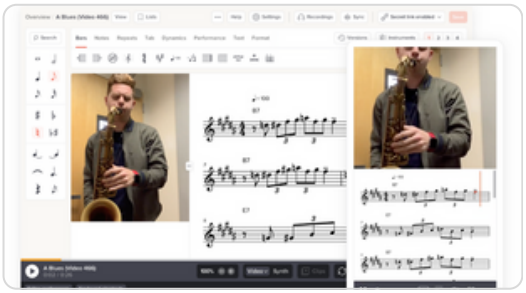
Sibelius First for Mobile

The free iOS, Android and Chromebook app version of Sibelius First. Like the desktop version of Sibelius First, there are limited features. A paid subscription is available to unlock more features.



Sketch Book - Dr. Musik

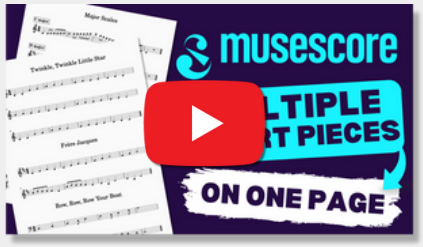
Practice drawing different notes and symbols on virtual staff paper or blank screens. Includes multiple colors and thin to wide-width pens.



Soundslice

A fantastic interactive notation app that allows you to embed a video into your score. You can synchronize the notation with the video so that the score scrolls along in time. It's perfect for creating interactive playalongs, transcriptions and tutorials that demonstrate playing technique.

YouTube



READ

We Have a Notation Program - Now What? A Step-by-Step Outline to Build a Song Using a Notation Program

WEBINAR

MUSESCORE: WORKSHEETS & TEST QUESTIONS

webinar replay

Learn how to create education-specific notation examples that you can use in your documents, slides, posters or flashcards.

LEARN MORE

ONLINE COURSE

CREATE PLAYALONG VIDEOS WITH SCROLLING NOTATION

5-day challenge

Playalong videos with scrolling notation can provide a useful and effective way for your students to learn music. In this 5-day challenge, you'll discover step-by-step how you can make your own playalong videos using free software.

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- PD certificate provided

LEARN MORE

ONLINE WHITEBOARDS

Online digital whiteboards provide a versatile, interactive platform for visual collaboration. They replicate the functionality of a traditional whiteboard while adding features such as infinite canvas space, multimedia integration, and real-time multi-user access.

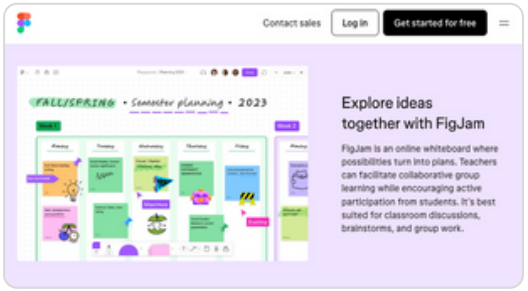
One of the best things is that you have unlimited space, endless colored pens, sticky notes, images, and the power to collaborate from anywhere. You and your students can brainstorm, plan, and share ideas in real time, whether you're in the same room or connecting remotely.

Many platforms offer templates, drawing tools and the ability to embed audio, video, and links. Unlike traditional whiteboards, online boards can be saved and revisited later on (an end to losing your board contents when the next class walks in!), making them an effective option for tracking progress and refining projects.

TIP: IDEAS FOR USING ONLINE WHITEBOARDS

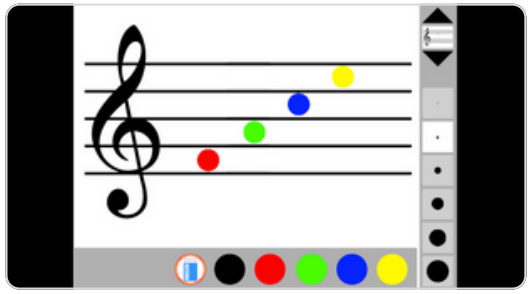
Here are a few ways you can use online whiteboards

- create composition maps
- sketch out song structure
- annotate scores
- analyse audio files
- collaborate on projects
- decide the rehearsal focus
- collect listening reflections
- plan concerts and other events



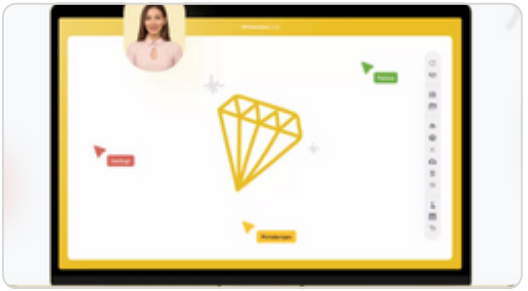
FigJam

Your new favorite online whiteboard! FigJam is free for verified educators. Use it to share ideas, collaborate and design. Includes templates for games, diagrams, daily agendas, to-do lists, mind maps plus a built-in timer, and other widgets to add features and functionality.



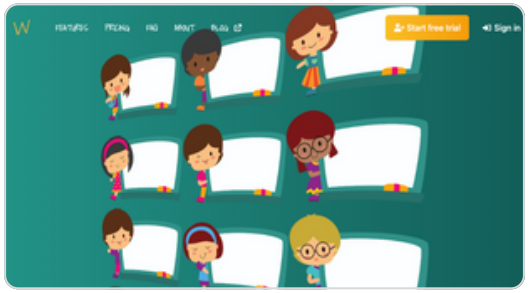
Sketch Book - Dr. Musik

A simple online whiteboard-style tool. Students can practice drawing different notes and symbols on virtual staff paper or blank screens. Includes multiple colors and pens with a variety of thicknesses.



Whiteboard.chat

This whiteboard has many features. Draw, create shapes, add images and audio files. Includes ready-made elements like music notes, clefs and other elements. Students can work on their own copy of your board and collaborate with one another. You can also see what students are doing in real time on their individual boards.



Whiteboard.fi

A simple online whiteboard tool owned by Kahoot. Students can join your session and get access to their own individual digital whiteboard, where they can draw, write text, make notations on images, etc. The teacher can view student whiteboards in real time. The free version has a limit of 20 students per session.

MIDNIGHT MUSIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

what teachers are saying ...

Diane Pendlebury

Just so many wonderful, doable ideas, particularly in this particular training.

Jennifer Patrick

Everything is so clearly laid out, concise, and actionable. Thank you for offering these PDs!

Susan Mears

Relevant practical training, super user friendly and brilliantly explained.

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ORCHESTRA, COMPOSERS & OPERA

Topics like the orchestra, famous composers, and opera have always been popular in general music classes and there are some invaluable free resources to support student learning in these areas.

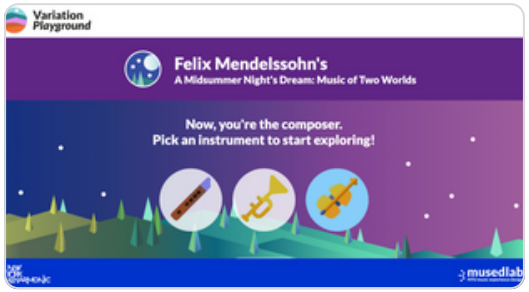
Many of the sites offer rich multimedia content, including videos, audio clips, and interactive timelines that bring the world of orchestral music and opera to life.

Students can explore the different sections of the orchestra, learn about the roles of various instruments, and discover interesting facts about the lives and works of famous composers.

Many of these websites offer educational games, quizzes, and virtual tours that make learning about these subjects engaging and interactive. There are also ready-to-use lesson plans, worksheets, and activities that can be easily integrated into your curriculum plus a range of top-quality instrument demonstration videos.

EXPLORE PAST MUSIC-THEMED GOOGLE DOODLES!

Did you know that Google has been celebrating notable events and historical figures through Google Doodles since 1998? In 2010 they launched the first interactive Google Doodle (for the 30th anniversary of Pac-Man) and over the years there have been a number of music-themed Doodles. Here is a collection of 9 Google Doodles you can use in your music classes and when you've finished with those ones, you can explore an additional 5 musical Google Doodles here.



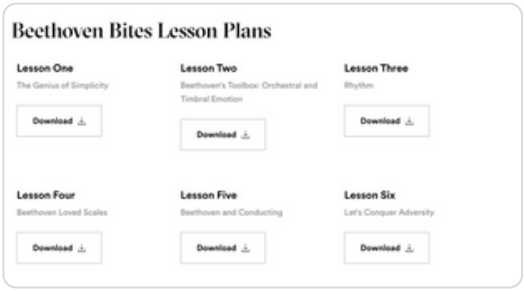
A Midsummer Night's Dream

Pick an instrument and explore sound: density, low/high pitch and dynamics in this interactive version of Mendelssohn's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Read: Variation Playground

Beethoven Bites Primary Resources

A series of 6 lessons aimed at primary/elementary students from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. MSO Beethoven Bites allows students to explore the orchestra through Beethoven's seventh symphony.



Beethoven Bites Secondary Resources

A series of 6 lessons for secondary students from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. MSO Beethoven Bites guide students through symphonic composition and musical function providing opportunities to apply their performance or compositional studies.

Carnegie Hall Kids NEW

Discover the sights and sounds of the orchestra with this lively, kid-friendly site. Students can play games, listen to music, and learn fun facts about instruments, composers, and styles—all designed to spark curiosity about classical music.

Classics for Kids

A collection of classical music resources designed especially for young students which includes free lesson plans and games.

Dallas Symphony Orchestra Kids

The kids' website of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. The Listen and Learn section contains simplified composer biographies and instrument listening guides. There are also activities, an orchestra seating chart and a large collection of lesson plans.

Inside the Orchestra Musical Games

An engaging collection of online games and interactive activities that allow students to learn about the orchestra. Includes melodic and rhythmic composition tools, memory games, bingo, playable instrument pictures, musical maps and more.

LSO Activities and Resources

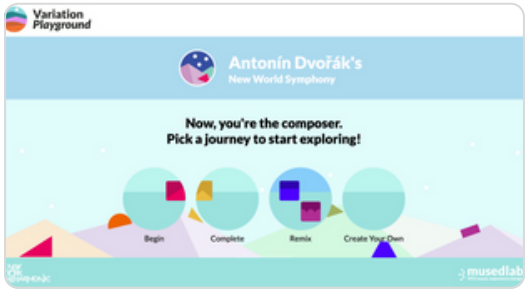
NEW

A collection of activities and resources for students and children from under the age of 5 to 16 plus. Includes downloads, online concerts and an interactive listening experience where students can see the LSO perform musical works from a range of camera angles.

MSO Learn

An interactive orchestral map by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra featuring information and pictures for instrument families and individual instruments. Musical examples play in the background. Website sound is controlled by using the on/off option at the top of the page.

Read: Instruments of the Orchestra



New World Symphony

Explore form by building your own version of Dvořák's New World Symphony. Students can choose which themes play when, they can choose to repeat them and they can change the playback sound.

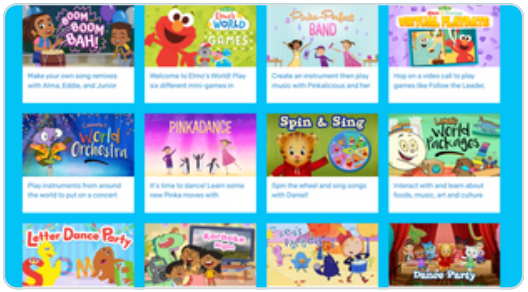
Read: Variation Playground

NY Phil Curriculum Guides

A collection of curriculum guides from the New York Philharmonic. Each guide provides detailed materials for specific orchestral works including Scheherazade, Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Billy the Kid and more.

NY Phil Learning Resources

An extensive collection of orchestra-related activities for students from early learners through to high school. This is an impressive collection of resources, guides and videos all about the orchestra, instruments, music concepts and composition.



PBS Kids Music Games

A collection of online games and activities (mostly music) for young students. Includes Carmen's World Orchestra, Sesame Street activities, interactive music tools and more.

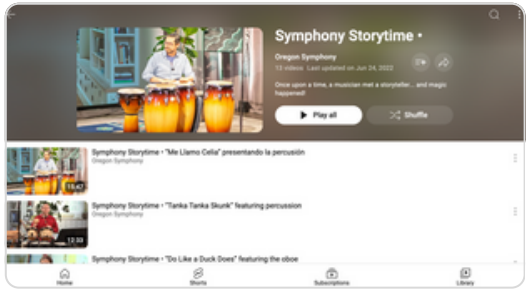
Semi-Conductor Experiment

This Google experiment allows you and your students to conduct an AI orchestra. The website registers your arm and body movements via the webcam and the orchestra responds accordingly.

