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Just Burn [RIP] your own CD's for DRM-free Digital Music

I personally know people who *avoided* **Napster** back in the day when it was the **hottest music file-swapping site** in the online universe. I was one of them, concerned about the very real possibility of getting a computer virus, as many file-sharers did [and do]. If it wasn't that, it was persecution / prosecution. As I recall, an 8-year old girl was sued for downloading music from a file-sharing site.

Maybe it's psychological, but I have NOT purchased music from iTunes or eMusic or any of the other online digital music stores. My preference is to **buy a CD**, own the rights entirely, '**burn**' my favs and **move them to my digital player**. What could be more perfect?

Why did I recommend iTunes DRM agreements and services in our June issue? Because of the hype -- iTunes was giving consumers a break by releasing the stranglehold and restrictions Digital Rights Management [DRM] imposed on the personal use of downloaded music.

With today's software, it is very easy to burn/rip CD's, convert to digital format, and play on a Zune, iPod, Xbox or whatever ;-). My CD brings complete return on investment and there is no stealthy third-party management of the use of my music.

The **Secret to ripping CD's**: Sony hacked computers all over the world by including a rootkit with some of its CDs. There's a simple way to avoid this. When you insert a CD to rip it with your favorite music player or application, hold down the left Shift key as you close the optical drive tray in your computer. OR, turn off Autoplay in your operating system. By circumventing autoplay, you not only prevent unwanted rootkit software from invading your PC, but you also prevent any special front ends or other weird software from starting up.

The **Secret to buying CD's**:
**Goto half.com, eBay, Goodwill,
Salvation Army, Catholic Charities,
swap meet or used music store!**

Scroll
Down for
rest of
August



Internet TV Beta

;-(/ ;-)

A week or so ago, I signed up to be an early user of JOOST, a new social networking channel t.v. Internet service.

Today was the day! After following the link in my email, I read the Terms and Conditions and proceeded to download the software and save it to my temp directory.

Upon execution, my entire monitor screen was filled with Joost. The picture was a little distorted, possibly because I have a 20" monitor.

Filling in a username, email address, birth date and zip code were necessary requirements to join the Joost community. A t.v. program started immediately; I could not find an exit or minimize button nor did I have access to my system tray with program icons. In desperation, I did the tried and true Ctrl+Alt+del to stop the program from running.

I will check out their 'Forums' to see what other users have to say...

What is an “unlocked” cellphone?



SOME OF THE COOLEST NEW PHONES I'VE SEEN ARE UNLOCKED. ... meaning one that is not tied (or locked) to a single carrier's network. You can use them with T-Mobile, AT&T, Verizon, etc. in the USA and any other GSM service provider anywhere in the world. These phones are **only available for GSM**, [global satellite positioning] technology and are a very good option for global travelers. Unlocked phones will work with **any carrier that supports the band/frequencies specified for the device**. They usually, not always, cost more than discounted, subsidized phones purchased with a one or two-year service contract with a major U.S. carrier.

An unlocked phone is one where you can **swap out the SIM card**, which is the 'brain' of the phone. Not only useful for those traveling overseas, it's also great for people who frequently swap out their phone in order to have the latest and greatest model.

Using a locked phone, roaming rates for International calls are expensive (@ \$1 a minute). Carriers program their phones to work with SIMs issued by their company. **With an unlocked phone, you can rent or purchase a prepaid SIM card at your destination.** Rates will be much lower, and your **incoming calls will be free** in most cases (wireless service is 'calling party pays' in most other countries).

There are **4 primary GSM bands** (or frequencies): 850/900/1800/1900. GSM cell phones are manufactured to be compatible with some or all of these bands. In the U.S., carriers use the **1900** band, with **850** also used in the U.S. and Canada. The dominant band in Europe and much of the world is **900**. Almost all new GSM models are at least tri-band (850/1800/1900). If your travels are global in nature, look for a **quad-band GSM phone with all four frequencies**.

If you are considering an unlocked phone, be aware that some features such as picture messaging may not work until the phone is properly configured. It is wise to contact your service provider before purchase if you are not sure about the frequencies they carry or if certain features of the unlocked device are not working.

Here is PhoneDog's **list of unlocked phones:**

TunePrompter is a NEW freeware application by Griffin Technology for both Mac and PC operating systems that helps **iKaraoke users make their own free karaoke videos using any song they own**. The iKaraoke supplies the music, user supplies the words for use anytime and anywhere.

To Use TunePrompter:

1. Download and install iKaraoke TunePrompter.
2. Open TunePrompter.
3. Load your favorite song.
4. Type your lyrics in, or let TunePrompter help you find them.
5. Tap your spacebar along with the music to teach TunePrompter.
6. Connect the iKaraoke microphone to your iPod and you're on. iKaraoke removes the vocals from your video.

Between now and August 24th one lucky iKaraoke-er will win a **Ultimate Griffin Prize Pack** worth more than \$800 through a random drawing by downloading TunePrompter HERE, make karaoke videos of their favorite music and simply submit feedback as to what works? What needs improvement? Griffin specializes in *peripherals* and *accessories* for **Mac, PC, iPod and iPhone**.

-editor

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