

Buy and Rent Apple Media

In the United States, Apple sells music in the Music app, movies and TV shows in the TV app, and ebooks and audiobooks in the Books app, and they offer movie rentals in the TV app. In other countries, the content available varies.

For a long time, Apple sold all this content in the iTunes Store. There are remnants of this store in various Apple apps: you can display iTunes Store in the Music app sidebar on a Mac, and there is an iTunes Store app you can download on an iPhone or iPad to purchase music. But, other than for music, media sale and rental options have been rolled into the Books and TV apps.

The examples I give show what happens in the United States. If you live elsewhere, the experience is largely the same, but some of the details may differ. I also explain how to move digital content you've purchased elsewhere into Music, in [Add Your Own Files to the Music App on a Mac](#).

About Your Apple Account

Your Apple Account serves many purposes. For example, it is the account you use to sign in to iCloud, which allows your Apple devices to sync files and other data across devices. You can also use that account to purchase or rent items from Apple's various media stores, as well as from the Mac App Store, iOS/iPadOS App Store, and other Apple services.

Note: In late 2024, Apple changed the name of your identifier for accessing Apple services from Apple ID to Apple Account.

You must be signed in to your Apple Account to use some of the features I describe in this book. In most cases, the Music, TV, Podcasts, or Books apps prompt you to sign in to your Apple Account when you

first try to access such features, but, if not, you can do so by choosing Account > Sign In in Music, TV, Podcasts, or Books.

For more on what your Apple Account is used for, see the Apple support document, [Manage and use your Apple Account](#).

Buy Music in the iTunes Store

When Apple split up iTunes into multiple apps, they changed the way users see the iTunes Store. If you have an Apple Music subscription, you do not see the iTunes Store in the app's sidebar by default. If you don't subscribe to Apple Music, you see the iTunes Store, but you also see the Apple Music section in the sidebar.

If you are an Apple Music user and do want to see the iTunes Store—many people both rent *and* buy music—go to Music > Settings, click General, and select iTunes Store in the Show section. Note that while you can browse the iTunes Store at any time, you must be signed in to your Apple Account to purchase or rent any content, or download any free content. See [About Your Apple Account](#) above for more on signing in to your Apple Account.

Note: On an iPhone or iPad, you can buy music in the iTunes Store app. If you don't have the iTunes Store app on your iPhone or iPad, you can [download it from the App Store](#). You cannot purchase music on an Apple TV.

Select iTunes Store in the sidebar to enter the store. You see what Apple is currently touting, with new music, discounted offers, per-orders, and more. You can navigate the store by genre (there are lots of navigation links in the right-hand sidebar), look at the top songs and albums (also in the right-hand sidebar), and browse in other ways. To learn more about an item, or to buy it, click it to open its page.

You can buy albums, and, in most cases, individual songs, though some songs are listed as *album only*, meaning you cannot buy them on their own.

To exit the Store, click a different item in the sidebar.

Where to Find iTunes Store Purchases in the Music App

iTunes Store purchases that you've downloaded appear in your library just like any other media, and if you're using Sync Library, they appear in the Music library of all your devices. For example, to see a downloaded song, click one of the views in the sidebar, such as Artists, Albums, or Songs. Or, type its title in the Search box in the top-right corner. Or, if you've just downloaded it, click Recently Added in the sidebar.

For purchases that are not downloaded, see [Re-Download iTunes Store Content](#), later.

Automatically Download Purchases to the Music App

You can choose to have new purchases download automatically to a different device that uses the same Apple Account for media and purchases. This means that when you buy a new album or app on your Mac, it can automatically appear on your iPhone or iPad, and vice versa.

For automatic downloads to occur, you must turn the feature on. This is a good thing, because you may not always want automatic downloads to all your devices.

To turn on automatic downloads in Music on your Mac—which affects only that copy of Music on that Mac—go to Music > Settings > General (**Figure 72**). If you check Automatic Downloads, the Music app downloads any purchases you make from the iTunes Store automatically; it also downloads music you add to your cloud library, so you may not want to do this on a Mac where you don't have a lot of storage. You can also tell the Music app to always check for available downloads, even if it does not download new content automatically. If new downloads are available, the app alerts you.

