



In the last session, we had a look at the history of iTunes and the Evolution of Digital Music.

This session, we'll have a quick look at the basics of using the iTunes app and the iTunes Store:

- to buy music and**
- to access your online library of digital music.**

We'll also have a look at some alternatives to iTunes.

iTunes

- The term *'iTunes'* is used in several ways besides for the iTunes app and the iTunes store, so it can be confusing sometimes.
- The iTunes app acts as a media player, a media library, as the client app for the iTunes Store, as an online radio portal, and as a portal to the *'Apple Music'* music, audio and video streaming service.
- It can be used to purchase, play, download, and organize digital multimedia on personal computers running Windows and older (pre-2019) versions of the macOS operating systems.
- Among several other things, iTunes can even be used to rip songs from CD's, and to make ('burn') CD's and DVD's.
- Apple has expanded on the core music features with support for movies, videos, TV shows, podcasts, e-books and more. Note that while most of the downloadable music is DRM* free, most of the other downloadable content is not.

* - Digital Rights Management (i.e., 'copy protection')

Download iTunes for Windows

Historically, the iTunes app has been downloaded and updated directly from Apple.

Apple now wants you to download the iTunes app and updates from the Microsoft Store. You can download the app at:

<https://www.microsoft.com/p/itunes/9pb2mz1zmb1s?rtc=1&activetab=pivot:overviewtab>

If you don't want to use the Microsoft Store, you can try:

<https://www.apple.com/itunes/>

Either way, the iTunes app is free to download and use.

Download iTunes for Windows

For more on why you should or should not use the Microsoft Store, see the article *'Avoid iTunes Bloat With the Windows Store Version'* at

<https://www.howtogeek.com/352307/avoid-itunes-bloat-with-the-windows-store-version/>

We may cover the various pro's and con's of using the Microsoft Store in a later Q&A.

Note that the Microsoft Store version is only good for Windows 10 and 11. If you are running older versions of Windows like 7 or 8.x, you will need to download and install the Apple version.



To learn more about the iTunes Store and the Library, as well as the many other functions of iTunes we won't be covering, you can access the online iTunes User Guide at:

<https://support.apple.com/en-ca/guide/itunes/welcome/windows>

There is also some good background info at:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/iTunes>

iTunes

When you first install iTunes, you will set up an iTunes account with a username, password and payment info. You can leave out the payment info, but you'll be prompted for it each time you buy a song, album, movie, etc.

You start the iTunes app like any other Windows app by using the Start Menu or the Desktop icon, or you can pin it to your Task Bar.

When starting iTunes, it will show the screen for whatever you were doing last, whether that was the store, your library, the radio portal or whatever. You can easily switch to other screens using the menu in the centre top of each screen.

