

BBC Learning English  
6 Minute English  
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*Rise of streaming*



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- Finn:** Hello, I'm Finn, welcome to 6 Minute English. With me in the studio today is Rob. Hello Rob.
- Rob:** Hi Finn.
- Finn:** Rob – a question for you to begin with: how do you buy your music?
- Rob:** Good question. Well I buy my music on CD.
- Finn:** On CD. Well today, in the programme we're going to talk about the rise of what we call **streaming** – and look at the language of online music.
- Rob:** Yes, let's define streaming first, shall we? Streaming is a way of watching or listening to media online – audio or video - where you don't need to wait for it to finish downloading – it plays instantly.
- Finn:** And it's becoming very popular. So, we have a question for you, Rob.
- Rob:** OK.
- Finn:** Which song was the most streamed song of 2012 in the UK, according to the music streaming service Spotify?
- a) Gotye – Somebody that I used to know
  - b) Carly Rae Jepsen – Call me maybe
  - c) David Guetta - Titanium
- Rob:** Ok well I'll have to confess, as I've only heard of David Guetta, I shall go for him.
- Finn:** Ok well you're showing your age there Rob. We'll find out if you are right at the end of this programme. Now, Spotify – is one of the several streaming sites like Pandora and Deezer, and it has been in the news this week because it is now expanding its business into Asia and Latin America.

**Rob:** Let's hear from Spotify employee Jim Butcher explaining how the site works. Listen out for another word for a song.

**Spotify communications officer, Jim Butcher:**

*So, whereas on an mp3 store where you have to buy each track or any album, you get access to 20 million songs. Let me just put in someone like The Rolling Stones, for instance. So, the most popular Rolling Stones track on Spotify: Paint it black. So I just played it, clicked the button and it's instant. It's as if you basically had millions and millions of songs downloaded to your computer already.*

**Finn:** Paint it Black by the Rolling Stones. Are you a fan, Rob?

**Rob:** I do like a bit of Stones now and again, definitely.

**Finn:** I do too. So, did we hear the other word for a song? Yes, a **track** is an individual song or part of a recording.

**Rob:** And an **album** is, of course, a collection of songs or tracks released together. Streaming sites give you access to millions of songs and albums without needing to download or pay for them individually.

**Finn:** They make money from **adverts** – advertisements; or from **monthly subscriptions** – some users pay a certain amount every month to get access to all the songs without adverts.

**Rob:** And the bands make a small amount of money every time a song is clicked on.

**Finn:** And in Sweden, where Spotify is based, there's a lot of clicking happening: over 90% of digital music income is from streaming now. But Spotify is facing competition, as we will hear from BBC reporter Maddy Savage. Listen out for another phrase for audience.

**BBC reporter, Maddy Savage:**

*Apple and Google are both preparing to launch streaming services, the French business Deezer is a growing international brand, and there are dozens of smaller companies attracting a rising user base, especially in the US, India and South Korea, although all of them face an ongoing battle with copyright issues and illegal piracy.*

**Finn:** Well, the term they used there was **user base**, the number of users of their service.

**Rob:** Although Spotify has a user base of around 24 million, if Apple and Google **launch** – or start - streaming services, we can expect they'll provide a lot of competition.

**Finn:** For all the streaming sites – they face continuing or **ongoing battles** with two things – **copyright issues** and illegal **piracy**.

**Rob:** That's right Finn, streaming sites don't always have agreements with the record labels – the companies who own and sell the music – which means there are often copyright issues.

The other issue is piracy – which is illegally copying and selling music, or movies or software.

**Finn:** But this rise of streaming and downloads is by no means the same everywhere – in Germany and Japan, for example, both technologically advanced countries, Rob can you tell me what percentage of people still buy music in **physical format**, like yourself, on CD?

**Rob:** Probably something like 20% of people?

**Finn:** Well, you'd be surprised that it's actually three quarters of all music sales in Germany and Japan are in physical format.

Anyway, let's go right back to the beginning, which track was the most streamed track on Spotify last year? The answer is...

**Rob:** That must be Gotye? I know my music really.

**Finn:** Gotye, yes. 'Somebody that I used to know' was the most streamed track of 2012.

Now, one more thing before we go. Let's remind ourselves of the musical words and phrases from today.

**Rob:** streaming  
track  
monthly subscriptions  
user base  
ongoing battles  
piracy

copyright issues

physical format

**Finn:** Thank you Rob. Time to press stop on this programme. Please join us again soon for 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English.

**Both:** Bye.

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>streaming</b>	listening or watching audio or video on a computer directly without downloading it first
<b>track</b>	song, part of a recording
<b>album</b>	collection of songs released together
<b>advert</b>	advertisement
<b>monthly subscription</b>	an amount of money paid monthly to receive a product or service
<b>user base</b>	the amount of people who use a product or service, especially in online business
<b>launch</b>	begin
<b>ongoing</b>	continuing
<b>piracy</b>	copying and selling things like music, movies or computer programmes
<b>copyright issues</b>	problems with the legal right to control and sell books, films, music, movies and other media products
<b>physical format</b>	hard, physical copies of media like CDs and DVDs rather than downloaded or streamed versions

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