

Music on the Radio

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The Music Selection for a Show

Because listeners often tune in to their radio station because of the music, you should carefully think about your choice of music for a show – no matter what kind of show it is.

The choice of music depends on the character of the show. According to the character of the show there are different criteria for a music selection.



- Opener: Directly at the beginning of show music can convey something about the character, rhythm and style of a show (eg. dynamic music for a sports show, feel-good-music for a talk-show about personal topics, plain, electronic sounds for an informative variety show).
- After a long-worded contribution music can give pause for thought about what has been said.
- Music can motivate to keep following the show because the show gets a rhythm through the interplay and alternation of different broadcast items and music.
- Rhythm, dynamics, tempo and key are criteria that can be used deliberately in a music selection. Music does not always have to be 'harmonious', you can also deliberately create disruptions.
- As possible, in a variety show the music should address the same target group that also the textual contributions should reach. The selection should be varied and diversified. If you play music that is too one-sided you might restrict the number of potential listeners.



- Music can also take up the topic of the show on an associative level (eg. If the show is about the change in the landscape of rivers, music that has a “flowing character”).
- But be careful: you should also not exaggerate any harmonisation of the music with the contents of the show. Not always when the topic is Argentina Tango is the way to go. Also the choice of music can reproduce clichés.
- A piece of music that in itself carries a meaning for the show should be planned according to the concept of the show.
- Beware of too ‘exhausting’ music. Sometimes it can be too much to play a powerfully eloquent piece that deals with the same topic after a long-winded contribution.
- It is advisable to always have a few more pieces of music at hand than are actually needed in the show, because then it is possible to spontaneously change a few pieces of music according to the atmosphere.



Music and Presentation: Talking about Music

Band presentations, new publications, a concert that takes place that night, interviews with musicians or collectors, background information about the development of a piece or portraits – there are many occasions to talk about music.

Indeed, often the presentation makes the music understandable. Particularly the different music cultures – from the many musical youth cultures to the so-called world music – lend themselves to be made the topic of a presentation: You can convey something about the origin, the development, the distinctive features or contents of a piece of music and this way create wonderful bridges as regards contents in a show. When playing a Reggae song you can say something about the spiritual background in which Reggae and Dancehall need to be placed. On this basis the listeners to whom this kind of music is still new and unfamiliar can appreciate it far better than only on the musical level.

They learn a lot about a specific attitude towards life or a special perspective – and also about the similarities of every-day lives in different worlds.



- When you consciously choose music and take it seriously as part of the programme it goes without saying that you name the titles of the songs as well as the musicians/ bands.
- When presenting the music it is imperative that: Everything that the listeners can hear for themselves in the music does not need to be said. Descriptions of music like they are necessary in written CD-reviews are unnecessary on the radio or even irritating. Example: "The new single release by XY starts with a drumbeat." This presentation takes away the effect of surprise that the piece starts with.
- Just as irritating are "stage directions" like: "and now some music."
- Be careful with adjectives and the corresponding value judgements: The listeners want to decide themselves whether they find the music "beautiful", "interesting" or that it "rocks".
- Music should be left enough space to have an effect on its own. It is the centre of attention and not him or her who presents it. Nevertheless music shows, in particular, leave enough space to be creative: presentations are fun that tune into the music – depending on the music style they can be playful, associative, based on a rhythm or onomatopoeic.



Use of music in montages like contributions or features

Music can evoke emotions and images in a montage: Only Samba makes a report from the carnival in Rio really comprehensive; you can imagine the musicians and dancers who are described by the words a lot better.

Music can also comment, intensify, create irony or structure.

- In montages you never play whole titles only short cut outs of music. The sequences are chosen by listening. The length can vary according to over-all length and rhythm of the montage but should not exceed 30 seconds even in a long feature.



- The beginning of a piece of music is suitable for something new also in montages; the ending marks a finale in montages, too. Within montages you usually use sequences from pieces of music because of that.
- When speaking over music note that: Music with singing or a solo instrument is usually not suitable for speaking over because then the voices of material and song compete with each other and the listeners cannot properly listen to either (vocal competition). Same holds true for music with a rhythm that you cannot match (rhythmic competition).gen.
- If the music is played in its own right voices, solo instruments and rhythms can be used dramatically in the montage and add another acoustic level.
- Music takes stronger effect than spoken text – use this sensibly.
- Music can reproduce clichés (Tango in a report on Argentina).
- Songs that are too well-known often have a fatiguing effect

