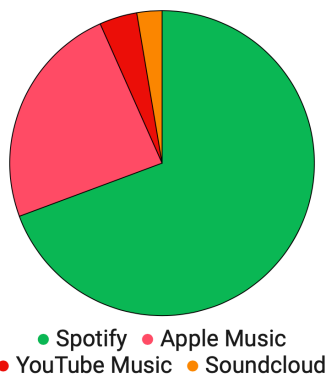


## What's Your Opinion?

Which music streaming services do you use?

Out of 75 responses:  
 Spotify -- 52  
 Apple Music -- 18  
 YouTube Music -- 3  
 Soundcloud -- 2



## Next Poll:

**Hello, Howl!**

Do you usually reply to or ignore messages from Howl, the A-State AI chatbot?

Students can answer the poll on The Herald's Instagram page, [@astateherald](https://www.instagram.com/astateherald). Instagram polls are posted on Mondays. Previous poll results can be found on [astatetheherald.com](https://www.astatetheherald.com). Have an idea for a poll? Send your ideas to [heraldopinion1921@gmail.com](mailto:heraldopinion1921@gmail.com).

These and future articles can be found on the Opinion section of The Herald's website.

## Spotify: the people's music streaming service

JUSTIN COATS

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD



Justin Coats is a junior computer science major from Cherry Valley, Arkansas.

When looking at an audio streaming service like Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube Music and the like, there is only one question at the forefront of the mind: "What is the better option?" Such a question is open and broad and can have a vast array of interpretations but for most people that question simply means "Will it play the music I like?" As far as Spotify is concerned, it can do all of that and more.

One of the greatest edges Spotify has over other music service providers is that the service offers a freemium version with ads. This allows anyone at any time to create an account and start listening to their favorite artists.

And of course, you can subscribe to premium at any time, and more

importantly, cancel at any time without worrying about getting locked out of your account.

Spotify also boasts a catalog of over 100 million songs, in addition to thousands of podcasts, audiobooks and music videos — whereas Apple delegates books and podcasts to their own apps, with separate subscriptions.

Additionally, Spotify has an easily readable and efficient user interface, in-app text resizing for those with impaired vision and automatically generated transcripts of music and podcasts.

Couple this with the fact that Spotify has a dedicated web version and it's evident that Spotify is far more accessible than YouTube Music.

Another ball in Spotify's court is the sheer value you get from it and its bundles as opposed to some other services.

For those attending college, which is likely most people reading this, Spotify offers a special subscription that bundles Spotify Premium and Hulu for only \$5.99 a month.

Compare this with YouTube Music, which offers no additional services. Rather, if you want anything extra with your YouTube Music subscription, you're going to have to buy YouTube Premium, which comes in at \$7.99 a month.

Of course, no article about Spotify

would be complete without mentioning Spotify Wrapped. In this annual social media phenomenon, casual listeners and connoisseurs come together to share their listening habits with the world.

While it's true that Apple Music and YouTube Music have developed their versions of Wrapped, let's just take a moment to be honest with ourselves here. No one in the history of humankind has ever said "Hey, check out my Apple Music Replay" or "Look at my YouTube Music Recap." No, the one everyone cares about is Spotify Wrapped and seemingly will be for the foreseeable future.

All in all, Spotify offers a wide variety of features for a great price and goes to show that there is value to be

found in an app that does many things as opposed to one that tries only one.

That being said, Spotify isn't all sunshine and rainbows. The app is lacking in a few key areas, most notably that Spotify is notorious for not paying their artists, reportedly offering their content creators less than half a cent per song streamed.

This, of course, is unsustainable for most indie content creators, and as such, has been a key reason why the music streaming industry has become so saturated with apps.

With so many new competitors in the audio streaming market, only time will tell if Spotify's legacy will be a match for the emerging apps of the future.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRABNERS

Photo illustration depicts a Spotify user next to earphones.

## YouTube Music: the underdog of music streaming services

BENJAMIN MCDOWELL

STAFF WRITER



Benjamin McDowell is a sophomore multimedia journalism major from Wynne, Arkansas.

Music streaming is more accessible than ever, especially with platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, Soundcloud and YouTube Music offering countless and innovative ways to listen to your favorite artists. But one platform stands out for both artists and listeners — YouTube Music.

YouTube Music is more than just a streaming service, it blends audio and visual content, allowing their users to experience music beyond the sound. From official music videos to exclusive performances to unreleased demos — this platform continually reshapes how people engage with their favorite musical artists.

Let's discuss pay, in a time where

certain subscription services can be quite expensive, Youtube Music allows people to listen and stream for free!

All you have to do is subscribe to your favorite artists' YouTube channel and you will be able to see and hear their entire discography. In addition, it's also an amazing place for fans to listen to artist's other content like their promotional videos, podcasts, performances from specific award shows or tours, as well as even hearing their unreleased demos.

But just like every other music streaming service, there are premium plans you can subscribe to.

The most popular plan users tend to purchase is the individual plan, which is \$10.99 per month. This plan allows users to listen to music ad-free, download tracks for offline listening and use smart downloads (which is where the platform automatically downloads certain songs to your device based on your viewing habits and activities).

Besides the pay, there is another important feature that many people put above anything else: sound quality.

YouTube Music in terms of sound quality is one of the best and is larger in sound than any other music streaming service, offering low, normal and high quality audio options. Through these options, it will give the listeners a

better listening experience with artists' instrumentation or production on an album and tracks.

But beyond the pay and the sound quality, YouTube Music pays their artists better in comparison to any other music streaming service.

YouTube Music pays their artists about \$0.008 per stream, which is considerably higher than some other streaming services, like Spotify who pay their artists between \$0.003 and \$0.005 per stream.

Now, we all know that a beloved feature regarding a certain app blows up every year where users will post their end-of-the-year listening summaries. Well, YouTube Music has them too, and they're better!

Youtube Music provides users with a "recap" of their favorite songs from the past three months, as well as a cohesive

display of the users' top artists/creators, favorite songs and videos, their listening trends, a personalized playlist and even shows their watch time stats and metrics for the past year.

Unfortunately, for all their benefits and unique features, YouTube Music still has certain things to work on. A personal gripe of mine is the fact that without the premium plan, you have to keep the app open (or tab, if you are on a desktop) if you want to continue listening to your music.

Regardless, YouTube Music is the best place to go for streaming music. With its combination of free access, premium features, artist support and the way it always redefines our musical experience — how can this not be the winner for the best music streaming service?

Read full story at [astatetheherald.com](https://www.astatetheherald.com)



COURTESY OF FORBES

Photo illustration depicts a smartphone next to a pair of earphones.

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