SFS Kids

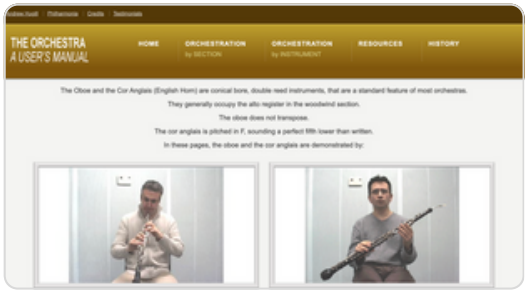
NEW

The new version of the San Francisco Symphony site where students explore instrument families, composers, world instruments, mood, and more through games like conducting, composing, and listening. A fun, all-in-one introduction to orchestral music.



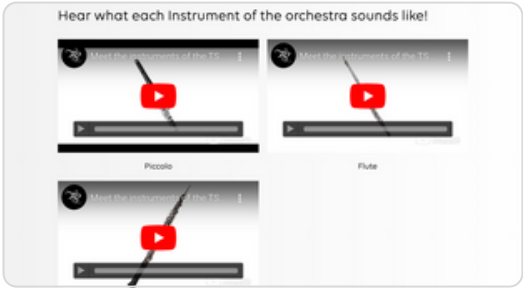
Symphony Storytime

Presented by the Oregon Symphony, each episode in this fun video series showcases a storybook with an instrumental backdrop to show how stories and music interact.



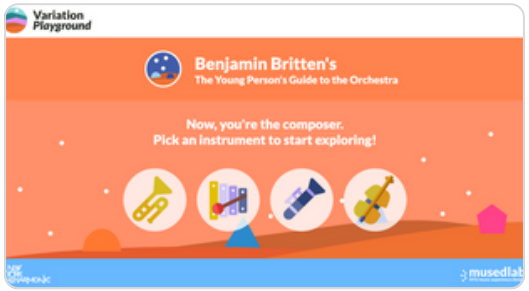
The Orchestra: A User's Manual

An extensive online manual about the orchestra by Professor Andrew Hugill. Includes orchestration information, instrument ranges, audio samples, layouts, seating plans, history and more. A very useful resource for older students.



What is a symphony orchestra? - TSO

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra resources for schools includes seating layout, plus instrument images with links to videos.



Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra

Choose your own instruments and create your own orchestral variation on Britten's Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra.

★★★★★

I have used so many of the things that I have learned from you in my classes. I just wish I had heard about you earlier in my career. I tell every new music teacher I meet to join Midnight Music.

Heather Pierce
music teacher & member

WEBINAR

MUSIC TECH PROJECTS FOR HARD-TO-ENGAGE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

webinar replay

Middle school students can be a tough crowd but in this practical webinar, you'll discover a range of music tech activities designed especially for this hard-to-engage age group!

Available inside the Midnight Music Membership Community

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime

LEARN MORE

REFERENCE TOOLS

The reference tools in this section are varied! An online dictionary of composers, an extensive music tech glossary, fingering charts, a folk song collection, and a fantastic website of fascinating school-friendly videos for curious students. There is something for everyone.

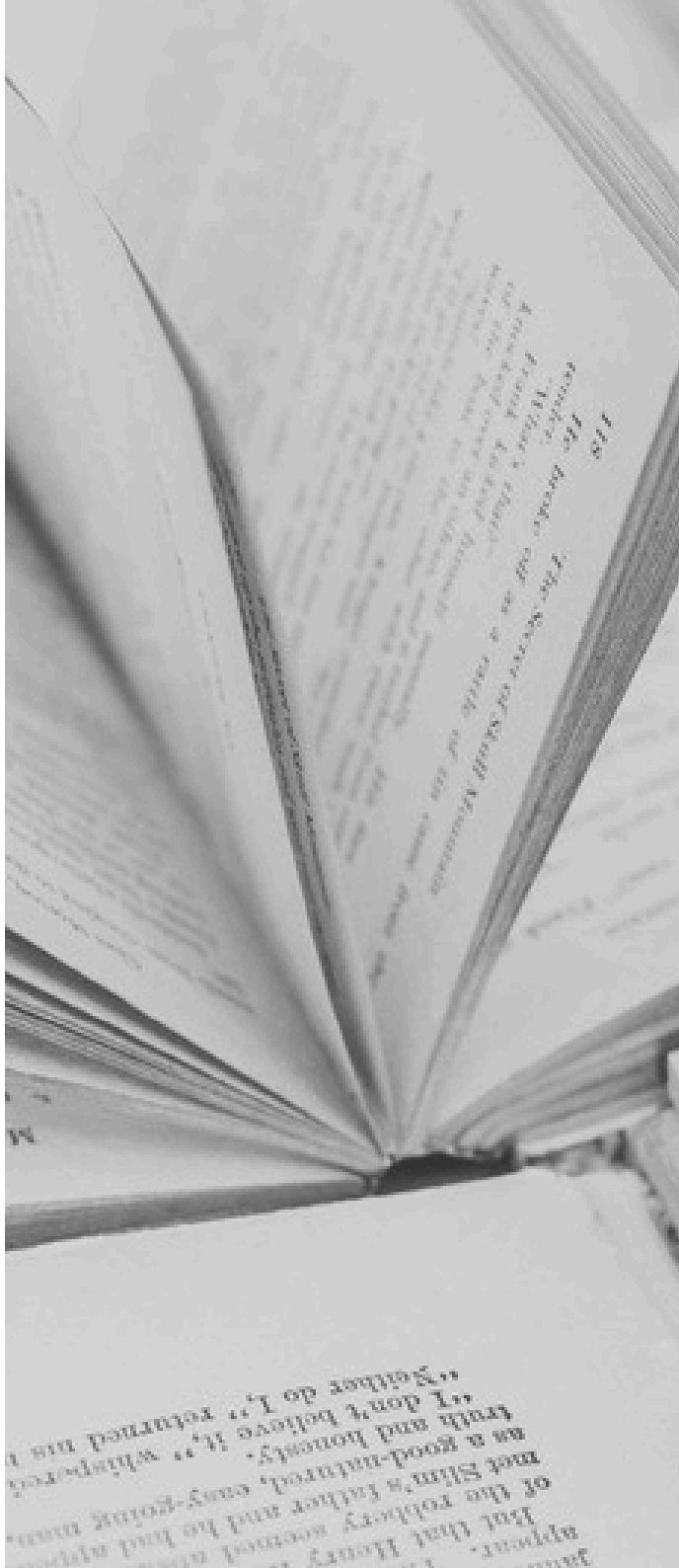
Some music reference tools also offer interactive features, such as audio examples and visual aids, that enhance the learning experience.

A highlight of this section is an incredible site called Audio Test Kitchen which lets you compares 300+ microphones. Each one was used to record the same song, so you can make a side-by-side comparison of different models. Even if you're not planning on purchasing a mic in the near future, it makes for a very useful interactive learning resource.

A new addition this year is the useful Chord ID tool which analyzese the notes you enter, giving you the chord name plus variations and extensions.

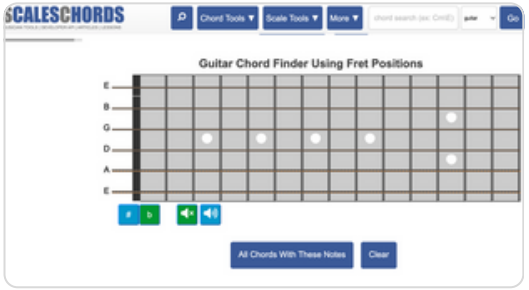
DEFINING MUSIC TECH TERMS

If you ever need to define a music tech term, the long-standing Sweetwater Music Tech Glossary has you covered. It's perfect for those times when you need to provide students with a succinct definition or when you need to clarify something for yourself!



Audio Test Kitchen

Compare more than 300 microphones side by side. A project of Sound On Sound magazine and Produce Like a Pro, Audio Test Kitchen allows you to hear the same song recorded with hundreds of different microphone models. Useful for students as a learning tool or for those times when you want to purchase a new mic.



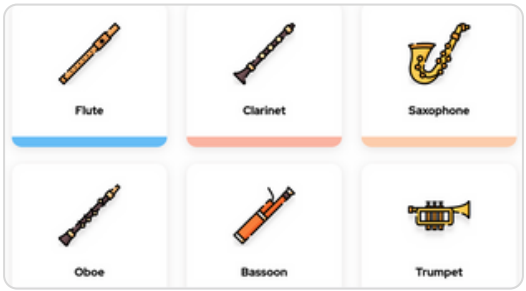
Chord ID

NEW

A helpful online tool that analyzes the notes you enter and tells you the chord name, including variations and extensions. Perfect for students exploring harmony, checking their compositions, or identifying chords by ear or from notation.

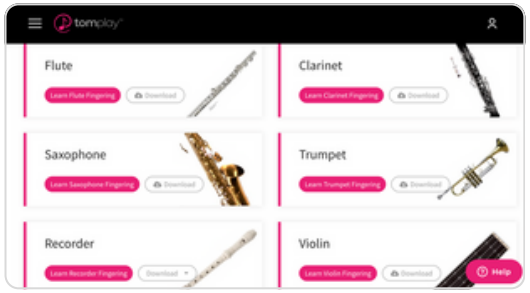
Elemental Musical Adventures

A free library of browser-based music activities and lessons located across the internet. Sorts activities by computers or tablet/touchscreen setups.



Instrument Fingering Charts

A handy collection of fingering charts for wind, brass and string instruments.



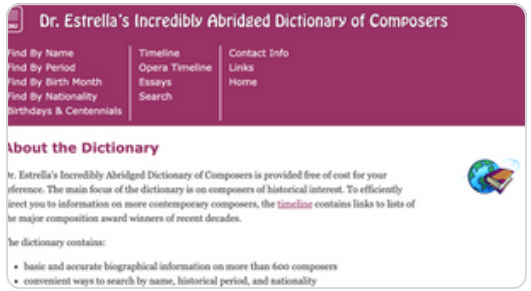
Interactive Fingering Charts

NEW

Free interactive fingering charts for a variety of wind, brass, and string instruments. Students can hear the pitch, see the finger placement, and switch between clefs—great for practice, learning notes, or quick classroom reference.

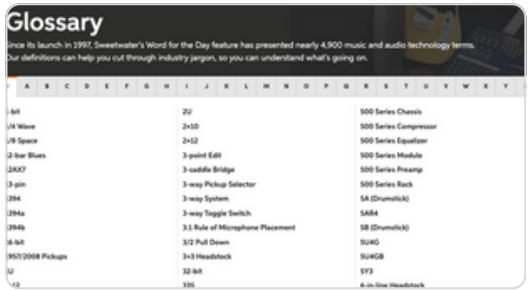
Soundbreaking

Explore a range of groundbreaking music technology as it emerged throughout history. Includes 10 different interactive tools that allow you to explore microphone types, a mixing desk, vocal and guitar effects, sampling and more.



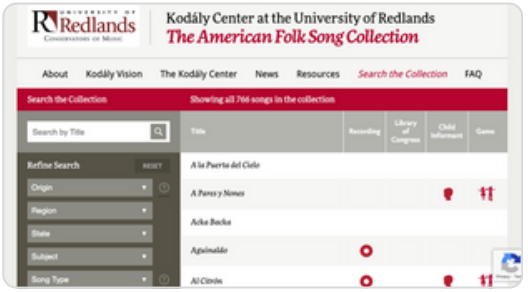
Steven Estrella's Incredibly Abridged Dictionary of Composers

Very useful Western Classical music timeline and composer biographies. Includes links to resources like sheet music and recordings.



Sweetwater Music Tech Glossary

Extensive collection of music technology terms and their definitions. Includes recording and editing terminology. This is a very useful reference tool for students and teachers alike!

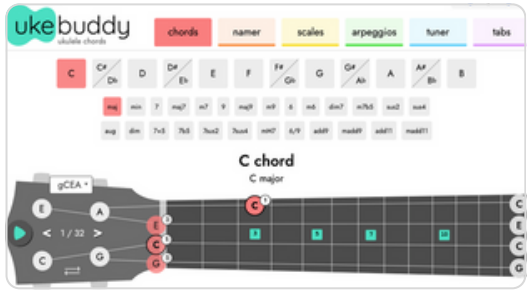


The American Folk Song Collection

If you're searching for songs you can use to teach a specific concept - like ti-ti or tika tika - or just want to expand your song repertoire, this Kodály Songs database from the Kodály Center at the University of Redlands has you covered. It's an extensive resource complete with notation, game instructions, recordings and much more.

TKSST

A huge collection of ad-free, curated videos that teach curious students (and adults) all about interesting topics like music, tech, space, food and more! If you're looking for interesting, funny, clever or quirky videos to show your students, this is the place to go!



Ukebuddy

Ukebuddy is a free-to-use companion website for learning the ukulele. Inside you'll find a library of popular songs with chords, an interactive chord-builder app, chord library, scale builder, and tuner.

REMIX, ARRANGE & CREATE LOOPS

Some of the most popular music tech sites are those that facilitate creativity by allowing you to remix or arrange music, or build compositions by creating loops.