Library

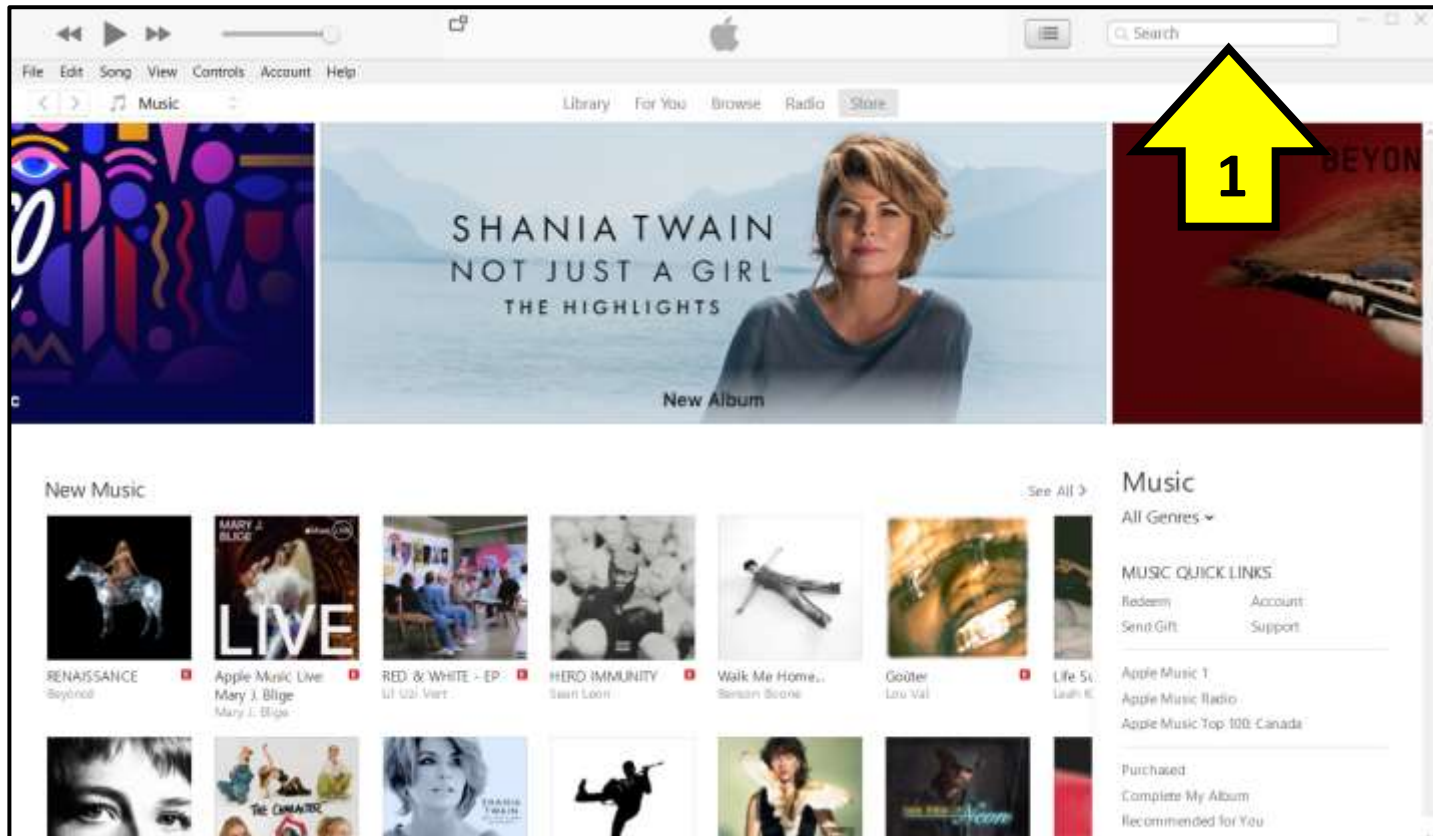
For You

Browse

Radio

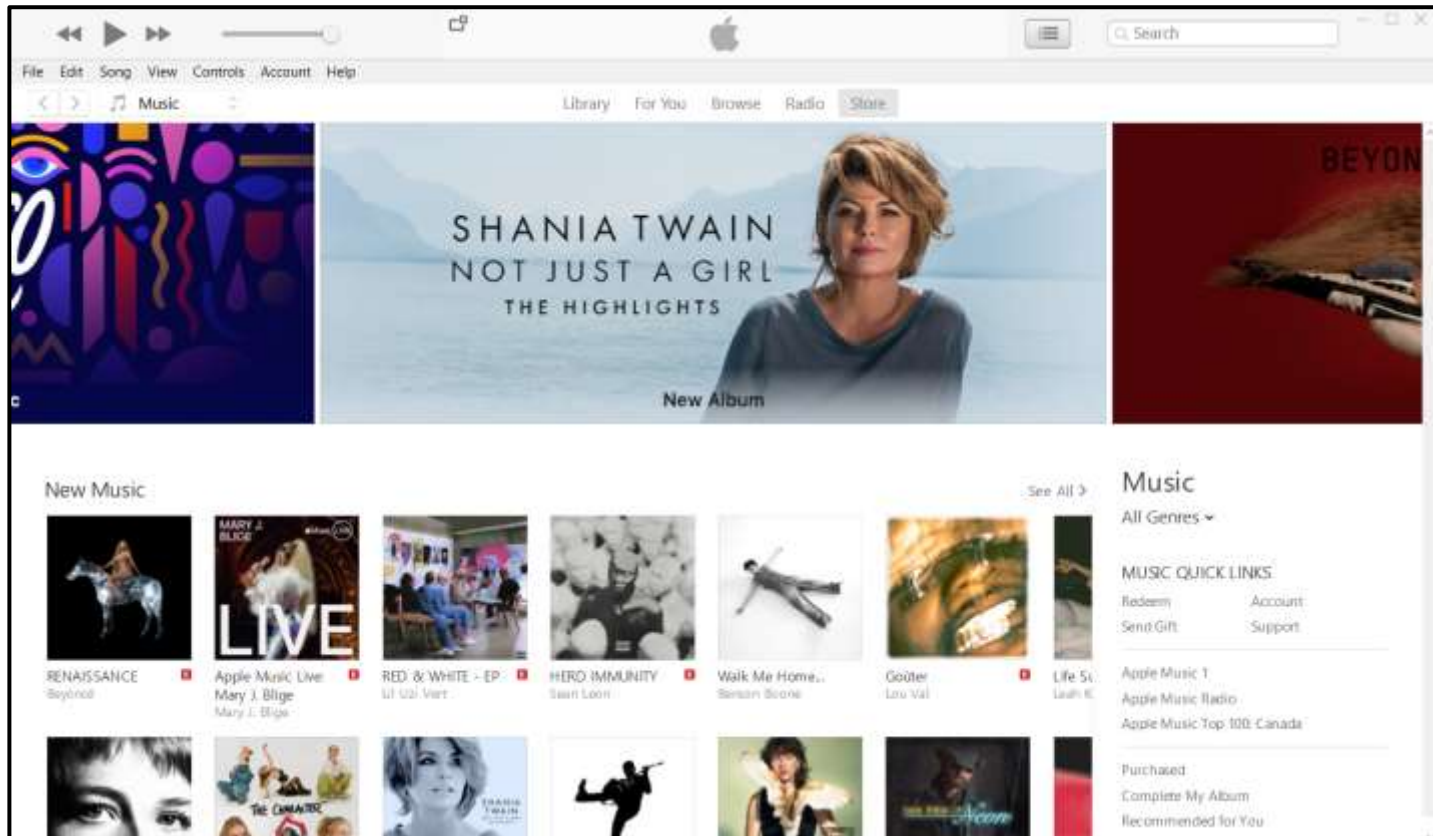
Store

The iTunes Store Start Page



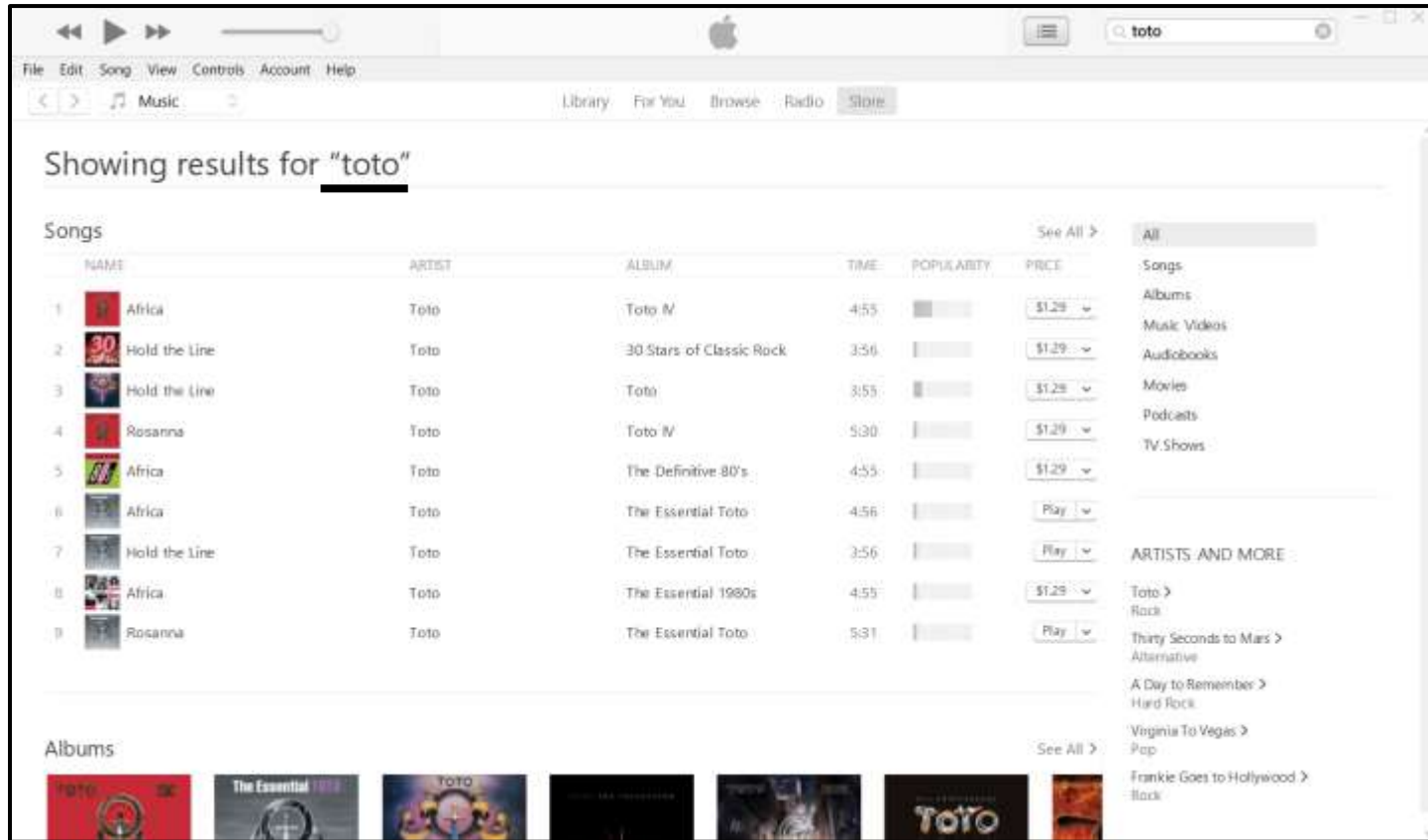
- The store start page has a search bar (1) in the upper right corner so you can go directly to whatever artist, album or song you are after.
- Otherwise, if you scroll down the page you'll see all sorts of deals, offers and links.

The iTunes Store Start Page



So let's use the search bar to look for music by a particular artist. In this case, we'll look for music by *'Toto'*, a group I highlighted in *'Organizing Your Music Part 4 - Final Thoughts'*.


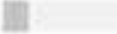

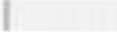


The Artist's Page



When you search for a particular artist, you'll be taken to the page for that artist.


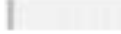
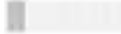
The page for a particular song is similar. You can search for a song without specifying the artist, and you may get several versions of the song.

The Artist's Page

Songs						
	NAME	ARTIST	ALBUM	TIME	POPULARITY	PRICE
1	 Africa	Toto	Toto IV	4:55		\$1.29 ▾