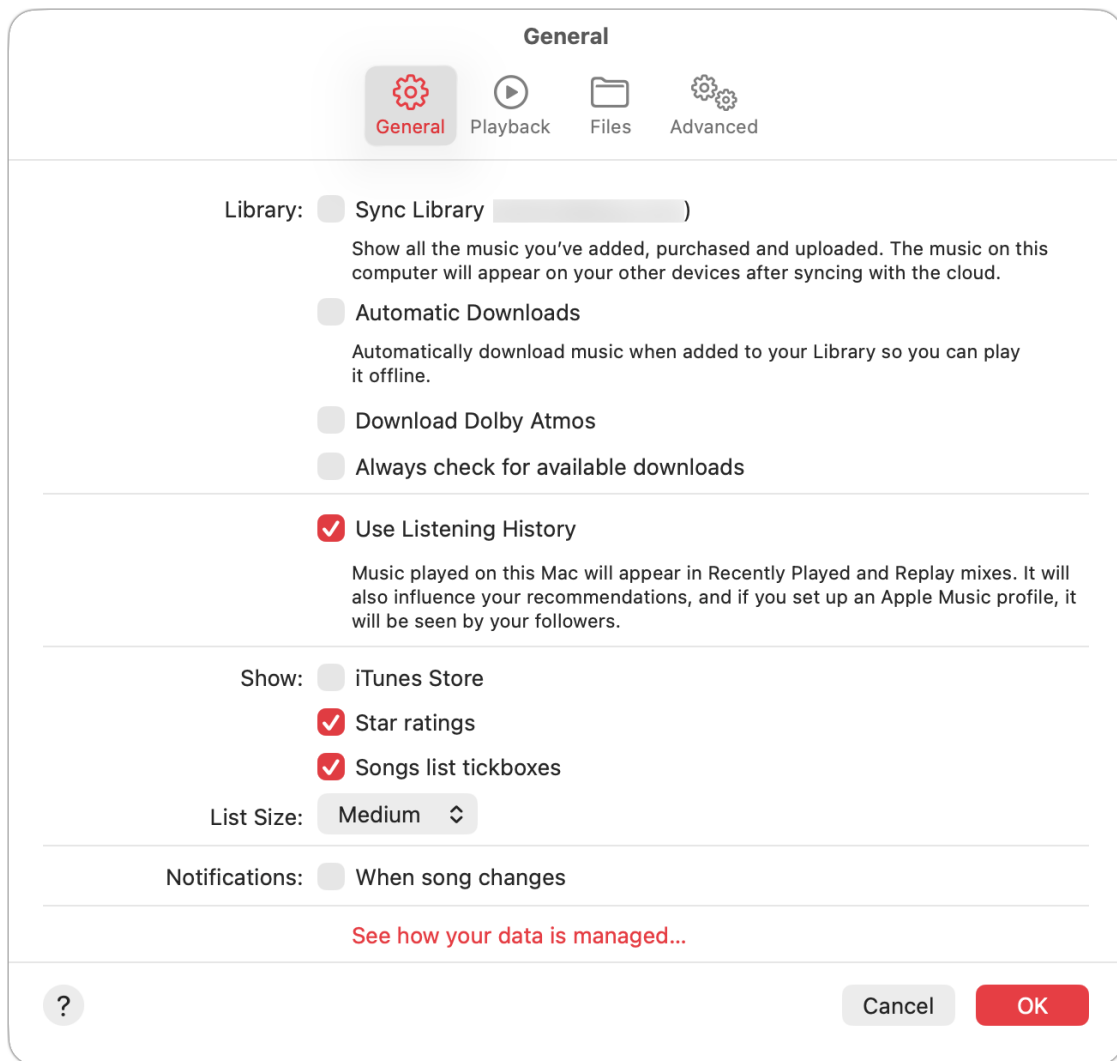


Figure 72: Choose whether you want the Music app to download new content automatically.

There are similar settings in the TV app, in TV > Settings > General, where you can choose to automatically download movies and/or TV shows, and in the Books app, where, in Settings > General you can turn on a similar setting.

Which Apple Media Content Has DRM?

Back in the day, *DRM*, or digital rights management (also known as copy protection), was quite controversial. In the early days of the iTunes Store, all content sold was protected with DRM. For more than 15 years, all music sold on the iTunes Store has been free of DRM. All other content sold by Apple, however, does use DRM: movies, TV shows, audiobooks, most ebooks, and so on. (Though this and other Take Control books sold via Apple Books do not have DRM.) This

includes movie rentals, which have DRM and are time-limited. Podcasts that are provided for free do not have DRM; subscription podcasts do have DRM.

DRM prevents you from sharing protected content with friends or family members, unless they use the same Apple account as you—or you are a Family Sharing group (see the next topic for more). Because iTunes Store music doesn't have DRM, you can share it with friends, though it's up to you to decide whether this is ethical.

Note: The audio files you download from Apple Music also have DRM. Since you haven't bought these files—you're only renting access to them while you subscribe to Apple Music—they are copy protected.

Share Apple Media with Family Members

Here are some ideas for sharing Apple media content within a family:

- **Use one Apple Account for all purchases:** In this scenario, you designate a single Apple Account to hold all media and apps purchased from Apple. Everyone signs in to the iTunes Store and other apps, or to Media & Purchases on an iPhone or iPad, with that account's credentials; this method works well with up to five "authorized" computers at once—Mac or PC—and (generally) on up to ten iPhones or iPads (see the next two topics). If you have children, you should manage the purchases, since you may set up an Apple Account using a credit card, and you probably don't want to give your kids your password. This account can be different from the Apple Account used to sign in to iCloud.
- **Use Family Sharing:** This feature allows everyone in a designated family (as many as six people) to share all purchased content, and an Ask to Buy option can be enabled to limit what children can buy. This is much more practical than the first option.