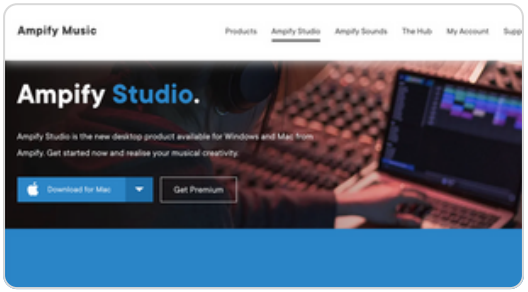
Although they might be easy to use and navigate, these tools often provide students in-depth ways to manipulate and transform existing music, create their own arrangements, and experiment with building loops that form the foundation of many contemporary music styles.

A common standout feature is a user-friendly interface which is fun and engaging - like the ever-popular Incredibox. These apps make it easy for students to drag and drop samples, adjust tempos, and layer sounds to create their own unique tracks. They're perfect for teaching concepts like form, texture, and rhythm in a hands-on way that's both fun and educational.

For more advanced students, these tools offer deeper features like automation, effects processing, and MIDI support, providing a gateway to more sophisticated music production techniques.

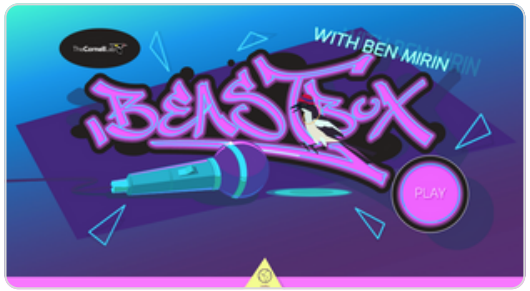
TIP: USING BEEPBOX TO COMPOSE VIDEO GAME MUSIC

One of the featured sites in this section is Beepbox which has been a long time favorite for composing video game-style music. If you'd like that classic Super Mario sound when using Beepbox, choose Square Wave in the Type menu under Instrument Settings.



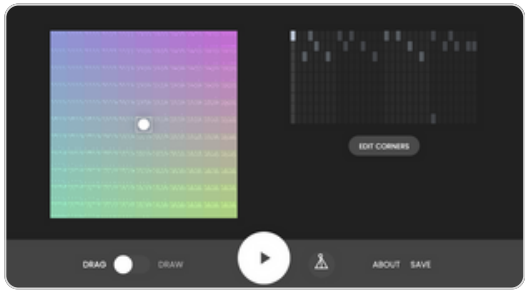
Amplify Studio

Desktop software with a drag-and-drop interface that allows you to build musical patterns. Load samples and use it as a sketchpad. Designed to work with Novation's Launchpad.



Beastbox

An interactive website for creating music using real animal sounds. It's a little like Incredibox with an eco theme! The samples used on the site have been recorded on location in a number of environments around the world. An excellent springboard for cross-curricular activities.

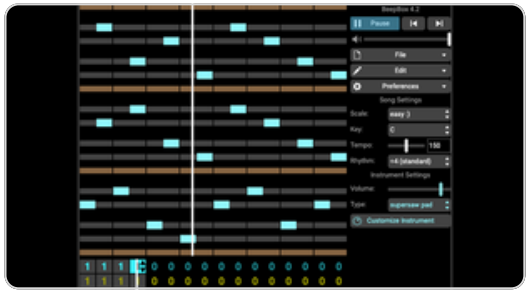


Beat Blender

Engage with rhythm in a completely new way by drawing lines and shapes over a grid of rhythmic patterns to create a new track. Also allows you to change styles of beats within the shape and move between them.

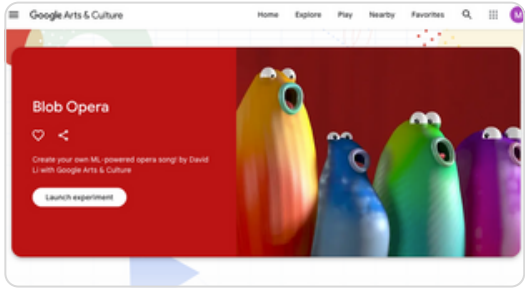
Beat Box - Toy Theater

Create a short loop of up to 5 parts by selecting an option at the bottom of the screen and clicking in the grid at the top. Each button represents a different rhythmic or pitched sound.



Beepbox

A favorite online step sequencing tool! Click in the grid to add sounds to build up your composition. There are lots of settings you can change on the right side, including an extensive list of instrument sounds. A great option for creating video game music.



Blob Opera

A fun machine learning experiment in which four blobs each sing a different voice part. Click and drag your mouse up or down on a blob to change the pitch or drag sideways to change the vowel sound. They also sing pre-made songs including the Wellerman, the Hallelujah Chorus, Summertime, La Bamba and more.

Citizen DJ

A compilation of samples & sounds from the Library of Congress. There are 15 collections including jazz, blues, interviews, found sounds, opera, folk and more which can be used legally for sampling, remixing and other projects. The website even has a built-in sequencer that students can use to create patterns.

Defonic

A simple soundscape generator with dozens of sounds. Use it to add ambiance to your classroom or student presentations, make stories more impactful, or for mindfulness sessions.

Hatnote

Listen to changes being made to Wikipedia articles. Kinda weird but beautiful!

Incredibox

Very popular interactive beatboxing and a cappella singing website. Drag a sound icon on to one of the dudes on the screen and he'll start to beatbox or sing. Great for introducing concepts like arranging, remixing, beatboxing and harmony singing. Students can record their remix and share the link. Paid EDU version also available.

Isle of Tune

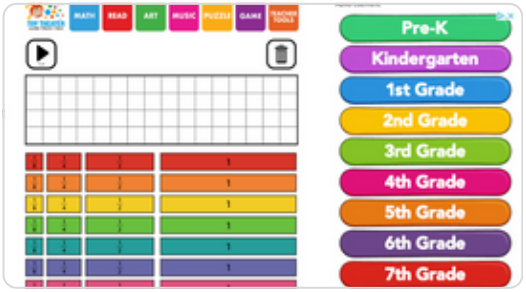
Create a road, add some trees, bushes, lamp posts and houses and then add a car. Press play and as your car drives past each item, it will make a rhythmic or melodic sound. You can get clever with setting up continuous roads, creating melodies, and having multiple cars trigger sounds simultaneously.

Kandinsky - Chrome Music Lab

Inspired by the artist Kandinsky who had synesthesia and heard musical sounds when he painted. Draw lines, squiggles or pictures on the screen with your finger or mouse and your picture will turn into sound. Press play to hear your picture as a looped piece.

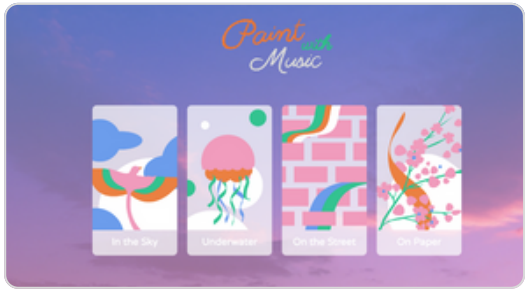
Launchpad Intro

An interactive virtual Launchpad Midi grid controller for digital music-making within your web browser. Can also be synced to physical Launchpads for playing in and out of the browser.



Music Box - Toy Theater

Create a short musical loop with up to 4 parts using the manipulatives at the bottom of the screen. The manipulatives are blocks divided into quarter, eighth, half and whole notes - similar to the Cuisenaire rods you used in Math class.

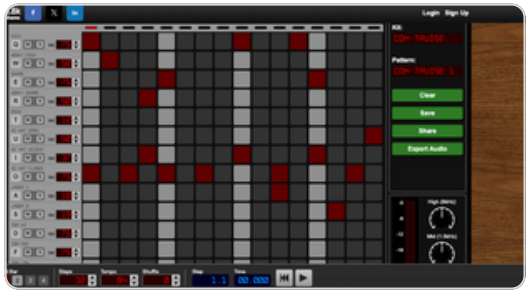


Paint with Music

Draw patterns, images, words, and shapes with a brushstroke, using different instruments on themed canvases. An effective cross-curricular art/music activity.

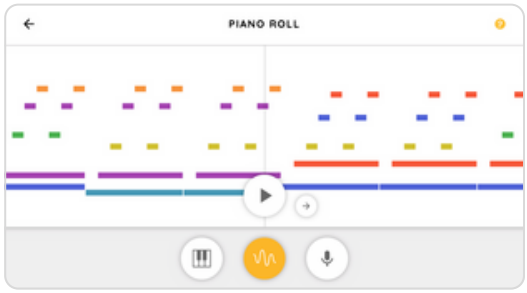
Patatap

Press any key on your computer keyboard to trigger percussive or melodic sounds that are coupled with a visual effect. The spacebar changes the sound set and there are 6 sound sets in total. Useful for exploring sound, experimenting with rhythmic patterns and sampling.



Pattern Sketch

Another online drum sequencer, but this one has an added benefit: you can play the drum kit sounds by using your computer keyboard.

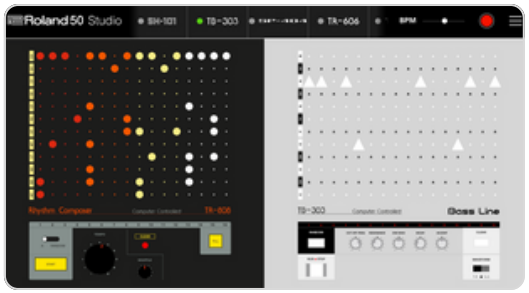


Piano Roll - Chrome Music Lab

Watch well-known classical pieces such as Mozart's Rondo Alla Turca or Beethoven's Fifth Symphony play in a graphic notation piano roll format. You can change the playback sounds and also record an audio sample to be used as the playback sound (try barking like a dog!).

Robot Sequencer - Dr. Musik

Compose different drum-beats and melodies by selecting different-colored robots on the screen. Also has adjustable tempo and save features.

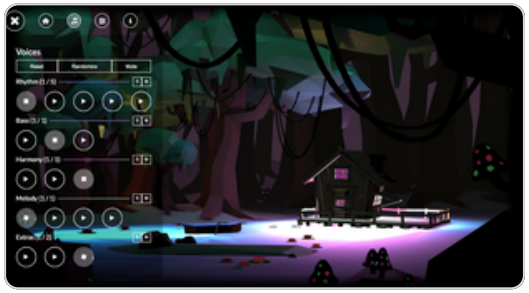


Roland 50 Studio

A free, online music creation platform with the classic Roland 808 drum machine on one side of the screen and the Roland 303 bass synth on the other. You can select other synths & drum machines from the options at the top of the screen. Set up your own patterns and then record and share them.

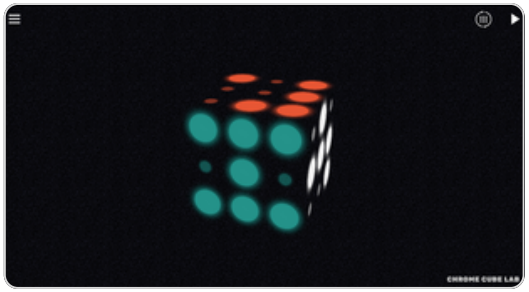
Scribble Audio

Draw different patterns over the screen using notes as different colors to create interactive sound loops and effects.



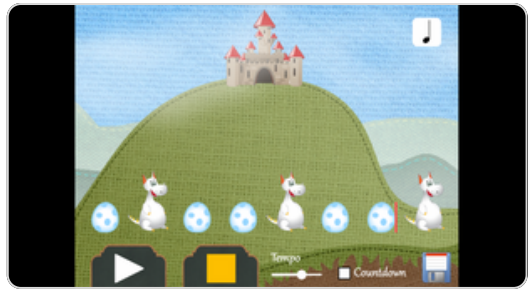
Soundscape World

Choose one of four different soundscape worlds and then build your soundscape with preset rhythm, bass, melody and harmony loops. This is actually a lot of fun and can be used to spark discussion about timbre, texture, arranging and layers.



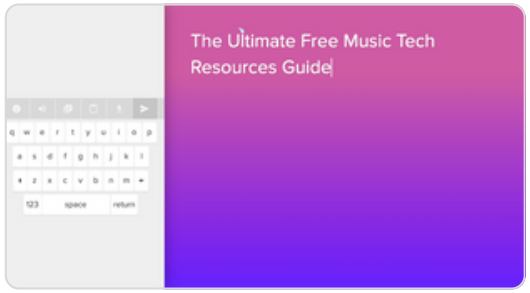
SynthCu.be

SynthCu.be is an interactive web toy that looks a lot like a Rubik's cube. The colored dots on each surface of the cube make a synth sound. You can adjust the sound qualities and which rows of dots are playing on the control panel. You can also shuffle or mutate the sides of the cube to vary the sequence.



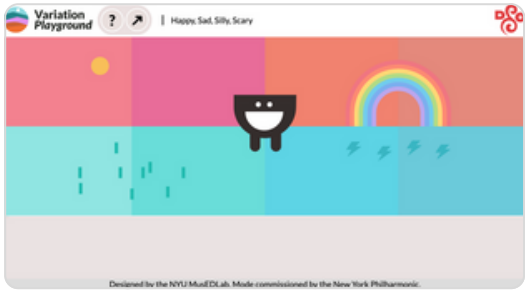
The Dragons Choir - Dr. Musik

Hatch different dragons to change them from beats to melodic notes, then play the composition.