2	 30 Stars of Classic Rock	Toto	30 Stars of Classic Rock	3:56		\$1.29 ▾
3	 Hold the Line	Toto	Toto	3:55		\$1.29 ▾

- Near the top of the page is a list of 10 songs. Each song listing has a number, song name, artist, album, time (length of the song), relative popularity and the price.
- If you hover over the number and click, iTunes will play part of the song.
- If you click on price, you can buy the song and it will be downloaded to:
'c:\Users\YourUsername\Music\iTunes\iTunes Media\Music\ArtistName\AlbumName\SongName.M4A'
- Note that the first time in an iTunes session that you click on the price, it will ask for your username and password.

The Artist's Page

Songs						
	NAME	ARTIST	ALBUM	TIME	POPULARITY	PRICE
1	 Africa	Toto	Toto IV	4:55		\$1.29 ▾
2	 Hold the Line	Toto	30 Stars of Classic Rock	3:56		\$1.29 ▾
3	 Hold the Line	Toto	Toto	3:55		\$1.29 ▾

- If you click on the album name, it will take you to the page for that album.
- If you click on 'Songs' in the menu to the right of the song list, it will expand the songs list to up to 100 songs or more, but many may not be from your chosen artist.
- If you click on the down arrow in the price box, you will be given a menu of other actions related to the song.