Note: To subscribe to Apple Music with a family plan, you must use Family Sharing.

- **Use Home Sharing:** With Home Sharing, available on a Mac, each family member has a separate Apple Account, and Home Sharing is mediated with just one of those Apple Accounts. Each person can load other Music libraries that are shared on the same network, and play or copy items. Also, a Home Sharing library can be accessed locally on an iPhone, iPad, or Apple TV. Find out more in [Use AirPlay to Stream Music in Your Home](#).

Authorize and Deauthorize Your Computer for iTunes Store Purchases

You must authorize your computer to play Apple content that contains DRM or to sync such content to a mobile device. The first time you try to perform one of these operations, a dialog asks you to enter your Apple Account password. You can authorize a total of ten devices, five of which can be computers—Macs or PCs—with the same Apple Account.

When you authorize a computer, Music looks at specific hardware information on the computer to identify that device. The authorization is connected to the physical computer, not to a specific Mac or Windows user account. So when you sell or give away a computer—or even if you send one in for service—make sure to deauthorize it first, by choosing **Account > Authorizations > Deauthorize This Computer**.

If you forget to do this and reach your five-computer limit, choose **Account > Account Settings**. In the “Account Access” section, click **Authorized Devices**. A dialog asks whether you want to deauthorize all your devices; while there is a number on this line telling you how many devices are authorized, you can’t see which devices they are. Click **Deauthorize All** to reset them. You then must reauthorize any computers that use content purchased from Apple in order to access the media. You can deauthorize all your computers only once per year (though if, for some reason, you need to do this again, contact Apple Support; they may be able to help you).

Manage Mobile Devices Associated with Your Apple Account

You can associate a total of ten devices with your Apple Account, only five of which can be computers. Associated devices are devices where you sign in to access DRM-protected content, and these include computers (Macs and PCs), iPhones, iPads, and Android phones where you sign in with your Apple Account, but not HomePods, Apple TVs, or Apple Watches.

Any associated device logged in to Apple media services with your Apple Account can access your purchased items and your cloud library.

Note: Some Apple media apps display dialogs asking you to sign in to Apple Media Services, rather than your Apple Account. This seems to be an umbrella term that Apple has not standardized, but that shows up in some cases.

You can find out which devices are associated with your account by choosing Account > Account Settings. Near the bottom of the screen that appears, click Manage Devices. If you want to disassociate a device, click its Remove button. For example, if you sell or give away an iPad, you should sign out on the device and remove it from the list of associated devices before you part with it.

Note that if the Remove button is dimmed, this means that your iPhone or iPad has connected to one of Apple's stores in the past 30 days. Sign out on that device and try again. To do this, go to Settings, tap your name, then go to Media & Purchases, scroll down, and tap Remove This Device.

If you've already sold or given away a device and forgotten to disassociate it, you must wait 90 days to do so. (See [this Apple support document](#) for more on managing associated devices.)

Add Your Own Files to the Music App on a Mac

You may have files downloaded from other online vendors, or other sources, or files stored on another computer. You can add files in the following formats to the Music app on a Mac: AAC, MP3, AIFF, WAV, and Apple Lossless; here are a few ways you can do this:

- Drop them—either grouped or in a folder—onto the Music app icon.
- Drop the files anywhere on the Library section of the Music app sidebar.
- Choose File > Import, and navigate to a file or folder. If you navigate to a folder that contains audio files, click Open and all the files in that folder are imported.
- Drop them onto a standard (not smart) playlist in the Music app sidebar to add them to that playlist and to your library.
- Select files in the Finder, then copy (⌘-C), switch to Music, and paste (⌘-V). If a playlist is visible, the files are added to that playlist; if not, they are added to your library.
- Drop them in the Automatically Add to Music folder. This is located in the Media folder, which by default is in the Music folder in your home folder. Music adds any new content in this “watched” folder to your Music library and then deletes it from the folder.

Work Smart with a Temp Playlist

I have a playlist that I call Temp. I select that playlist in Music, switch to the Finder, then drag the files onto that playlist in the Music app’s sidebar to add them to the playlist. This way I know where new tracks are, and I can tag them as I want. Otherwise, I sometimes have to hunt in my library to find them.

What's a FLAC?

FLAC files are audio files compressed with the Free Lossless Audio Codec. They are relatively popular on websites that sell lossless files and those that provide live concerts for download.

If you want to convert *FLAC* files—or files in other audio formats—for use with Music, I strongly recommend the free [XLD](#) (X Lossless Decoder), which is the most powerful and flexible audio file conversion tool for Mac. (Look on the website for a download link for a file with `.dmg` at the end.)

After Apple released the Apple Lossless format specifications as open source in 2011, the use of this format became much more common. Most online retailers of lossless or high-resolution music files offer them in this format.

You should be aware that you can convert files in any lossless format (*WAV*, *AIFF*, *FLAC*, or Apple Lossless) to another lossless format with no loss in quality. So you can convert *FLAC* files to Apple Lossless and lose nothing of the original music. This is even the case for high-resolution lossless files.