Typatone

Typatone combines text and music. Type on the right side of the screen and then your text will be played back to you. You can save a link to your creation. Could be used as composition starter activity: type words and have students transcribe the musical phrase, or record it in a sequencing program.



Variation Playground

A brightly colored site where you can drag a character around to experience different musical dynamics and moods. The movements are recorded for easy playback. A great option for social emotional learning.

READ

Free Music Tech Resource Highlight: Variation Playground

Defonic vs. Soundscape: Exploring two free ambient sound machines

LESSON PLANS

SUPER-SIMPLE LESSONS USING FREE RESOURCES *online course*

Lesson plans & tips for:

- Incredibox
- Isle of Tune
- Beepbox
- Groove Pizza
- Hook Theory

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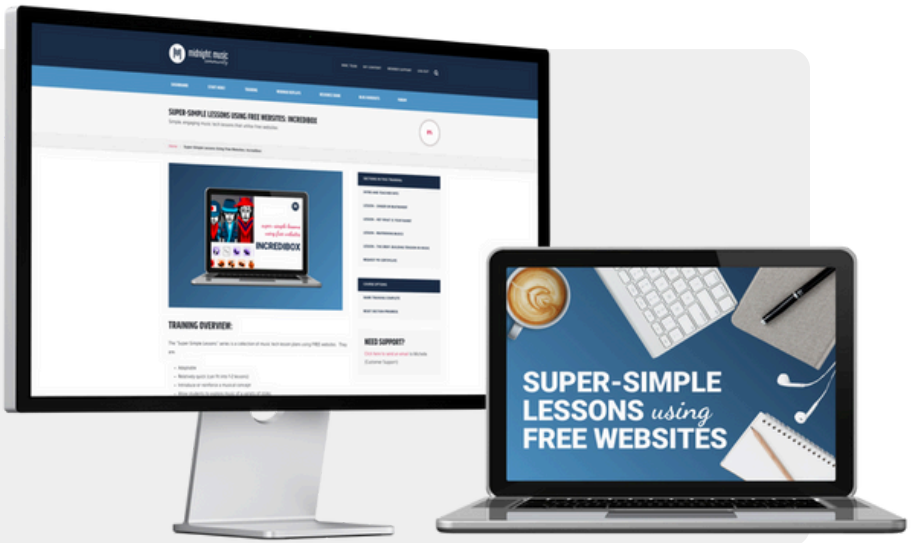


RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

Creating rhythmic patterns and loops is an essential skill in music production, and there are many tech tools designed specifically to help students and teachers master this art.

These are intuitive apps where users can experiment with different rhythms, beats, and grooves, building patterns that can be looped and layered to create full tracks. Many of these tools come with preloaded sounds and drum kits, allowing for endless creative possibilities.

Rhythmic apps provide an engaging hands-on way to learn about rhythm, timing, and the structure of contemporary music styles. They're also great for developing a sense of timing and coordination, as students can experiment with different time signatures and rhythmic variations.

As a teacher, you can create rhythms on the fly to replace a metronome, use them to learn beatboxing patterns, or to accompany class ensemble work. Students can create short loops and then develop them further in a digital audio workstation or use them as a backing for their practice sessions.

FREE LESSON PLAN: RAP MY NAME

Learn how you can use the rhythm creation tools to create a backing track and then write a simple rap over the top. Full lesson plan, downloadable worksheet and a video walkthrough can be found here.

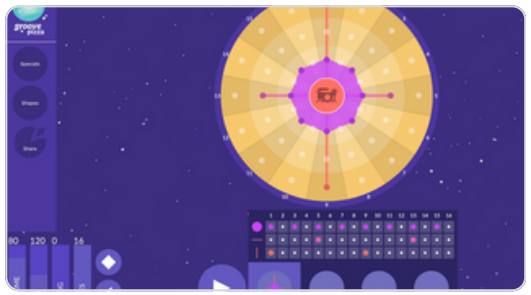
808 Cube

NEW

808 Cube is a browser-based 3D drum machine that works like a Rubik's Cube. Each face holds a different TR-808 loop, and rotating the cube layers the sounds. It's a fun, hands-on way for students to explore rhythm, sequencing, and electronic music creation.

Drumbit

A clean online drum sequencer which includes a range of drum kit styles and effects.



Groove Pizza

Drum pattern creator which has a circular "pizza" interface. You can also create patterns by using the grid underneath the pizza. Includes the option to view rhythms as shapes and angles, allowing for math/music cross-curricular lessons. Export patterns as WAV or MIDI files or send a pattern directly to Soundtrap.

iO.808

An online drum machine in a classic 808 drum machine style which allows you to program patterns.

Infinite Drum Machine

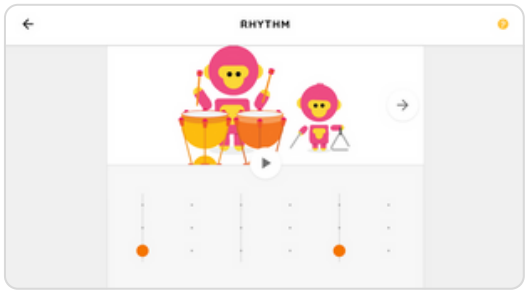
A Google experiment which features a visual "cloud" of sounds. Zoom in and out and move your mouse around to preview the samples. Add samples to the sequencer at the bottom of the screen to create a pattern.

One Motion Drum Machine

Create drum patterns using this online drum step-sequencer by clicking on the squares to turn sounds on or off. Also has a Pads view and a view showing an animated cartoon-style drummer.

Online Drum Machine Musicca

An easy-to-use beginner drum machine that allows you to change tempo, add swing, change time signature, and manipulate samples within a 4-beat frame.



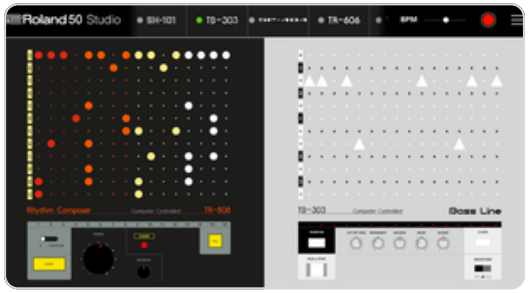
Rhythm - Chrome Music Lab

Make your own rhythms in a variety of meters - 3, 4, 5 or 6. Click on the grid to add or remove sounds. You can have students play along with the on-screen rhythms using body percussion or classroom instruments.

Rhythm Tutor

NEW

Practice rhythmic reading and playing with this Boomwhacker-based rhythm trainer. Students choose a level, read the pattern, and play along. A fun, interactive way to build beat awareness, timing, and rhythmic confidence.



Roland 50 Studio TR-808

Digital version of the classic Roland 808 drum machine which you can use to create 80s-style drum patterns and learn about the mechanics of early physical drum machines.

Typedrummer

Type something in the box and your text will be “played” back to you with a series of rhythmic sounds. Students could collaboratively “decode” the alphabet: identify which letters make the sounds of a bass drum, snare drum, or hi-hat and then determine how to create a basic rock pattern.

WebSynths Grooves

A browser-based free drum machine and sample library that allows you to create patterns for songs. Includes the ability to export and save files to work on again later.

Whacky Looper NEW

Layer different rhythms to build your own groove! This looping tool lets students combine Boomwhacker or percussion patterns, exploring texture, ensemble playing, and creative layering.

READ

Celebrate 808 Day With The Roland TR-808

WEBINAR

MAKE IT FUN! QUICK TECH ACTIVITIES

webinar replay

Need to switch things up in your music classes? Here's a collection of fun ideas, games, activities and projects you can use with your band, orchestra or chorus students and almost all of them use free tech tools.

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- PD certificate provided

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MIDNIGHT MUSIC COMMUNITY

tech-focused, practical professional development especially for music teachers

The Midnight Music Community is your go-to hub for step-by-step training, world-class online courses and creative lesson ideas.

Join the Midnight Music Community for instant access to:

- 330+ hours of online music tech courses
- ready-to-use lesson plans
- the Digital Badge Project - earn badges for tech skills
- our members-only forum where you can ask anything
- monthly live webinars & drop-in office hours sessions
- personalized professional development certificates

TRY THE COMMUNITY FOR JUST $1

SAMPLES, SOUND EFFECTS & AUDIO FILES

There are thousands of high quality free samples, sound effects, and audio files out there if you know where to look.

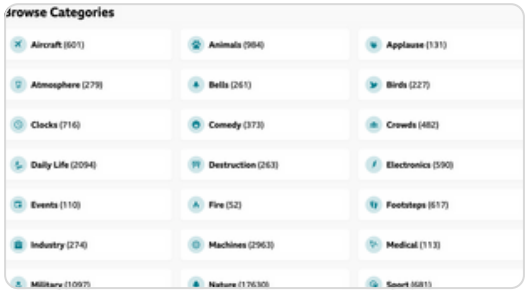
These libraries offer a vast array of sounds, from instrumental samples and vocal clips to ambient noises, found sounds and cinematic effects. They're perfect for all student projects, whether they are working on their own compositions, remixing, producing a podcast, enhancing a multimedia presentation, creating film scores or video game soundtracks.

The time-consuming part will be exploring and sorting through the available resources. It's a good idea to shortlist the options yourself ahead of class time and present students with a limited selection. Another approach is to give students a time limit for searching for sounds or music so that they don't spend too long on this part of the process!

On the following page, you'll find a collection of sound and sample libraries that cover a wide range of music styles and genres.

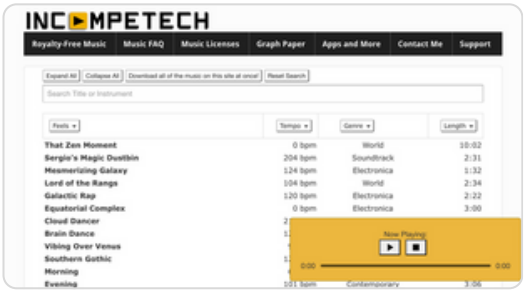
DIG DEEPER INTO SAMPLES

If you or your students have ever wanted to explore connections between songs and artists, the Who Sampled website is a fascinating and eye-opening resource (we've included it in our Reference section). You can trace where samples have been used and compare the original and new tracks side-by-side. Another excellent resource is the collection of succinct, visually engaging Sample Breakdown videos by Tracklib on YouTube.



BBC Sound Effects

A fantastic collection of sound effects which includes nature, animals, foley and more.

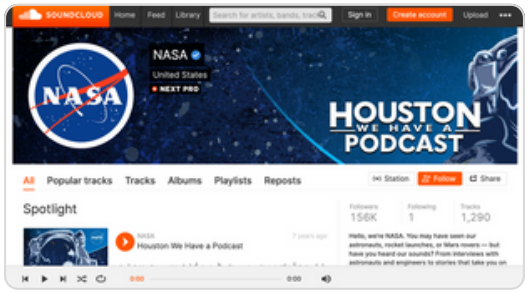


Incompetech

Highly recommended! Composer Kevin McLeod shares his music under a Creative Commons license. Search by music style or “feel.” Excellent for film scoring, jingles and intro/outro music for student projects.

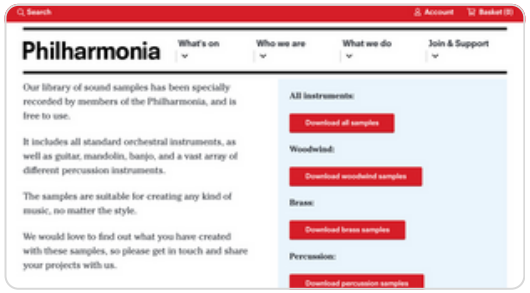
MusicRadar Free Samples

Extensive collection of free samples, loops, sound effects, and drum hits that can be used in student projects. Many genres are represented and it's worth just scrolling through the list to see what's there. The collection is updated regularly, so bookmark the page and visit often.



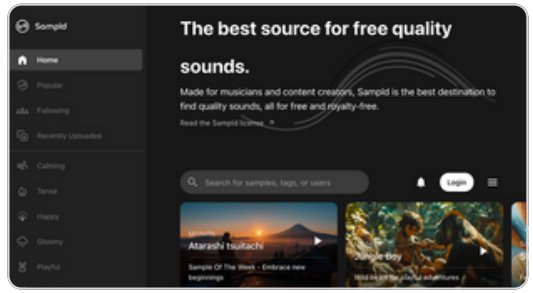
NASA Sound Library

NASA has an entire library of sounds from historic spaceflights, astronauts and mission control. This collection of more than 140 sounds and tracks is perfect for remix assignments, film scoring, storytelling and more.



Philharmonia Orchestra Samples

Thousands of free sound samples recorded by the Philharmonia (London) musicians. Includes sounds by standard orchestral instruments, plus guitar, mandolin, banjo, and a range of percussion instruments.