The Artist's Page

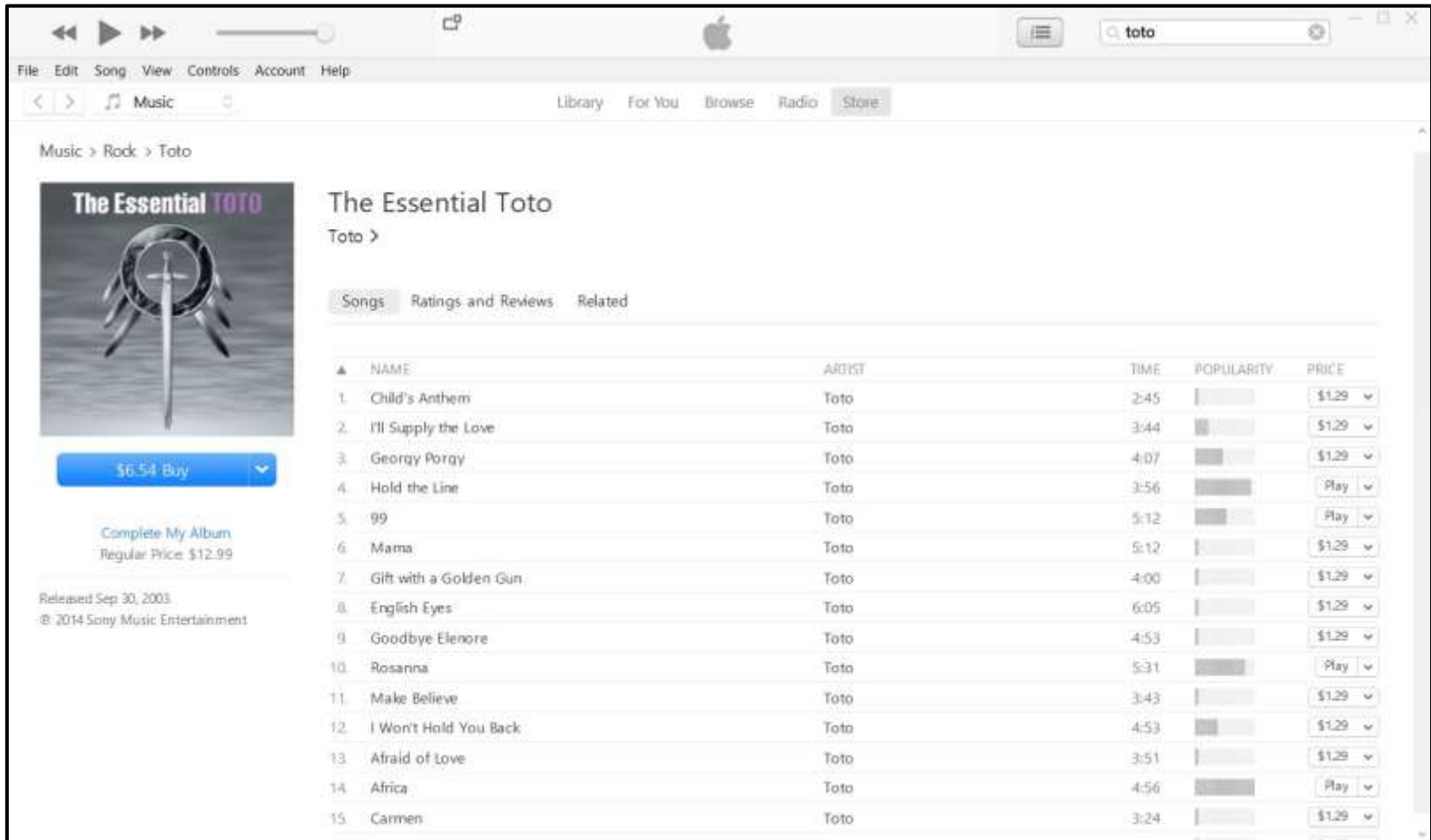
The screenshot displays an artist's page with two main sections: Albums and Music Videos. The Albums section features a grid of album covers with their titles and prices. The Music Videos section features a grid of video thumbnails with their titles and prices. Two yellow arrows with the number '1' point to 'See All' links in the Albums and Music Videos sections.

Album Title	Price
Toto IV	\$10.99
The Essential Toto	\$12.99
Toto	\$9.99
The Collection	\$39.99
Toto XIV	\$9.99
Falling In Between	\$9.90
25th Anniversary - Live In Amsterdam	\$8.99
35th Anniversary: Live In Poland	\$12.99
Greatest Hits Around the World	\$10.99

Music Video Title	Price
Africa (Live)	\$1.49
Somebody That I Used to Know (feat. Kimbra)	\$2.99
Hail to the King	\$2.29
Rosanna (Live)	\$1.49
Rosanna	\$1.99
Hold The Line	\$1.99
Brantley	(Closed-Brantley)

- If you scroll down past the song list on the 'Artist' page, you will come to Albums by the artist (click on (1) 'See All' to scroll right). Clicking on the Album takes you to the page for that album.
- The 'Music Videos' will not necessarily all be for the artist.
- Scrolling further down the page has mostly stuff not specifically related to the particular artist.

The Album Page



The screenshot shows the Apple Music interface for the album 'The Essential Toto' by Toto. The album cover art is displayed on the left, featuring a circular object with a sword-like shape in the center. Below the cover is a blue 'Buy' button with a price of \$6.54 and a dropdown arrow. To the right of the cover, the album title 'The Essential Toto' and the artist 'Toto' are listed. Below this, there are tabs for 'Songs', 'Ratings and Reviews', and 'Related'. The 'Songs' tab is active, showing a list of 15 tracks with columns for Name, Artist, Time, Popularity, and Price. The price for each track is \$1.29, except for tracks 4, 5, 10, and 14, which have a 'Play' button instead of a price. The interface also includes a navigation bar at the top with 'Library', 'For You', 'Browse', 'Radio', and 'Store' options, and a search bar with the text 'toto'.

Music > Rock > Toto

The Essential TOTO

Toto >

Songs Ratings and Reviews Related

▲	NAME	ARTIST	TIME	POPULARITY	PRICE
1.	Child's Anthem	Toto	2:45	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
2.	I'll Supply the Love	Toto	3:44	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
3.	Georgy Porgy	Toto	4:07	<div style="width: 20%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
4.	Hold the Line	Toto	3:56	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>	Play ▾
5.	99	Toto	5:12	<div style="width: 20%;"></div>	Play ▾
6.	Mama	Toto	5:12	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
7.	Gift with a Golden Gun	Toto	4:00	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
8.	English Eyes	Toto	6:05	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
9.	Goodbye Elenore	Toto	4:53	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
10.	Rosanna	Toto	5:31	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>	Play ▾
11.	Make Believe	Toto	3:43	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
12.	I Won't Hold You Back	Toto	4:53	<div style="width: 20%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
13.	Afraid of Love	Toto	3:51	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾
14.	Africa	Toto	4:56	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>	Play ▾
15.	Carmen	Toto	3:24	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>	\$1.29 ▾

Released Sep 30, 2003
© 2014 Sony Music Entertainment

Complete My Album
Regular Price: \$12.99

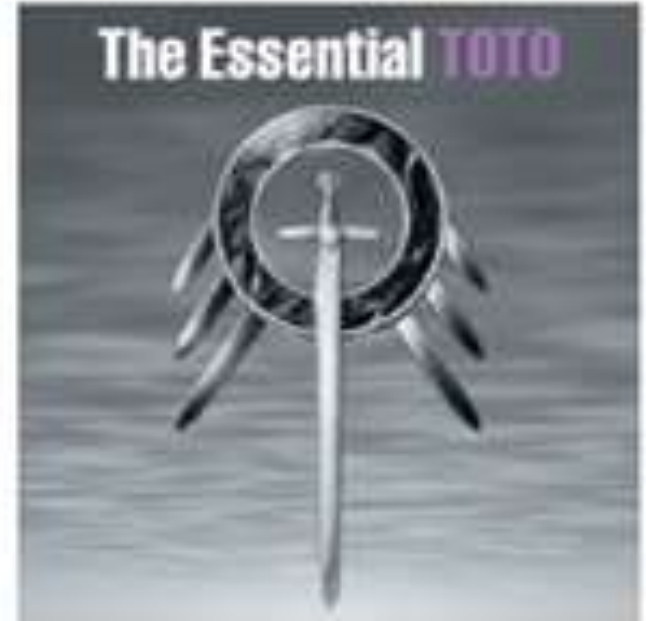
\$6.54 Buy ▾

The 'Album' page has the cover art, a 'Purchase' box with the same drop-down menu as the songs, and a list of all the songs on the album.

