



Galaxy of Stars® 2015 Songwriting Contest

JUDGES SONGWRITING TIPS

Song Structure: For Example: Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus or... Verse, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus (Bridge-or not) Chorus. Have structure to your song and write to the hook.

Rhyme Scheme: Try to be consistent with the rhyme structure; if starting out rhyming line 2 with line 4, continue with that structure through all the verses - be as descriptive as possible with as few words as possible.

Be consistent with tense: Are you in first, second, or third person. (I, me, you, we, he, she, they).

Have a message or point to the song: A situation, a conflict, a resolve – use the bridge to tie the verses together and the chorus (hook) for the common theme within the verses.

Relate the lyric to the hook throughout the song: Try not to lose sight of the “point” of your song – choose your words efficiently.

Match the lyric with the chords of the song-Major or Minor: In general major chords are happy and minor chords are sad.

Use common or conversational language: Strive to make the lyrics current if it's a contemporary theme.

Try not to use too many clichés: Make your metaphors unique and purposeful.

Make the song one that others can relate to, not just a personal story, by using a universal theme.

Change the surroundings of where you write your songs: A different environment may give you a different kind of song.

Make sure to start the chorus on a chord other than the one you used to start the verse: For example: If you start the verse on the 1 chord, begin the chorus on the 4 or 5 chord and try to give the chorus it's own musical identity, not just a musical repeat of the verses. If using the same chord structure, vary the chorus vocally by singing up a third or fifth vocally.

Keep a journal with your thoughts song ideas, words, catch phrases, etc.

Brainstorm on descriptive details before starting. Example, a restaurant, dim lights, white napkins, upstairs, soft music.

Your Audience: Remember your audience has never heard your song, so make sure that what you are trying to say is clear to a new listener.

Arrangement: Look how popular songs are arranged. The arrangement is a big part of that. Songs are hits for a reason. Learn when and where to put verses, chorus, bridge, and solo which will help bring your song to life.

Don't force your lyrics to work with your melody. Good lyrics will just flow with your melody. If they don't, they should be rewritten.

SUGGESTED READING:

Six Steps to Songwriting Success - Jason Blume *Lyric Writing* - Sheila Davis

You Can Write Great Lyrics - Pamela Phillips Oland

“Great songs are not written they are rewritten”

“Know that songs are a work in progress”