Sampld

A browser-based library of audio samples that can be downloaded and used royalty-free for video projects, songs, presentations, and more. Allows for non-commercial and commercial use.

SCIENCE OF SOUND

Exploring the science of sound is a fascinating way to bridge the gap between music and physics, offering students a deeper understanding of how sound is created, transmitted, and perceived.

There are numerous tech tools and websites dedicated to this topic, providing interactive simulations, experiments, and visualizations that make complex concepts accessible and engaging.

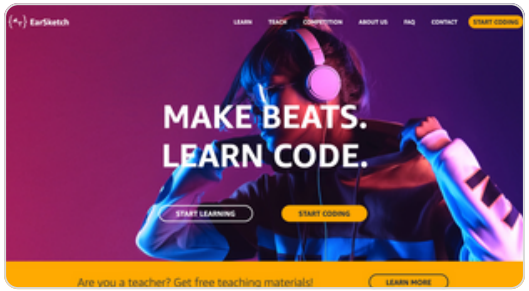
Students can learn about waveforms, frequency, amplitude, and the physics of how different instruments produce sound. Many of these tools also explore the relationship between sound and acoustics, helping students understand how sound behaves in different environments.

Integrating the science of sound into your curriculum can enhance students' understanding of music and also fosters critical thinking and curiosity about the world around them.

These tools are also perfect for cross-curricular activities.

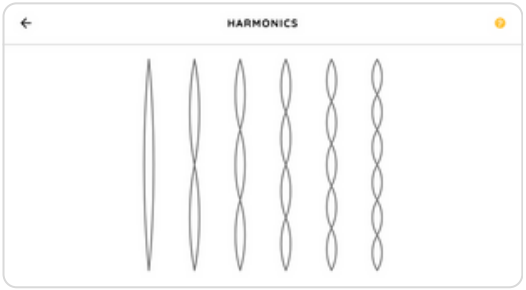
CHROME MUSIC LAB

One of the most popular free interactive music websites of recent years is Google's Chrome Music Lab - a collection of 14 music "experiments" which provide an opportunity to explore music and the science of sound. Although the Song Maker is widely known, it's worth exploring the other 13 experiments which all help to teach or reinforce music and sound concepts. You'll see some of these experiments highlighed on the following pages.



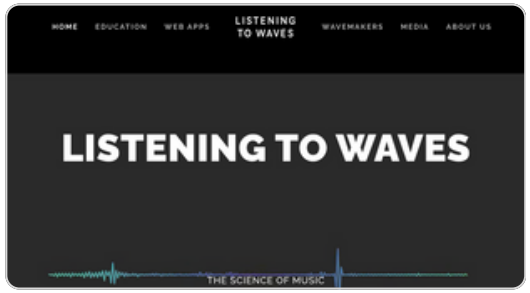
Ear Sketch

Created by researchers and musicians at Georgia Tech, this completely new way of music-making relies on learning how to create and edit code. Includes free resources for teachers.



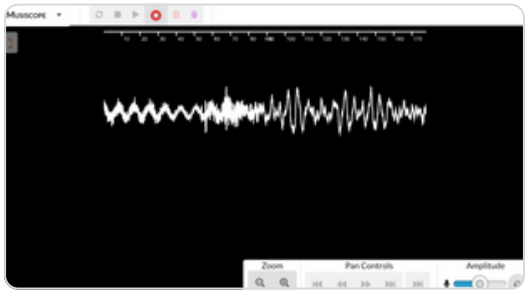
Harmonics - Chrome Music Lab

A visual and interactive representation of the harmonic series.



Listening To Waves

A collection of lesson plans, information, interactive tools and more, all designed to help students learn about the science of sound.

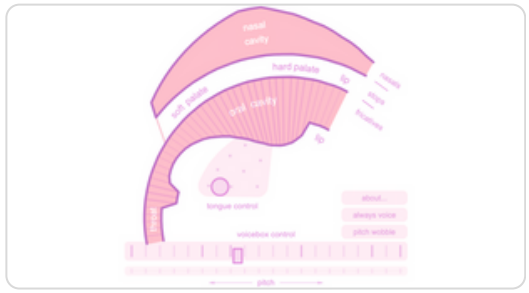


Musiscope - Listening to Waves

An online oscilloscope from the Listening to Waves site you can use to record a waveform. You can replay the recording and also play it in a loop. Useful for visually analyzing dynamics, tone, timbre and articulation.

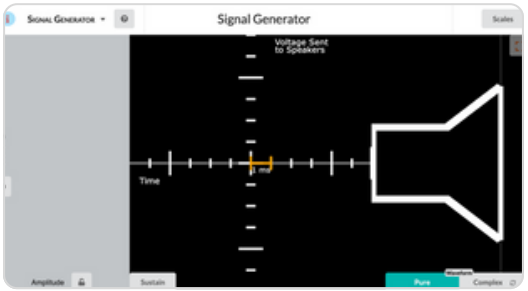
Oscillator - Chrome Music Lab

Interactive and cute! Play different oscillator characters by clicking and dragging up or down to change the frequency. Oscillator options include square, triangle, sawtooth and sine.



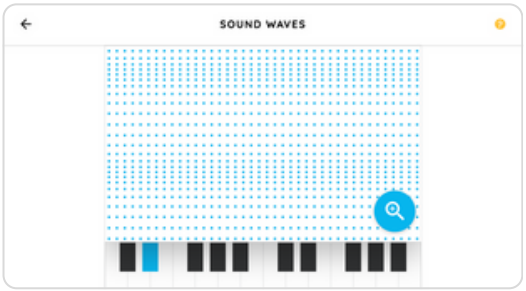
Pink Trombone

An interactive online model of the human vocal tract. Experiment with changing the tongue position and oral cavities to adjust the sound produced.



Signal Generator

A signal generator from the Listening to Waves website that allows you to play and visualize pure or complex waveforms. Click and drag your mouse left, right, up or down on the left panel to activate the waveform and change the frequency.



Sound Waves - Chrome Music Lab

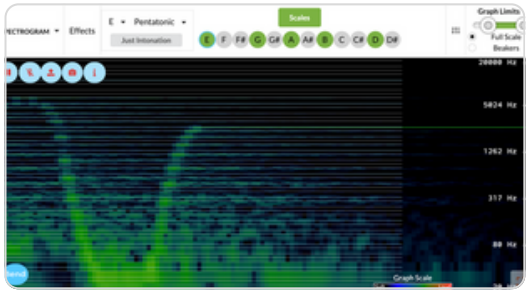
A visual representation of the way sound travels through the air. View sound waves in two ways - as moving air molecules (in the regular view) or zoom in to see the detailed view of one molecule (the sound wave itself).

Soundbreaking

Explore a range of groundbreaking music technology as it emerged throughout history. Includes 10 different interactive tools that allow you to explore microphone types, a mixing desk, vocal and guitar effects, sampling and more.

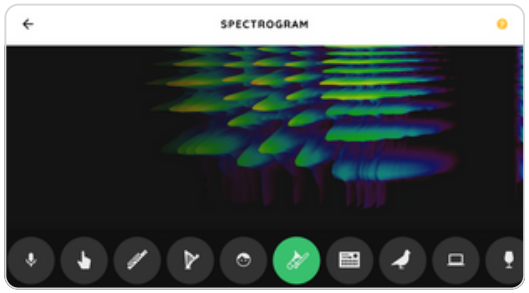
Soundcheck Pro

Your students can learn how to use a mixer by experimenting with this free online tool. Use the Play button at the bottom to start the audio file and then use the knobs and dials on the mixing desk to change the levels and effects.



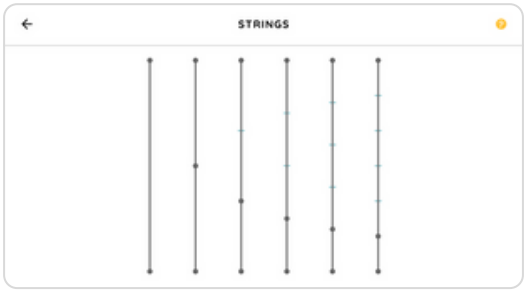
Spectrogram - Listening to Waves

This spectrogram from the Listening to Waves website allows you to see the frequencies that make up sound.



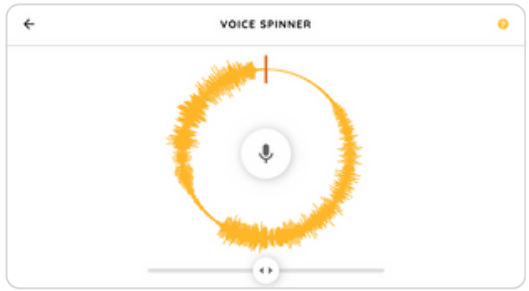
Spectrogram - Chrome Music Lab

View spectrograms - sound pictures that allows you to see the frequencies that make up sound - produced by a range of objects and instruments using the options at the bottom of the screen. You can also use the microphone to record your own sounds.



Strings - Chrome Music Lab

An interactive representation of strings that you can "play." Useful for showing students the effect of placing a finger down on a string in order to shorten it and the effect it has on the pitch of a note.



Voice Spinner - Chrome Music Lab

Spin the wave form like a record player to hear the sound sample fast, slow, forward or backwards. You can also record your own voice sample and then manipulate the playback of the audio file.

Xhalr NEW

A simple breathing app to demonstrate how controlled air flow shapes sound. Students can explore how breath pressure, duration, and pacing affect vibration and resonance—key to understanding how voices and wind instruments produce sound. Great for warm-ups and experiments.

WEBINAR

ESSENTIAL MUSIC TECH GEAR FOR EVERY CLASSROOM BUDGET

webinar replay

In this webinar, learn about USB mics, MIDI keyboards for inputting notes into software, what an audio interface is and which headphones and speakers you should buy for your classroom.

Available inside the Midnight Music Membership Community

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime

LEARN MORE

UTILITIES

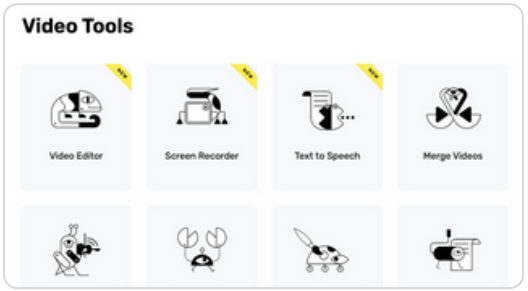
While teaching, there are times when you just need a handy online metronome or tuner, or a way to easily convert one file format into another. There are a number of utility-type websites that provide these services, and it can be useful to bookmark them for those times when you need them in class.

If you're not already using the Transpose extension for Chrome, that's definitely one to take a look at. Once installed, it adds additional functionality to the playback controls of videos on platforms like YouTube and Vimeo. You can speed up or slow down the video with more control, transpose it to a new key and set up a short practice loop which causes the video to play a defined section over and over. The extension even works with the web-based version of Spotify (with a few limitations).

Another highlight is the 123Apps website, which has a large collection of apps that you can use to carry out functional tasks like converting video from one file type to another, joining audio files together, splitting or merging PDFs and more.

TIP: PIN YOUR MOST-USED CHROME EXTENSIONS

If you have a few extensions installed in your Chrome browser, it can be easy to forget that they're there because they disappear into your extensions menu. You can choose to pin any extension that you'd like to access frequently. Right-click on the extension icon and choose "pin."



123apps

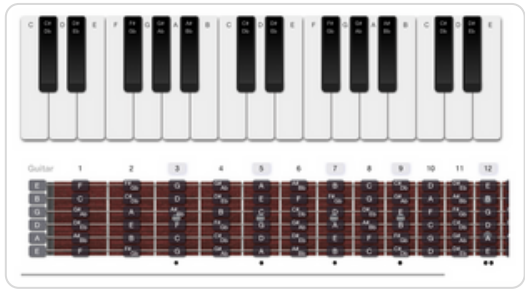
A collection of free web apps that do functional things like convert video, trim audio, join audio files together, split or merge PDFs and lots more. You'll also see them listed individually throughout this guide in other relevent sections.

Audio Converter

This audio converter from 123Apps is useful when you need a quick solution for converting an audio file from one file type to another. Upload the original, choose the new format and then download the file to your computer, Dropbox or Google Drive. You can also batch-convert multiple files at once.

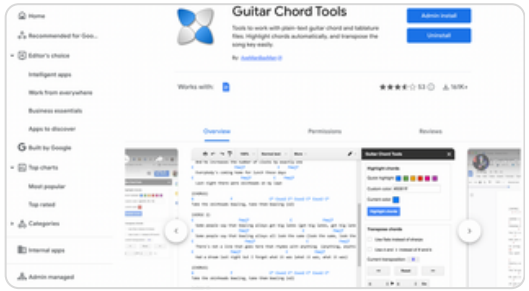
BPM Tool

An online tool that you can use to identify tempo. Tap the button 6 times in your chosen tempo and the tool will show you the BPM on the screen.