The Album Page

You do not have to buy the entire album. You can buy whatever songs you want at the individual song price (note: there may be the occasional song you can ONLY get if you buy the whole album).

If you come back later to buy the rest of the album, the cost of the songs you have already bought is deducted from the album price. In this example, I have already purchased 4 songs, so it will cost me only \$6.54 to complete the album of 30 songs.



\$6.54 Buy

Complete My Album
Regular Price: \$12.99

The Album Page



Mothership (Remastered)
Led Zeppelin >

Songs Ratings and Reviews Related

iTunes Review

Mothership is Jimmy Page's hand-curated selection of guitar riffs created some of the leanest hard rock of the 1970s. "Loving You" is particularly aching—they reached a

\$14.99 Buy

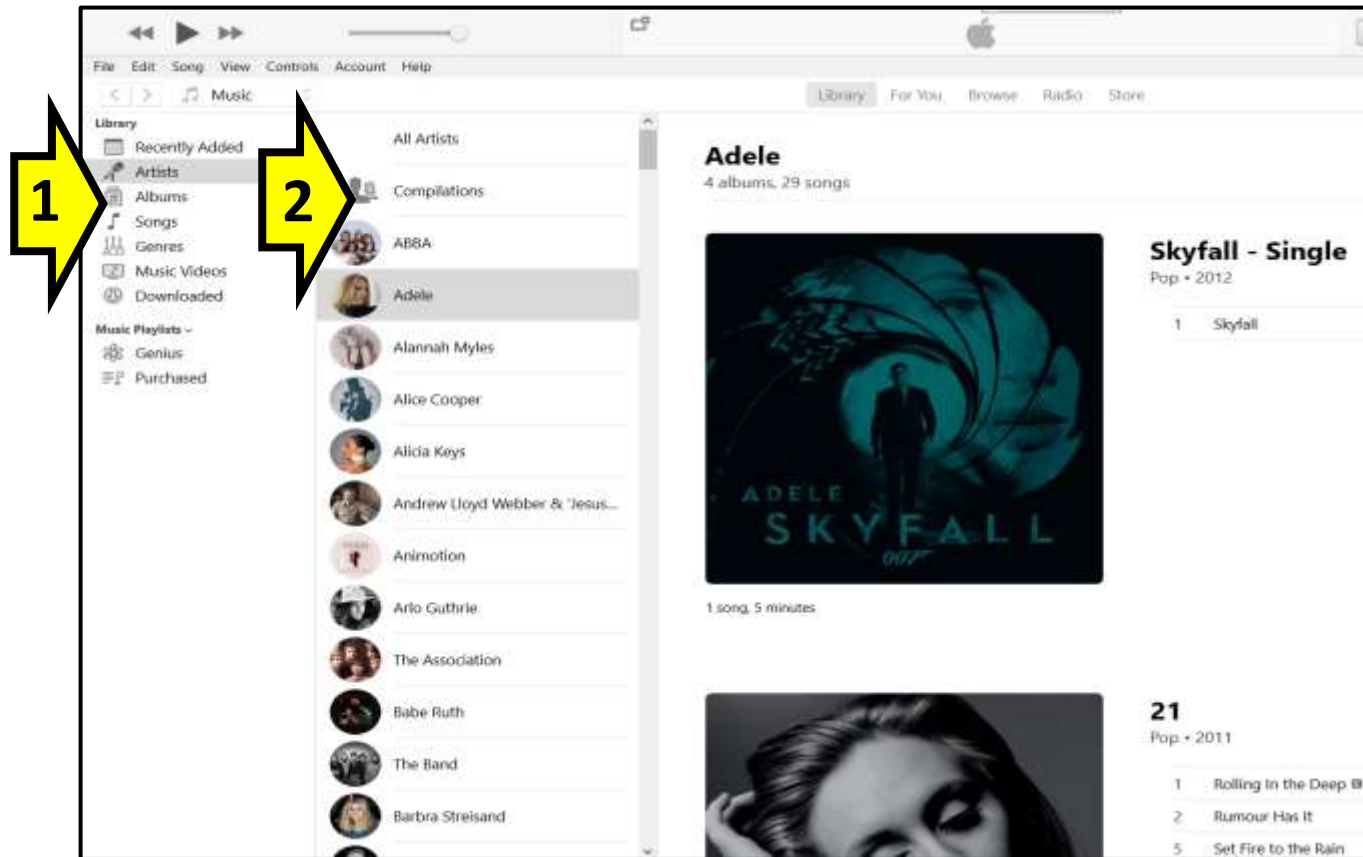
Many of the songs and albums available through iTunes have been 'remastered' from the original tapes, and digitally cleaned up and enhanced.

Some of the album pages have Ratings and Reviews for the album.

The iTunes Library

- The iTunes Library keeps track of all the songs, albums and other digital media you have acquired from iTunes, and any of your own music (e.g., from CD's) that you've uploaded to iTunes. iTunes supports importing digital audio tracks so you can use iTunes as a music management app.
- Although most media is downloaded when you purchase it, the library keeps track of it all in your online account so you can download it again or just play it in the iTunes app whenever you want.
- iTunes supports WAV, AIFF, Apple Lossless (M4A), AAC, MP3 and other audio formats.

