

## Recording Artists Studio Considerations

### The 5 most important things to consider when choosing a recording studio.

- Price
- Studio Aesthetics
- Equipment/hardware
- Location
- Engineer's experience

**Price.** Spending more money doesn't necessarily get you a better recording, conversely spending very little will not necessarily get you a poor recording. Pricing ranges from 35\$ an hour to over 100\$ per hour. The best test of value is the engineer's experience and track record. What recording projects has the engineer done recently? You might get a good product for 35\$ and you should get a great product for 100\$. There might be some fantastic values at 50\$. What recordings has the engineer done in your specific field of art? He/she may have produced some super radio spots or some great acoustic work, but pop/rock recordings are lacking. Listen to some samples and get some references to help you in your decision.

**Studio Aesthetics.** Your environment needs to enhance your creative abilities and musical talents. The studio needs to be relaxed, comfortable, and have a homey feel, inspiring but not distracting. It should not impede the music flow and production in any way. The recording room itself needs to have an atmosphere that is quiet and not effected by outside sounds. A pleasing social room or lounge is nice but not critical.

**Equipment/hardware.** The type and amount of recording equipment may not be an issue to one artist, but to another it would be the main reason they choose a particular studio. Equipment alone does not make the studio, the engineer makes the studio. The very paint brush used by Picasso in the hands of an average oil on canvas painter will only produce an average painting. The basics to consider are few but a given for an average studio. There are some standard microphones and electronics that a studio should have as well as a recorder that is capable of recording at least 24 tracks. The specific models will be mentioned in another article. The list should include quality mics, good mic preamps, good comfortable head phones, and accurate studio monitors. Again an extensive list of expensive recording equipment will not guarantee a quality product, but in the hands of a proven expert, it will enable the engineer to produce consistently great recordings.

**Location.** The studio should be in a location that will be convenient to you. At times your project will take many days to complete. Multiple trips to a remote location can be taxing and greatly impact production costs. Choose a studio that has the standards you desire and within a reasonable distance, if your project will require multiple trips. The studio should be physically accessible if you have special needs.

**Engineer experience.** The last item - the most important item to consider when choosing a recording studio - is the engineer that will be doing your recording and

mastering. An engineer can make or break your recording. The engineer will greatly influence your product with subtle enhancements, setting it above the good recording to something spectacular. How would you know who is great and who is just average? You can ask for references, copies of the engineer's previous work, recommendations from trusted musicians and friends in the industry. Ask your questions up front because a great engineer will listen to the artist to know exactly what they want.

**In summary some questions to ponder:** Will you get what you pay for? Do you *feel* creative and free in the studio you have chosen? Are you getting the sound you want in your current studio with the hardware they are using? If you have to make multiple trips to this studio, is it a physical or financial burden? And finally is that engineer you are considering great at producing rap and rock (but you want to do a country ballad) the best choice for you? Choosing a studio is like choosing and making friends. Will it enhance your life or bring it down? Will the experience encourage you and bring out the star in you?!

**All the best in your search for the studio that's just right for you!**

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