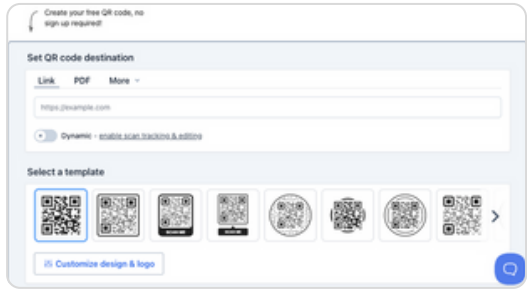
Chords and Scales 3.0

An excellent reference for chords and scales on keyboard, guitar, bass, and ukulele.



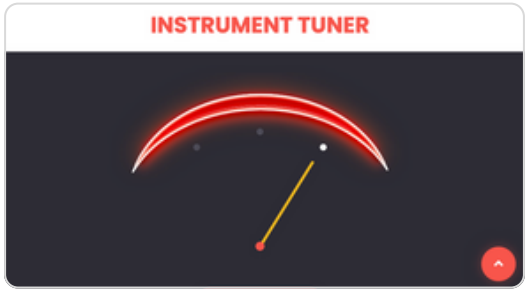
Guitar Chord Tools

An add-on for Google Docs. Copy chords/lyrics into a Google Doc and use this add-on to transpose the chords, recolor them, add "proper" sharp and flat signs and more.



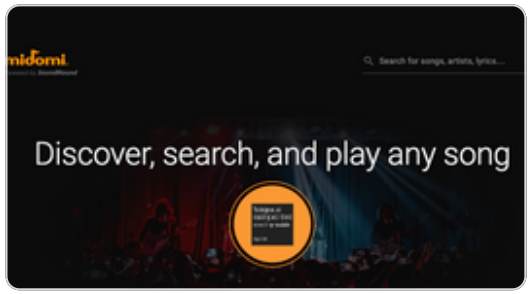
Hovercode QR Code Creator

A versatile static and dynamic QR code creator with a range of designs and styles. Create QR codes with a border, in a circular shape or with a customizable label.



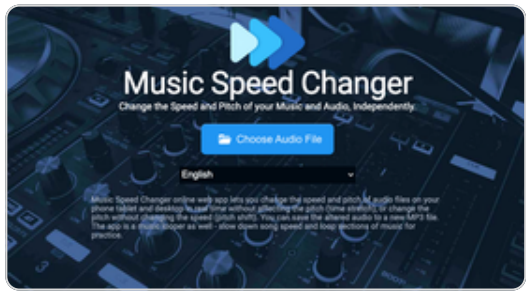
Instrument Tuner

A simple online tuner. You'll need to allow the site you use your microphone to get started. The tuner shows the musical pitch plus the frequency of the pitch being played or sung.



Midomi

Identify a song by singing into a computer mic. Successful identification of a song relies on whether the song is part of their online library, so it may not work for everything, but it's worth a shot! Also includes lyric look-up and playback of music samples.

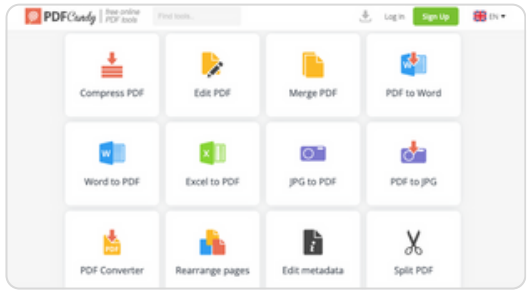


Music Speed Changer

A straightforward app for Google Play, iOS or the web, which lets you change the pitch or tempo of a song. You can also set up a loop section so you can hear a snippet of the song over and over.

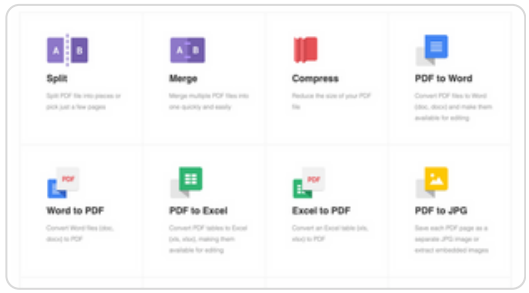
Online Metronome

In addition to the usual metronome features, this one has an option to set up an automated series of measures with predetermined time signatures and tempi. The metronome can play your preset options for a specified number of measures.



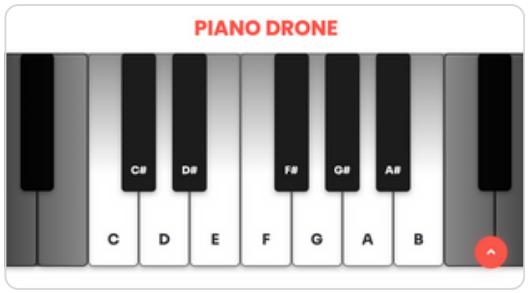
PDF Candy

A full range of free PDF editing tools including compression, merge, change file type, secure pdf and many more options.



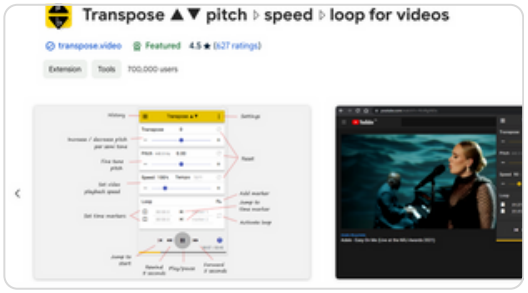
PDF Tools

Have you ever needed to split a PDF into separate documents? Or merge multiple PDFs into a single file? This collection of PDF tools includes a Split and Merge option, as well as 15 other options such as converting PDFs to Word or Excel (and vice versa), converting to and from image file types to PDF and more.



Piano Drone

A simple piano drone that can be used while practicing. Select a pitch for the drone and turn on an optional metronome.



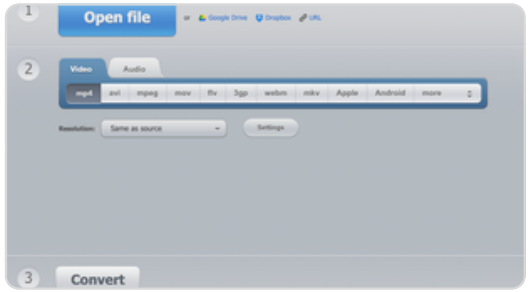
Transpose

A super-useful extension for your Chrome web browser that allows you to change the key and the speed of a YouTube video. It also allows you to set up a short "loop" within the video for practice purposes.

Soundshow

NEW

Sound Show is a user-friendly soundboard software that allows you to trigger sound effects and songs. Ideal for performances, theater, improv, sport events and more.



Video Converter

An online video converter is useful for those times when you need to convert a video from one file type to another. Upload the original - up to 4GB - choose the new format and then download the file to your computer, Dropbox or Google Drive.

WEBINAR

ADVOCACY: 6 SIMPLE WAYS TECH CAN BOOST MUSIC PROGRAM VISIBILITY

webinar replay

Learn how to create 6 different interactive tech projects that can help increase the visibility of your music program, including QR code posters, short promo videos, a class website, and digital concert programs.

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

VIDEO CLIPS AND STOCK FOOTAGE

More and more there is a need to create videos whether for a class project like film scoring, a school performance, or to promote an upcoming event. Although it's ideal to use your own video footage, there are times when you need to utilize ready-made video clips.

Luckily there are multiple online video libraries that offer a wide variety of high-quality footage, including scenes from nature, cityscapes, abstract animations, and more, all available for free use.

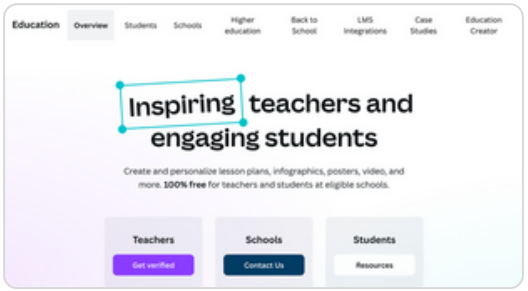
Three favorite resources can be found in this section.

The Moving Image Archive forms a small part of the extensive Internet Archive website and includes Creative Commons and public domain videos. There are entire collections of public domain cartoons, plus documentaries and full-length films. There is so much material that it can be hard to sort through it all!

Pixabay videos and Canva videos (available inside your Canva Elements library) are both go-to sources of shorter clips that are easily searched through keywords and filters.

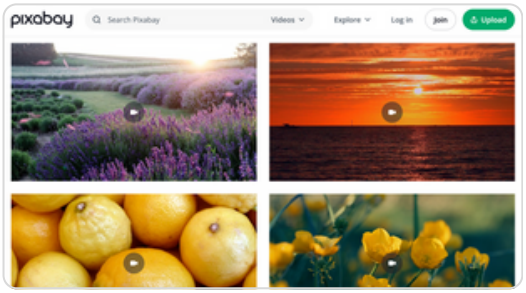
TIP: YOU CAN EASILY EDIT STOCK VIDEOS

Once you've downloaded a stock video, you can easily edit it using free video editing software (see the following section for software suggestions). This means you can shorten it, create a fade-in or fade-out, remove the soundtrack or replace an existing soundtrack with something else.



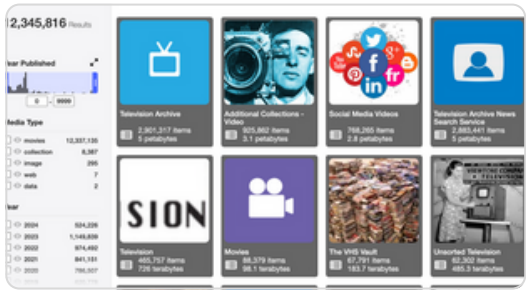
Canva Videos

Includes a collection of videos that you can use in your teaching materials, promotional materials, social media posts and other video-based projects. Educators can sign up for a free account.



Pixabay Videos

Pixabay has a fantastic collection of stock video footage which can be downloaded for your multimedia projects or film scoring projects. Try searching for nature, sports, cars, cartoons and more.



The Moving Image Archive

Creative Commons and public domain videos useful for film scoring projects. There are a wide variety of styles and lengths. Includes an entire collection of Warner Bros. cartoons.

VIDEO CREATION FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

online course

Learn how to create play-along videos (2 ways!), effective tutorials, end-of-year showcase videos, montages and multitrack videos. This 5-module course will teach you the basic and intermediate video editing skills you always wished you knew!

Available inside the Midnight Music Membership Community

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- professional development certificate

LEARN MORE

ONLINE COURSE

VIDEO RECORDING & EDITING

Learning basic video recording and editing skills is a worthwhile investment of time and these days there are many options when it comes to available software that's also free.

Features like cutting, trimming, adding transitions, and incorporating sound effects or music make it easy to create polished videos that look professional.

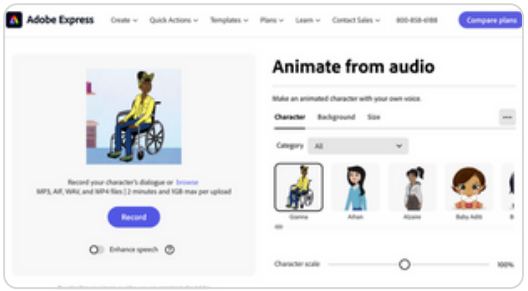
In addition to these common editing techniques, teachers often need to record their screen in order to create instructional tutorials or teaching materials.

These tools provide the features you need to capture, edit, and produce high-quality videos without the hefty price tag of professional software. Many of these platforms offer user-friendly interfaces, making them accessible even to beginners but there are also professional-level programs available for free too (hello DaVinci Resolve!)

For teachers, these tools can be used to create engaging content for flipped classrooms or online learning modules.

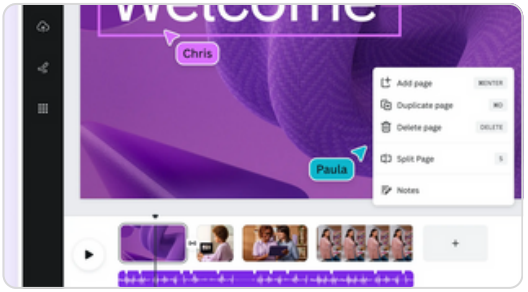
SPOTLIGHT ON: CLIPCHAMP

Clipchamp is a fantastic free web-based video editing app. It is perfect for beginner and intermediate users and the best option for Windows, Chromebooks and Macs (yes, it's better than iMovie!) Highly recommended if you're looking for a simple-to-use option. It even has a karaoke lyrics feature which you can learn about here.



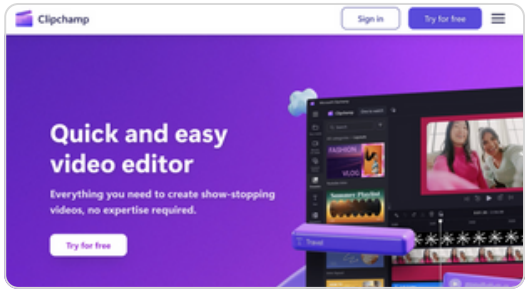
Animate from Audio

A free video creation tool which is part of the Adobe Express suite. Choose a character and background and then record a short snippet of spoken audio. Your character will lip sync what you've recorded!