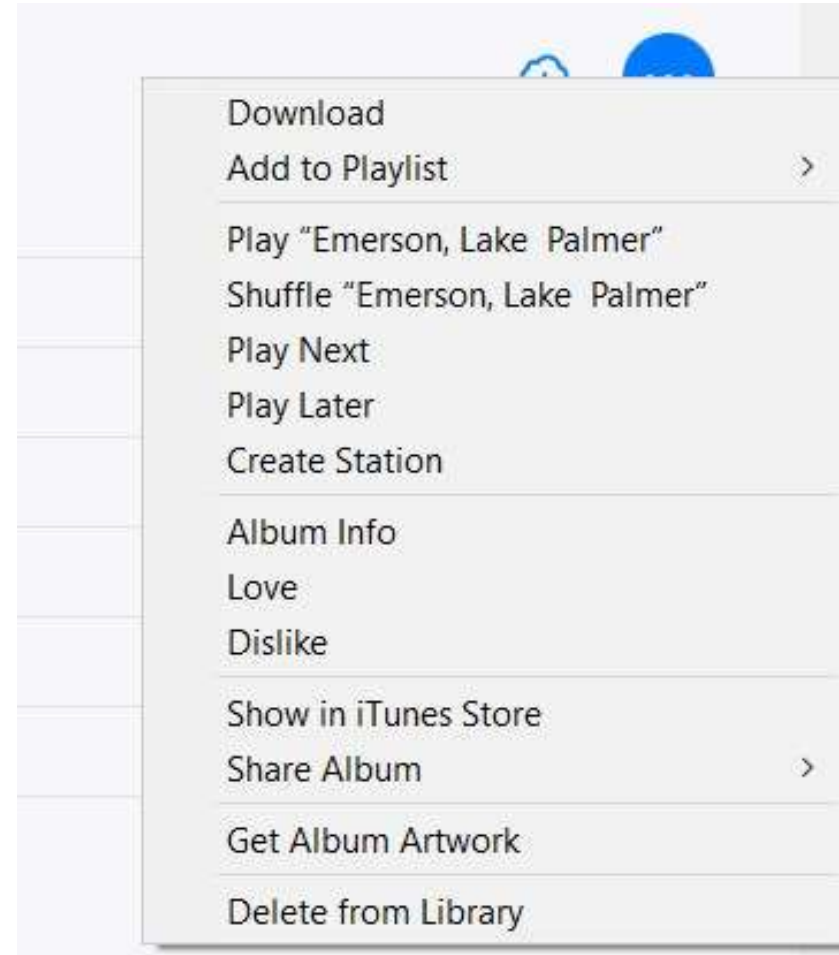
The iTunes Library



- The default view of the iTunes Library is by artist, and when you click on the artist, the songs are arranged by album on the right part of the screen.
- Note (1) the view menu, and (2) the '*Compilations*' menu.

The iTunes Library

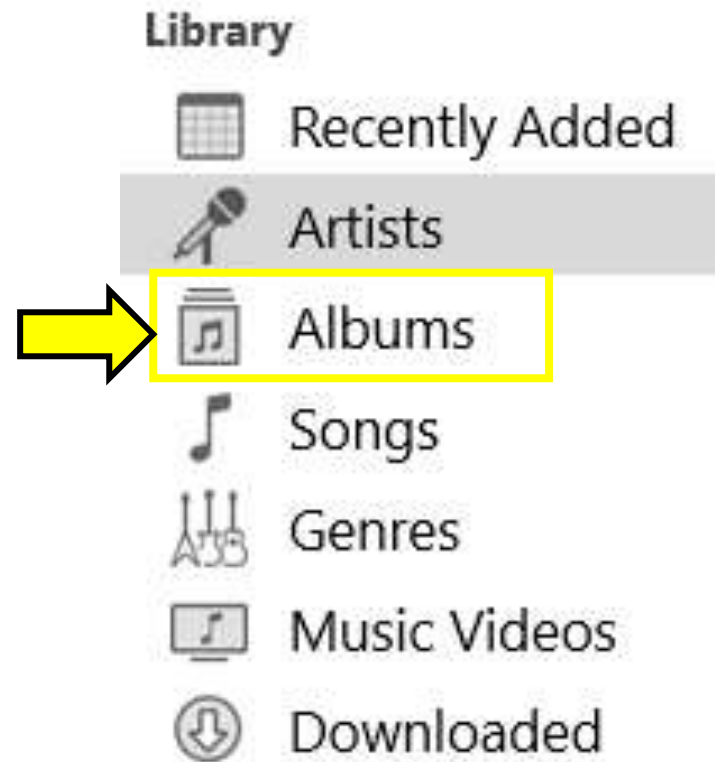
When you right-click on the album title or on the song, a menu pops up with selections you can make.



