

Welcome to your free preview chapter of *The Songwriter*, by Rob Carona (Founder of Songsmith Creative). Thank you so much for visiting the website and taking the time to join the mailing list!

If you enjoy this chapter and want to grow even further in your songwriting and creative ability, you can purchase the full version of *The Songwriter* on Amazon.com

[Click Here To Purchase Now](#)

#1 PRACTICE

I want to tackle this first because I feel it is so

foundational in being a successful songwriter.

Songwriting is all about trial and error. The more you

try, the less errors you will encounter. The more passes a quarterback throws, the better he gets; there is just no way around it.

We are all familiar with the old adage, “Practice makes perfect.” When applied to songwriting, practice ensures your success.

What I have found with a lot of aspiring songwriters is that they only write when they are inspired. There may be productive seasons of writing a song every week, and then they might go six months to a year without writing a thing, simply because they weren’t “feeling it.” I can

tell you that I get out onto the golf course about once every four months, and every time, I have this wild expectation that I am going to hit perfect tee shots and birdie every hole. Of course, I end up frustrated as shot after shot finds itself in the weeds or the water.

To be a successful writer that hits the mark with their songs over and over again, we must develop a consistent writing schedule that regularly exercises our creative muscles and allows us to see and attack the areas where we need improvement. The longer we sit between practice, the more we lose focus on what is creating a win and what is causing a setback in our creative efforts.

The reason that writers only write in inspirational spurts is that they only want to put effort into writing their best songs. I am here to break some bad news to you: you *will* write bad songs . . . really bad songs. In fact, I *encourage* you to write bad songs—not on purpose, of course, but for the sole reason of getting into the routine of writing all of the time. If you were sitting right here next to me in my office, I could show you notebook upon notebook of song ideas that will never see the light of day. Those doomed song ideas are actually written down and kept for reference of what *didn't* work. Now of course you should be studying and employing correct writing techniques. But at the same time, don't ever hesitate to put some lyrics or music down, no matter what you feel about it. The point is, **establish a regular routine of writing that encourages you to *practice***

songwriting.

This brings me to one of the main points I teach in my songwriting workshops. Simply put, **creating** and **critiquing** are two separate processes. It is one of the hardest mentalities to break for creative people; but for songwriters especially, it is imperative that they do. Artists tend to critique while they create, which is the reason for all those half-finished songs and the excuse of “writer’s block.”

A CREATIVE SPACE

You have to allow yourself a non-judgmental space to create in order to squeeze out every awesome and stupid idea you have in your head, instead of picking one and shooting it down, picking another one (forgetting the first) and shooting that one down, then repeating the process until you have totally lost sight of the initial inspiration. A more effective practice in prolific writing is to allow yourself a safe place to just have fun and be creative. Write every thought that comes to mind, describe every image, and record every melody. It’s important that you don’t allow yourself to judge its validity at this point.

Do you remember the old TV show on PBS with Bob Ross, the beloved painter with the awesomely big hair? He would calmly approach his canvas and start making blotches and paint marks all over it, and somehow, somehow, those disjointed colors eventually merged

their way together and materialized into a breathtaking forest scene. How many of those paintings do you think he did before he accomplished such a seamless performance? Thousands of hours of study and practice were guiding his hand in each of his paintings. A mature artist of any medium will never consider himself above this preparation time just because he or she possesses a measure of raw talent.

Another thing to take note of is how a painter chooses his palette of colors. He doesn't just grab a random tube of paint, bring it to the canvas, try it out, and then toss it if it doesn't work. That would be an incredibly ineffective way of painting. No. First he approaches his full inventory of paints and carefully selects the colors that he feels will work best with his creative concept, thus creating his palette. Nothing gets thrown out.

It's the same with songwriting. You must review and tap into your full inventory of words and music before ever approaching your canvas. Let it flow. How wide and deep that inventory will be is completely up to you.

The best readers make the best writers. You can only get out what you have put in. So if you don't have a constant stream of creative input from outside sources, then you are severely handicapping yourself and will wind up writing the same lyrics over and over again. Surprisingly, the most random ideas can often end up being your most powerful lyrics. But you will never find those golden nuggets if you negatively pick at your

ideas and nix them one by one without any context.

PALETTE OF WORDS

The next step after you gather and record every idea is to choose your palette of words to describe those ideas. This will be your working list. If you have established the routine of writing hooks first, then the process of creating your palette will be easy because you have a **focused theme** to guide you.

A great visual way of accomplishing this is to create an actual palette. Here's how:

- ▶ Write your hook in the center of a blank page and circle it.
- ▶ Draw 5 lines radiating out from that circle.
- ▶ At the end of each line, choose 3-5 words or short phrases that support that hook idea. Try to group them with similar thoughts.
- ▶ Draw 3 more lines out from each of these groups and then write 3-5 more words or phrases that tie into those ideas.

THE CRITIQUING PROCESS

Now you've stepped into the critiquing process to hone in on **the purpose of your song** and deciding **which ideas support it** best. Having all your ideas in front of you allows you to see how some work together that may have seemed odd standing alone. Or you may even see that your song idea needs to change based on some of the stronger ideas that have emerged. Either way, by looking at a visual palette (as in the steps we 28 just outlined), you will see much clearer which ideas are the strongest contenders.

WRITER'S BLOCK

Every writer will at some point come to a moment when they feel inspired. Yet, no matter how hard they try, they just cannot seem to get any good ideas out on the page. This is commonly known as "writer's block." While I do believe that there are justified cases of writers getting stuck, I think a lot of us use it as an excuse. This allows artists to justify their lack of creativity for months on end as they wait till it passes. I know that sounds a little harsh, but we have to stop limiting ourselves, and work to broaden our self-imposed creative boxes. We have to find creative ways to get unstuck.

There are so many topics, emotions, and situations to write about that are often ignored because we are only focused on writing songs reflecting our own personal experiences. When you find yourself dealing with a block, or maybe haven't felt any creative inspiration, that's when you need to get up and start moving. Just keep writing . . . no matter how bad the songs may seem to be. They may never see the light of day, but the goal is to keep your writing muscles toned up and ready to go. As a successful writer, sometimes you have to stop waiting for a wave to ride and go make one.

So to sum up, if you want to improve your skills, you simply have to write constantly and consistently. Don't just wait for creative lightning to strike. Instead, press through the block, study, and use practical tools to intentionally process ideas into songs, even if it's with topics and styles outside of your personal writing style.

LET'S REVIEW

1. How many hours a week do you devote to practice?
2. Do you have the problem of critiquing while you create?
3. What types of resources do you use to improve your writing?

[Click Here To Purchase The Full Version Now](#)