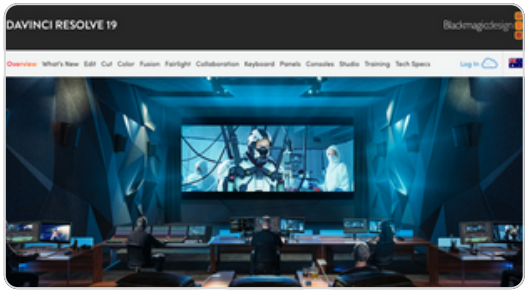
Canva Video Editor

The free design tool Canva includes a simple video editor which is perfect for creating teaching materials, promotional materials, social media posts and other video-based projects. Educators can sign up for a free account.



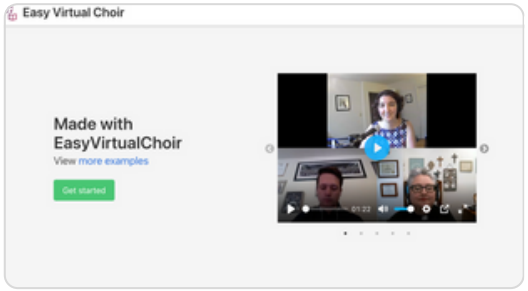
Clipchamp

A fantastic free online video editor that's quick and easy to use. Highly recommended if you need to edit videos yourself or need something you can use with students. Includes a useful karaoke text feature so you can make your own karaoke-style sing-along videos.



DaVinci Resolve

Fully-featured free pro-level video editing software that works on both Mac and Windows. This software is best for those that already have some video editing experience. Note that you will need to use a computer that meets the minimum specs. required by DaVinci Resolve.



Easy Virtual Choir

A very simple, straightforward way to make virtual-choir videos and it's not just for choirs! Use it with any ensemble or use it solo to create demo videos for parts. Includes video tutorials and a supportive community. Works on all devices. It's free to export up to 50 tracks (performers).

Line Rider

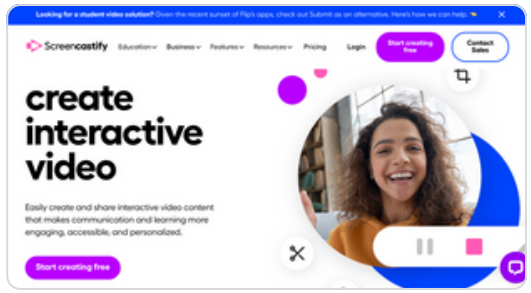
Did you know that you and your students can create your own line rider videos? The website allows you to upload your own music file using the Load Track option at the beginning, so you can try your hand at creating a synchronized line rider video.

Loom

This easy-to-use screencasting software allows you to record your computer screen, make tutorial videos, provide feedback and assessment, or capture student work on websites that don't have a save option. Free Starter accounts allow 25 videos of up to 5 minutes each in length.

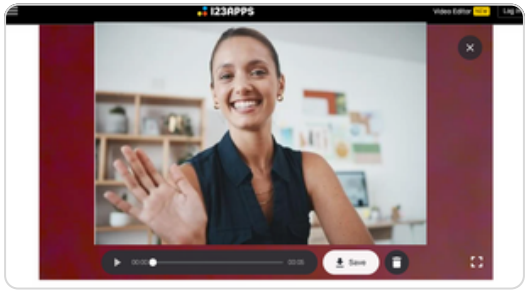
Online Video Cutter

This simple online video editing tool (from the 123apps website) allows you to trim the beginning or end of a video, rotate a video or crop the size. You can upload a video from your computer, Dropbox or Google Drive and then save your new edited version.



Screencastify

Easily record, edit and share videos. Record your screen, your webcam or both. Free for the first 10 videos and unlock more features with paid plans.



Video Recorder

If you need an easy way to record webcam videos, this online video recorder (part of the free 123apps collection) is a great option and will work for Chromebooks. You can record videos of unlimited length and then download them to your computer, or save them to Dropbox or Google Drive.

FREE WEBINAR

5 SIMPLE VIDEO EDITING SKILLS FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

free webinar

Learn 5 basic and incredibly useful video editing skills: how to crop the beginning or end off a video, add a fade in/out, add background music, remove a soundtrack, add titles and text and even create karaoke-style lyrics.

- instant access
- on-demand, watch anytime
- PD certificate provided

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what teachers are saying about

MIDNIGHT MUSIC

★★★★★

"I'm stopping now to say how much the **Midnight Music Community has been a benefit** to me in my practice.

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Mike Helton
music teacher & member

★★★★★

"The instructions were clear and presented in such a way that helped me feel confident that **I could do this!**"

Argean Vokes
music teacher & webinar attendee

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VIRTUAL INSTRUMENTS

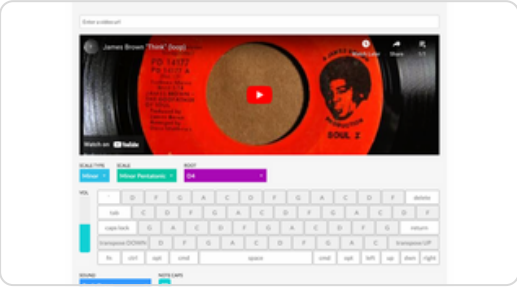
Virtual instruments are a useful addition to the music teacher toolkit, providing students with access to a wide range of instruments and sounds that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to play.

These digital instruments can be played using a computer or tablet, offering realistic simulations of everything from grand pianos and string ensembles to synthesizers and percussion instruments.

Virtual instruments can provide a versatile way to introduce students to different timbres and styles. They can be useful for composing and recording projects, allowing students to experiment with different sounds and textures without needing physical instruments. There are an extensive number of virtual instruments available for free and some can even integrate with digital audio workstations (DAWs).

Virtual instruments make a useful accessible option for students with varied abilities and physical needs.

MORE THAN JUST KEYBOARDS!
Although a large number of the virtual instruments in this guide are keyboards, there are some other unique instruments too. Check out the virtual theramin, the bongo-playing cat, the Gregorian chant generator and Viola the Bird who plays a cello!

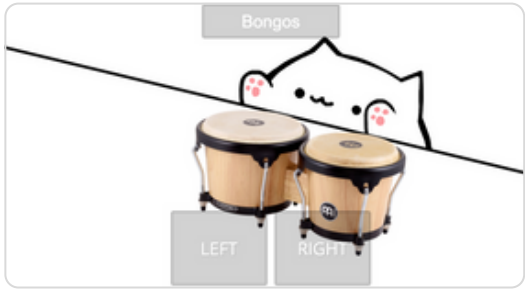


AQWERTYON

AQWERTYON can turn your computer keyboard into a musical keyboard so you can play along with a YouTube video. Set up a preset scale or mode, playback sound and embedded video and share the settings with students via a link to make class time more efficient.

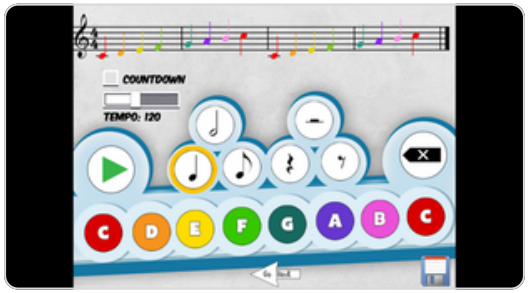
BeatBots - Dr. Musik

Play and improvise on a virtual keyboard along with built-in songs, add/remove sounds of different backing tracks, and then record and save your performance.



Bongo Cat

Virtual bongos played by a cat. You can also play cymbals, cowbell, tambourine or make a meow sound. Extremely popular with students!

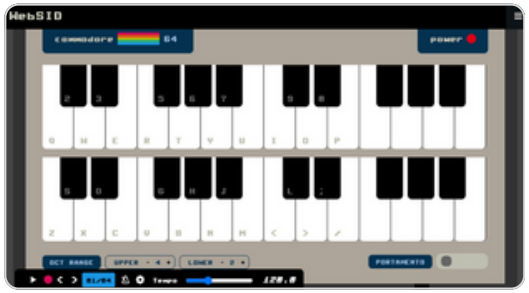


Boom!Writer - Dr. Musik

Compose short, 4-measure phrases using boomwhacker-colored notes and rests. A simple composition tool for young students.

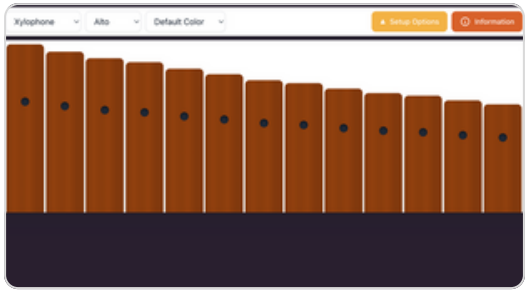
Boomwhackers

Play a tune on this one octave on-screen set of Boomwhackers. You can choose to use the diatonic set, or the diatonic set plus the chromatic add-on.



Comm 64 Websynth

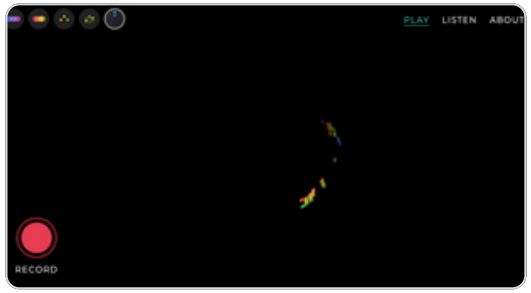
A fun and easy way to play vintage sounds and samples inspired by Atari. Includes effects and a drum sequencer.



Digital Orff

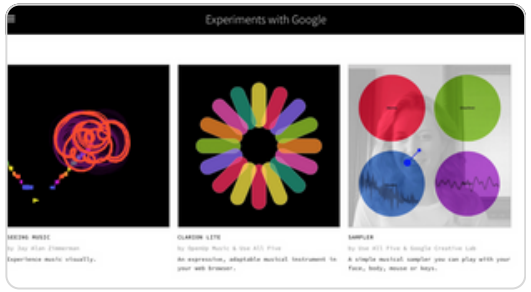
NEW

A browser-based Orff-inspired virtual instrumentarium featuring xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels. Students can add/remove bars, switch scales and notation styles (Chroma, Figurenotes), and explore melodic and harmonic play—ideal for elementary music classrooms.



Dot Piano

Dot Piano is a visual musical instrument that lives online. Use your computer keyboard to play. Colored dots appear as you play. You can record a song, then share it simply by saving a link.

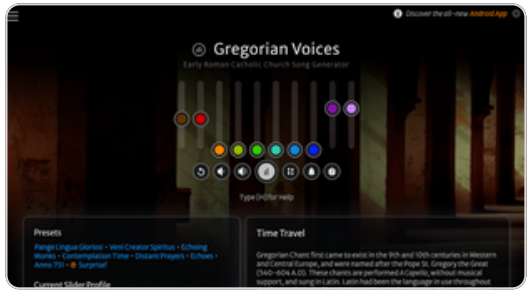


Google Creatability Experiments

A set of interactive music websites that make creativity accessible through the use of web and AI technology. By using the webcam, students can interact with virtual instruments by using body movements, eye tracking and sounds made by the voice.

MIDI city

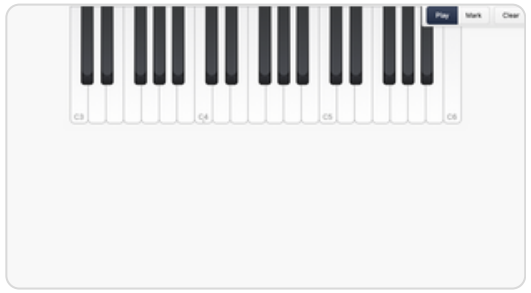
An online keyboard/synth with a great range of sounds, including metallic, bowed, rain, goblins, sci-fi, banjo and more.



MyNoise

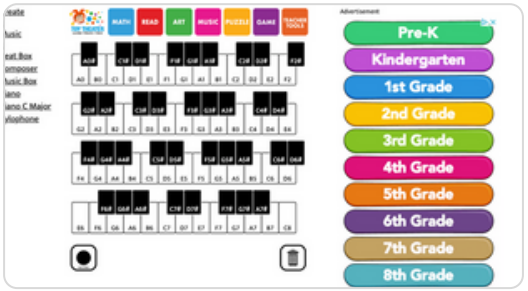
NEW

myNoise lets students mix sound layers in 200+ soundscapes like Gregorian chant, African trance drumming, binaural beats, rainstorms, temple bells, and underwater drones. Great for teaching texture, timbre, mood, and cross-cultural listening or ambient composition.



Piano - Musictheory.net

A useful online piano keyboard. Turn on Play Mode to play notes on the keyboard. You can add red dots to notes when in Mark Mode.