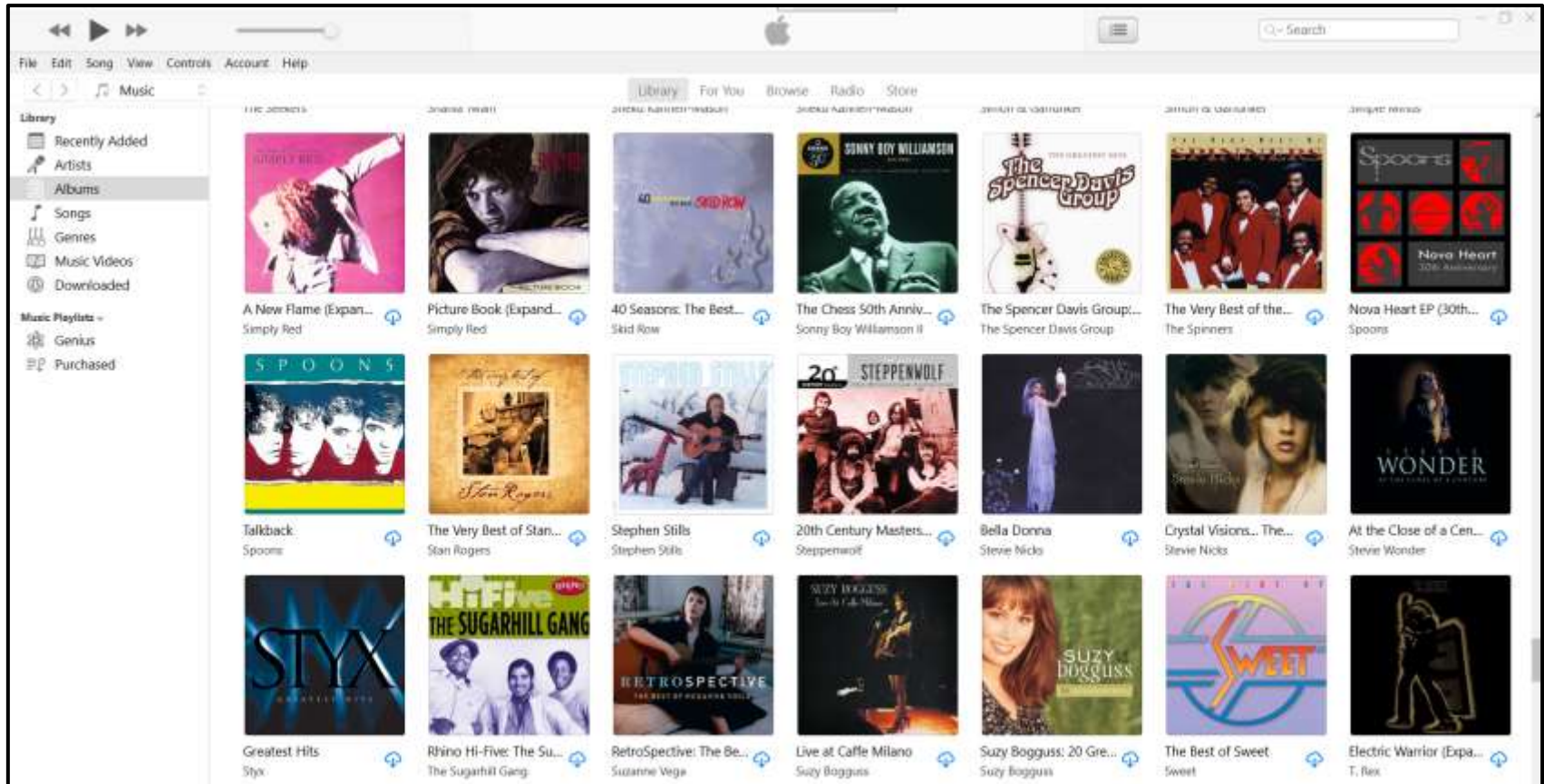
The iTunes Library

The view menu in the upper right of the screen allows you to chose which view of the Library you want.

Let's take a quick look at the 'Albums' view.



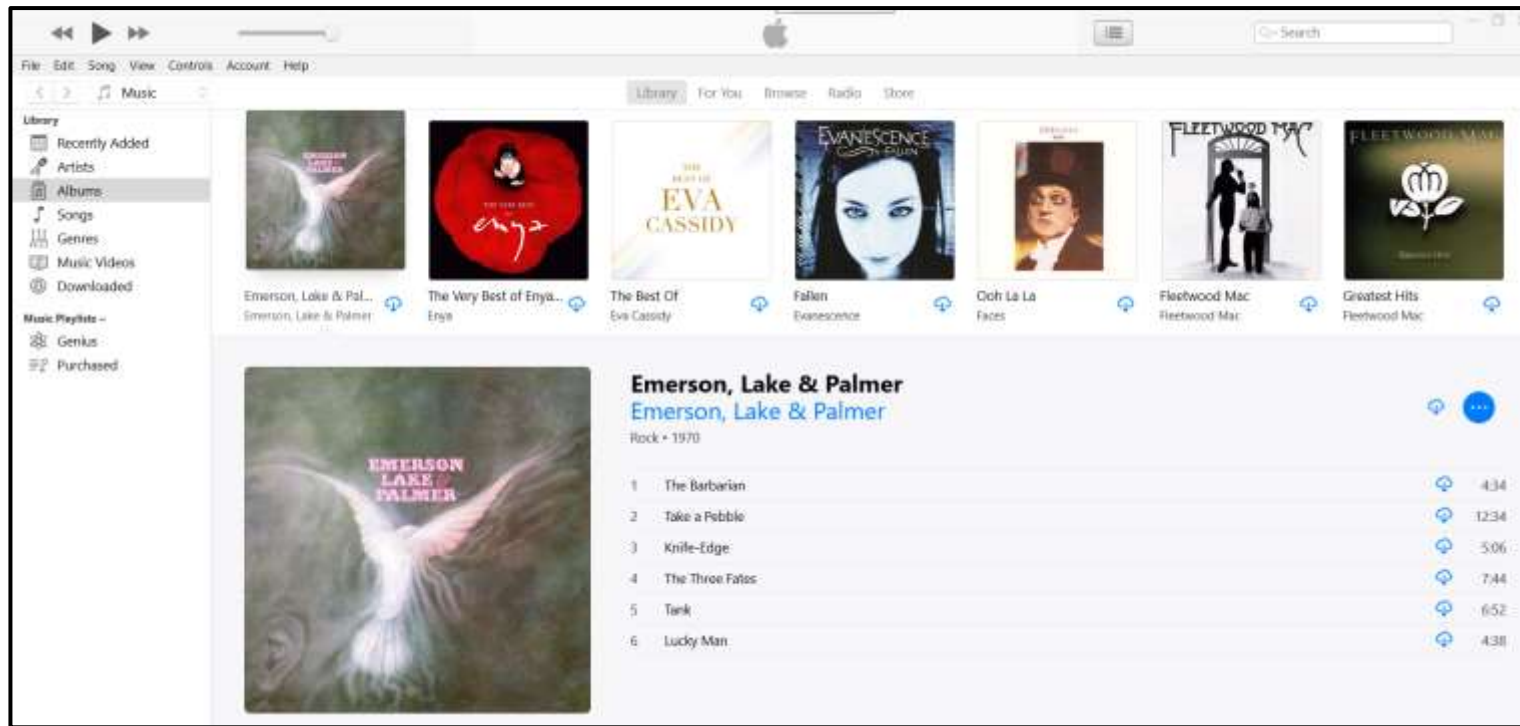
The iTunes Library – Albums View



The Album view shows the album covers by artist, and then for each artist alphabetically by album title.

