

Golden Rules for Preparing Lyrics for Streaming Services (DSPs)

To ensure your lyrics are not rejected by moderation systems, they must meet the following requirements:

I. Text Formatting

a) The structure of the lyrics should correspond to the structure of the track. When formatting the lyrics, follow the rhythm of the song and separate its individual parts:

Lines – each line should begin on a new line.

Verses, choruses, and other distinct parts of the track (e.g., bridge, pre-chorus, outro) – separate sections with a blank line.

This division should reflect natural pauses in the vocals, as well as changes in tempo, dynamics, or singing style.

Background vocals (backing vocals, Ad-libs) – if present, they should be written after the main vocal, on the same line, in parentheses.

b) Each part of the song should be clearly separated from the next by one blank line.

c) The lyrics should be written exactly as performed in the recording.

If a given line is sung more than once, it should be written as many times as it actually occurs in the track (instead of using notations like "x2").

d) The lyrics of the song must not contain:

title, lyricist, band name, ISRC code, and other track data;

information about changes in volume or type of sounds in the track (e.g., whisper, voice from afar);

section headings (e.g., chorus, verse);

lyrics that are not heard in the recording.

II. Punctuation and Spelling

When writing down lyrics, apply general orthography and punctuation rules appropriate for the language in which the vocals are performed, considering the specific requirements for publishing lyrics on digital services.

Additionally, the following rules apply:

- a) each line should begin with a capital letter;
- b) a line of text should generally not end with a punctuation mark — do not add commas, periods, semicolons, or dashes at the end of a line (exceptions include: question mark, exclamation point, quotation marks, or closing parentheses, if they result directly from the performance);
- c) if the vocalist consciously or clearly pronounces a word in a way that deviates from the linguistic norm, it should be written according to that performance (e.g., "weźnie" instead of "weźmie");
- d) profanity should be recorded exactly as heard in the recording;
if a word has been censored (e.g., muted or replaced by another sound), its notation should be marked with asterisks (e.g., ***);
- e) numbers should be written in words, unless their numerical form results from a commonly accepted format (e.g., "007", "3D").
- f) Capitalize:
 - proper names and geographical names;
 - acronyms and abbreviations (e.g., NASA, FBI);
 - words referring to divinity in religious songs (e.g., God, You, He – if they refer to God).
- g) In the case of multilingual tracks, apply the above rules appropriately to each language used.

III. Non-word Sounds

According to the principle of recording only vocal elements significant to the reception of the song's content, any non-word sounds should be transcribed sparingly and only when they are an integral part of the structure or message of the track.

Specifically, the following rules apply:

- a) vocal improvisation (e.g., scat singing) is treated as a musical rather than a lyrical element — therefore, it should not be recorded;

b) sound effects and non-vocal sounds (e.g., closing doors, car horn, ambient noises) should not be included in the lyrics;

c) onomatopoeias and other non-verbal vocal sounds performed by the vocalist should be recorded if clearly audible (e.g., "oo", "whoa", "uh");

d) sounds elongated by the vocalist should be written in a shortened form — generally using a maximum of two repeated letters (e.g., "oo", "uu", "aa"), regardless of their actual duration in the recording.

e) In case of doubt, follow the principle that the written lyrics should reflect the semantic layer of the vocal performance rather than serve as a description of sounds present in the recording.

IV. Lyrics in Foreign Languages

For songs performed in foreign languages, the lyrics should be written in the original alphabet appropriate for that language.

Transliteration (e.g., phonetic notation in the Latin alphabet) is not permitted.

For example, regarding songs performed in English, the following rules apply:

a) words should be written according to their standard spelling, even if their pronunciation deviates from the orthographic form;

this also applies to slang expressions;

b) if a word is performed in a shortened form, an apostrophe should be used in place of omitted letters (e.g., givin' instead of giving, 'Rari instead of Ferrari);

c) if the pronunciation of a slang expression does not allow for a clear determination of its spelling, its correct standard form should be used (e.g., because instead of becuz);

d) if the vocalist spells out words, the notation should be presented by separating individual letters with hyphens (e.g., L-Y-R-I-C-S).

e) In multilingual tracks, apply the above rules appropriately to each language used.

V. Delivery of Lyrics in the Original Language

1. Properly formatted lyrics should be delivered via email to the Account Manager or added independently using the IDS system (see point 2).

Each text must be in a separate text file (.txt), named:

a) the title of the track and

b) the track number preceding the title (only in the case of multiple tracks, e.g., 01_title, 02_title, etc.).

Please include all additional information such as band name, track title, lyricist, UPC code, and ISRC in the body of the email, not in the lyrics file.

Upon receipt, the lyrics will be verified according to the rules listed above.

If correctly prepared, they will be sent immediately to DSPs.

If errors are found, the file will be returned to the client for correction.

VI. Appeal to Creators: Ask Your Distributor!

Dear Artists!

Your distributor is your first point of contact with streaming platforms.

If your lyrics are not appearing on streaming services, do not wait!

Email your manager or support!

Remember – lyrics are your business card and a bridge to the listener’s heart. Taking care of them is your responsibility as a professional creator.