Piano - Toy Theater

A full 88-key online piano. The notes are in rows to save space, but they are usefully labeled with the note name and octave. Includes a record button.

Piano C Major - Toy Theater

A one-octave chromatic keyboard which matches the Boomwhacker colors. Includes a record function.

Playsprout Xylo

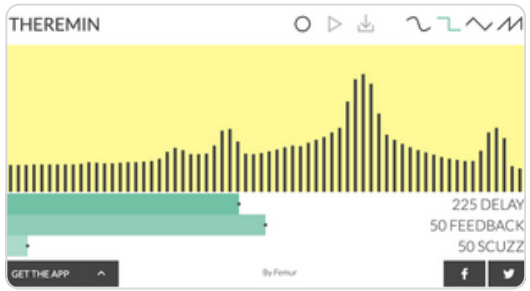
A one-octave online xylophone which is big and bold on the screen and has a wooden xylophone playback sound. You can click on the screen to hear notes, or use the numbers or letters on your computer keyboard. Use the drop-down menu to select different configurations. A Chrome extension is also available.

Robot Staircase - Dr. Musik

Click the boomwhacker-colored stairs to make your robot jump to a note. Useful for demonstrating the way different-sized boomwhackers or xylophone bars correspond to higher or lower notes. Can also turn on solfa labels.

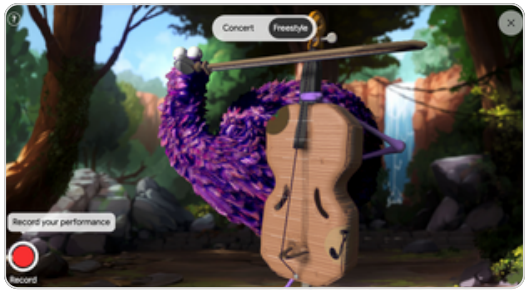
Shared Piano - Chrome Music Lab

A collaborative online keyboard that's part of the Chrome Music Lab. Trigger sounds by playing your computer keyboard. Invite players to join your session so you can create music together.



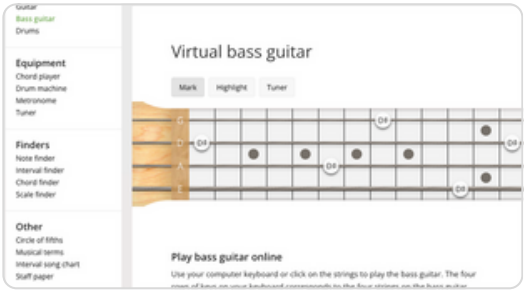
Theremin

An online theremin that lets you to play with waveforms and different effects. You can also loop and record. Very entertaining!



Viola the Bird

A fun interactive cello-style instrument that you play by dragging your mouse pointer back and forth across the screen to make the bowing motion or better still, on a touch-screen device (simply drag your finger back and forth). Use Viola to discuss the way string instruments produce sound, change pitch and more.



Virtual Bass Guitar - Musicca

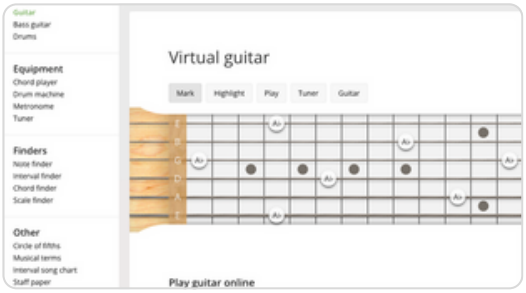
A simple on-screen bass guitar that you can play with your computer keyboard or by clicking on the screen with your mouse.

Virtual Drum Kit

An on-screen virtual drum kit that you can trigger using your computer keyboard. The keys you use are customizable and you can also customize the volume level of each part of the kit. Even includes cowbell!

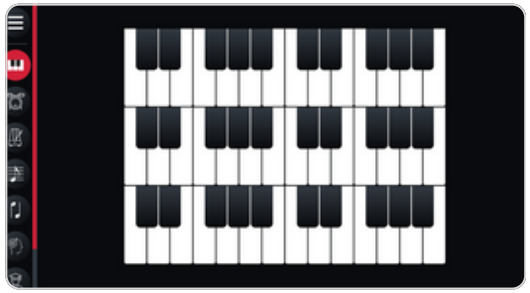
Virtual Drumming

A realistic-looking virtual drum set with quality instrument samples. Perfect for teaching students about the drum kit (you could display it on the data projector), or as a basic beat maker.



Virtual Guitar - Musicca

Use your computer keyboard or click on the on-screen guitar to play. You can mark individual notes and also highlight all the notes of a specific pitch on the fretboard.

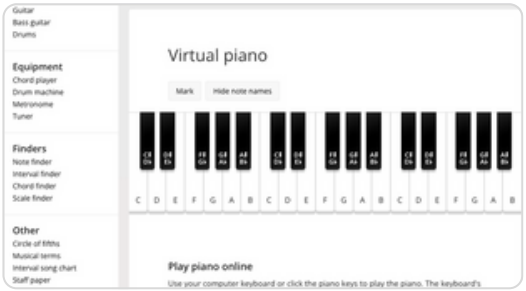


Virtual Keyboard

An online piano with a variety of playback sounds that you can trigger with your computer keyboard.

Virtual Percussions - Dr. Musik

A variety of classroom percussion instruments that you can click on to play. Also includes a "name that instrument" sound identification game and a call & response activity.

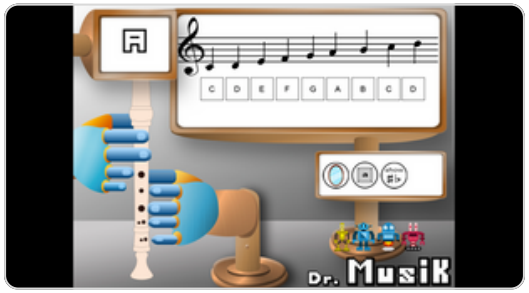


Virtual Piano - Musicca

A simple online piano that can show letter names on the keys.

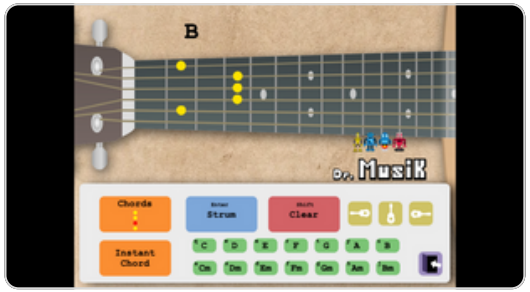
Virtual Piano - Recursive Arts

An online piano/synth that you can play with your computer keyboard. Has a built-in metronome, sustain that can be turned on or off and a collection of different sounds.



Virtual Recorder - Dr. Musik

An easy-to-use virtual recorder that also displays fingerings by clicking on notes of the treble clef. Can be played by pressing letters on the computer keyboard. Useful for displaying recorder fingerings on a data projector. Can also be used on a laptop by students that have difficulty playing a regular recorder.

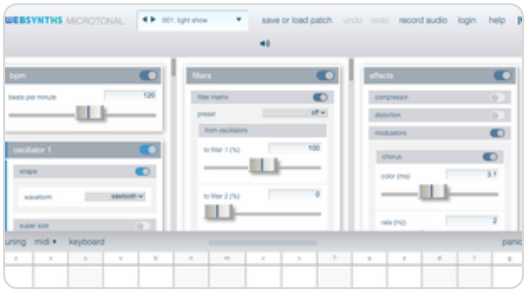


Virtual Ukulele & Guitar - Dr. Musik

Play notes or chords on a virtual ukulele or guitar. You can change the orientation of the instrument to view it from different angles. Useful for displaying notes and chords on a data projector. Can also be used on a laptop by students that have difficulty playing a regular guitar/uke.

Virtual Xylophone - Dr. Musik

Virtual bass, alto, and soprano xylophones with the option to add or remove bars, show/hide letters, show/hide sharps/flats and add boomwhacker colors.



WebSynths Microtonal

A free browser-based synthesizer that contains over 100 sounds that can be manipulated and played on a tuned keypad and then exported. Allows for very specific tuning including microtonal sounds.

Xylophone - Toy Theater

A simple one-octave online "xylophone" (it plays a metallic glockenspiel sound). You can use the keys on your computer keyboard to play each note, or click on the screen. Includes a simple record function.

READ

How to Make Interactive Virtual Play-Alongs with the free tool aQWERTYon

10 Virtual Musical Instruments for Your Virtual Classroom

Chrome Music Lab Lesson: C Major Musical Phrases on Shared Piano

Google Creatability Experiments: Creative Music Sites for Special Needs Students

SPOTLIGHT: TECH GEAR FOR MUSIC TEACHERS - TIPS & ADVICE

READ

The Best Portable Piano Keyboards and Midi Controllers for Every Music Classroom Budget

5 of the Best USB Microphones to Look for in a Sale

LISTEN

MTT145: My Go-to Sources When Researching Tech Gear

MTT153: Your Guide to Buying, Connecting & Using MIDI Keyboards

MTT156: What's on my desk? Tech gear I use everyday

WEBSITE CREATION

Website creation platforms offer a way for music teachers and students to build an online presence and many have easy-to-use, drag-and-drop interfaces that make it simple to design professional-looking websites without any coding knowledge.

A website allows you to showcase student work, create a class blog, or organize resources for your music program. It can also be a great way to communicate with students and parents, share lesson plans, post updates about upcoming events, or even host online learning materials.

Students can create websites to host a personal portfolios, share their compositions, or collaborate on group projects.

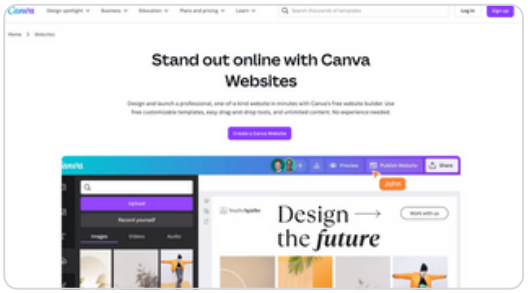
Many of these free website builders come with customizable templates and integrated features like galleries, blogs, and contact forms, making it easy to tailor the site to your specific needs.

WHY CREATE YOUR OWN WEBSITE?

These days, creating a website is a straightforward process and there's absolutely NO coding required. In fact, if you regularly create and edit documents and presentation files, you have almost all the skills you need to create a website!

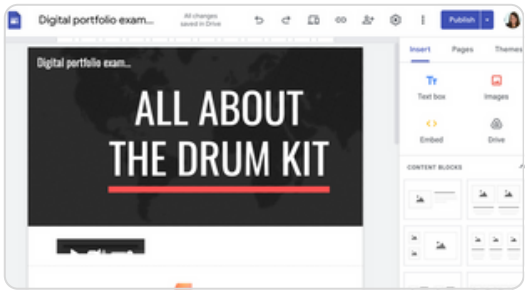
Example website ideas for music teachers:

- a personal portfolio or online CV
- class website for student and parent communication
- a music ensemble website for sharing music, audio files, rehearsal dates and forms
- an event website which includes details and ticket booking links



Canva Website Builder

The extensive design tool Canva includes a simple website builder. Useful for creating a class website for communication or an online CV or portfolio. Sign up for Canva for Education which gives teachers the Pro version for free.

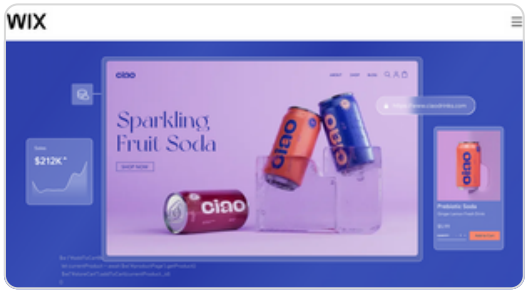


Google Sites

Free website builder from Google. Create a class website, create a "home" for your teaching resources or use it for student digital portfolios.

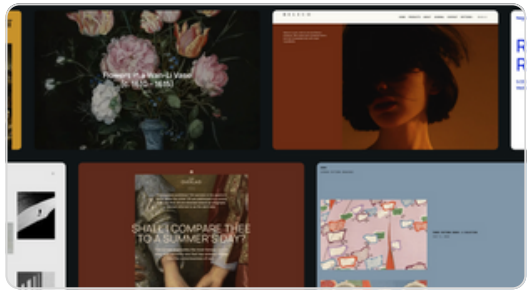
Weebly

A free website/blog creator which is easy to use. It has a drag-and-drop interface and it's a popular choice for beginners.



Wix

Another free website/blog platform which is easy to use and also popular with teachers and students.



Wordpress

Create your own website/blog for free on this extremely popular website builder. No coding is necessary and there are hundreds of tutorial videos available if you need help. The free version can be upgraded to a self-hosted pro version to give you a wider range of features.

READ

How to create a free one-page website in Canva for music teachers

Music Teachers Using Google Sites: 6 effective examples

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