The album will show up in this view even if you've only bought one song from the album.

The iTunes Library – Albums View



When you click on an album, the cover expands and the songs are listed beside it.

When you right-click on the album, a menu pops up with the song selections you can make.

After the Download

Generally you'll want to eventually move anything you download from iTunes (and pretty much any other source) from the download directory to the directory structure for your music collection.

You may want to rename the song files to a standard format like '*Artist Name – Song Title (Album Name) iT.m4a*' to make it consistent with other content in your music library.

Once you have it squared away in your music collection AND backed it up, you can delete it from the download directory.

Don't forget, iTunes has copies of all the stuff you bought off them in your account on the web, so you can download it again, or you can play it directly in the iTunes app.

A Note About iTunes and Compilations (iTunes Quirk #1)

iTunes normally downloads songs into
'c:\Users\UserName\Music\iTunes\iTunesMedia\Music\Artist\Album\Song.m4a', or lists it in the library by Artist.

However, if the album is a 'Greatest Hits' type album, even if it is specific to a particular artist, they place it in:
'c:\Users\UserName\Music\iTunes\iTunesMedia\Music\Compilations\Album\Song.m4a' instead, along with the true (i.e. multiple artists) compilations, and places it under 'Compilations' in the library.

A Note About iTunes and Compilations (iTunes Quirk #1)

This can be confusing, especially if the album title is something like just '*Greatest Hits*' without mentioning the artist's name in the title. You may have to actually play one of the songs to check the tag to figure out who the artist is.

So if you go to look in your iTunes library for music by a particular artist, it may not be listed under that artist but in the '*Compilations*' section instead.

A Note About iTunes and Soundtracks (iTunes Quirk #2)

You would think that iTunes would hold in your library and download any soundtrack album you buy as the album from that movie.

But sometimes they don't.

They somehow think that it is better to hold and download the songs from the soundtrack album under each individual composer's or performer's name instead. Thus, the songs may be split up among three of four entities, and once you download them it is up to you to put all the songs back together into a single directory for that soundtrack to play all of the songs in the correct order.

A Note About iTunes and Soundtracks (iTunes Quirk #2)

For example, in the 'Album' view below there are three instances of the soundtrack for the movie *'The Revenant'*.

For one, the music was composed by Ryuichi Sakamoto. For the next, the music was composed by Ryuichi Sakamoto and Alva Noto. For the last, the music was composed by Ryuichi Sakamoto, Alva Noto and Bryce Dessner.



A Note About iTunes and Deluxe Editions (iTunes Quirk #3)

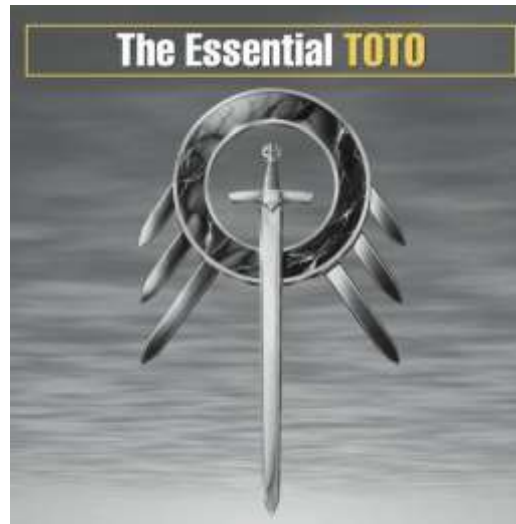
Some albums have a 'Deluxe Edition' version as well as the originally released version. The Deluxe Edition may have additional songs, or more than one version of a particular song.

When you buy a Deluxe Edition album, iTunes may download the songs that were on the original album to a directory for the original album, and download the Deluxe Edition special songs to a separate directory for the Deluxe Edition album.

Likewise, if you buy only some of the songs, the songs that were on the original album will download to a directory for the original album, and the Deluxe Edition special songs will download to a separate directory for the Deluxe Edition album.

Song Tags in iTunes

The 3 quirks mentioned can sometimes cause issues with the way the songs are tagged. Other than that, the tagging of songs downloaded from iTunes tends to be excellent, including the album cover art.



The sound quality of the music downloaded from iTunes is usually very good, and the sound levels between the songs is very consistent.

Final Thoughts

Some of what we've covered can be changed if you dig down deep enough into the various settings.

The iTunes app can do a lot more than I've covered here. If you want to explore further, you can start with '*The Big Book of iTunes*', a free downloadable PDF that is a starter guide for iTunes:

<https://www.makeuseof.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-Big-Book-of-iTunes.pdf>

There's also '*The Complete Guide to Using iTunes and the iTunes Store*':

<https://www.lifewire.com/itunes-itunes-store-guide-1999711>

There is some additional information on the iTunes Store at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/iTunes_Store

Alternatives to iTunes

If you want to try other online music stores, Wikipedia has their '*Comparison of digital music stores*' at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_digital_music_stores

You might want to try streaming music instead of buying it. Wikipedia has their '*Comparison of music streaming services*' at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_music_streaming_services

Keep in mind that some of the music streaming services allow you to download some songs if you have the proper subscription package.

URL's

The iTunes app from the Microsoft Store:

<https://www.microsoft.com/p/itunes/9pb2mz1zmb1s?rtc=1&activetab=pivot:overviewtab>

The iTunes app from Apple: <https://www.apple.com/itunes/>

The online iTunes User Guide at:

<https://support.apple.com/en-ca/guide/itunes/welcome/windows>

Some good background info about iTunes at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/iTunes>

'*The Big Book of iTunes*', a free downloadable PDF that is a starter guide for iTunes:

<https://www.makeuseof.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-Big-Book-of-iTunes.pdf>

'*The Complete Guide to Using iTunes and the iTunes Store*':

<https://www.lifewire.com/itunes-itunes-store-guide-1999711>

Comparison of digital music stores at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_digital_music_stores

Comparison of music streaming services at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_music_streaming_services