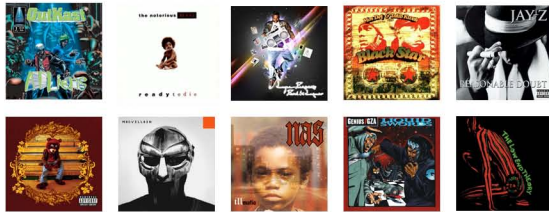


LYRICIST GUIDE

There's no guide that will turn you into a great lyricist overnight. It takes practice. However this will give you some good tips to step up your writing game that you can start using right away.

Your Purpose. The first thing you should do is determine your purpose. You may want to make commercial hits, be a lyrical titan, a great battle rapper, or write for other rappers? Maybe you just want to express yourself. But first you must understand your purpose. That's your foundation. From there you can build a fortress of technical skill, vocabulary, cultural references and unique identity.

Study the Greats. Feed your mind with great music. Study the lyrics. Study the rhyme schemes. Listen to how great rappers ride the beat. Listen to their adlibs. Listen to their themes, their cultural references, their double entendres, their swagger, and the narratives they create.



Watch the News and Read. Not only does this exercise your mind, it also gives you a deeper understanding of the world around you. This is vital to being a writer. The more you comprehend the more you can bring to bear in your work. If at some point you want make historical or political references in your lyrics you'll have the knowledge to do it.

Clear Your Mind. The first thing you want to do is clear your mind. This doesn't mean you should be emotionless. Writing when you're emotionally charged is compelling. Being clear minded means you should be alert, in peak mental condition and focused on your work. You'll find that your lyrics flow easier and that writing becomes automatic

Warm Up is Important. When you first start writing it might not flow. You might spend an hour on your first 8 bars. That's ok. It's normal.

It takes your brain time to get into flow. At first write whatever comes to mind. Don't worry about quality. Just write to write.

Experiment with Rhymes. Rhymes help organize lyrics into patterns that fit the beat. They link the vocals to the instrumental. They're also pleasing to the ear. When we hear them our brains release small amounts of chemicals that make us feel good. When we hear a lot of rhymes the effect compounds. That explains why it's such an awe inspiring experience to hear a great MC flow.

End Rhymes. Rhymes that come at the end a line. They're good for maintaining structure and defining flow.

Internal Rhymes. Words that rhyme inside a line. Good for intensifying the listening experience and impressing your audience.

"So while you're fuming I'm consuming mangos under Polaris – you're just embarrassed cause it's your last tango in Paris" – Lauryn Hill

Multi-syllable Rhymes. Rhymes where all the syllables rhyme. An advanced technique that sets apart good MCs from great ones.

"Mech-anic-al move-ment – un-der-stand-a-ble smooth shit – that murderers move with" - Nas

Slant Rhymes. Imperfect rhymes that sound similar but not exact. Good for expanding your content and defying the expectations of your listener. But don't overuse them or you'll sound lazy.

"I don't need wry-teers – I might bounce i-deers" – Kanye West

Wordplay. Wordplay is as pleasing to the ear as rhymes are. It's a great way to surprise your listeners and add poetic depth. On the next page you'll find tools you can use to enhance your wordplay...



Alliteration. When a string of words all begin with the same letter.

“Artificial amateurs aren’t at all amazing” – Gift of Gab

Anaphora. Repeating a series of words at the beginning of each line.

“Sometimes I rhyme slow – sometimes I rhyme quick”
– Nice and Smooth

Antanaclassis. Repeating a single word, but with a different meaning each time.

“you say it’s just clothes - but we shoppin’ in that motherfucker and it just closed” – Kanye West

Assonance. Repeating vowel sounds to create internal rhyming within a line.

“I bomb atomically—Socrates’ philosophies and hypotheses can’t define how I bedroppin’ these mockeries” – Inspectah Deck

Conceit. An extended metaphor that carries through a verse or song.

“I met this girl when I was 12 years old” – Common, using a girl as a metaphor for hip hop

Epistrophe. Similar to anaphora, epistrophe is repeating a series of words at the end of each line.



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