

## HOW TO ACQUIRE SHEET MUSIC... LEGALLY!

Brian DeMaris | [www.briandemaris.com](http://www.briandemaris.com)

**Go to the library!** Search the catalogue for the song title, the composer, or the show. *Your school library has hundreds of published complete musicals and vocal selections. If you can't find what you're looking for, ask our music librarians for help.*

If the library doesn't have it, **search the internet.** Try any of the following websites where *legal copies* of music are available immediately and affordably. Single songs can be downloaded legally for as little as \$0.99-\$10, granting you complete rights for practice and performance. On the internet:

You can buy it directly from the composers:

[www.newmusicaltheatre.com](http://www.newmusicaltheatre.com)  
[www.contemporarymusicaltheatre.com](http://www.contemporarymusicaltheatre.com)

You can buy it and download it from the publisher:

[www.halleonard.com](http://www.halleonard.com)  
[www.jwpepper.com](http://www.jwpepper.com)  
[www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)  
[www.eamdc.com](http://www.eamdc.com)

You can buy it and download it from a distributor:

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)  
[www.musicnotes.com](http://www.musicnotes.com)  
[www.sheetmusicplus.com](http://www.sheetmusicplus.com)  
[www.onlinesheetmusic.com](http://www.onlinesheetmusic.com)  
[www.musicroom.com](http://www.musicroom.com)  
[www.playbillstore.com](http://www.playbillstore.com)  
[www.musicals.net](http://www.musicals.net)  
[www.hollywoodsheetmusic.com](http://www.hollywoodsheetmusic.com)  
[www.music44.com](http://www.music44.com)

Believe it or not, there is a lot of **musical theatre repertoire in the public domain:**

Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/collection>

International Music Score Library Project: <http://www.imslp.org>

UCLA Library: <http://digital.library.ucla.edu/apam/index.html>  
(includes links to Hoagy Charmichael Collection, Digital Archive of Popular

American Music, Music for the American Nation, African American Sheet Music, Sheet Music Consortium, 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Sheet Music, etc.)

Sheet Music Consortium: <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/sheetmusic/>

**Visit your nearby theatre department library** where they likely have numerous scores and librettos for "fair use." This generally means for use in classes only for "face-to-face" instruction and scholarly research. Ask any faculty member if we have it in our digital department library.

**Contact the composer or publisher directly** to ask if you can attain a copy of the music you are looking for. Be sure to explain what your purposes are in using it: class, audition, performance, etc.

**Contact performers** who have performed the music to find out where they obtained the sheet music.

If you can't find published music after trying all of these things, there is probably a good reason it's not available. Perhaps the composers or licensing agencies don't want it to be performed, or perhaps it doesn't exist. **It might be in a library somewhere** (such as the publishers' libraries, the Sherer Library at Goodspeed or the NY Public Library, for example). A trip to one of these libraries can be an incredible experience, and some libraries will allow you to photocopy scores for "fair use." It can often be worth just a phone call to these libraries to see what their parameters are.

#### **WHAT NOT TO DO**

Don't go online looking for illegally traded and unlicensed versions. By all means, don't publicly announce online that you're looking for illegal music that is readily available for purchase. **DO NOT participate in Facebook groups and file share sites that promote illegal trading and downloading!**

**Illegally obtained music can't be trusted as an authoritative source. Moreover, it's illegal and you risk being fined hundreds of thousands of dollars for doing it. And most of all, it does a disservice to the composers, the industry, the art of musical theatre, and ultimately yourself. Think about it. We're all in this together!**

#### **FAIR USE**

*"Fair use" is considered for scholarly and pedagogical purposes for "face-to-face" in-class instruction. Music that has not been obtained through the composer, the publisher, or a licensed distributor should not be used for performances.*

In the end, each of us is responsible for his or her own actions.