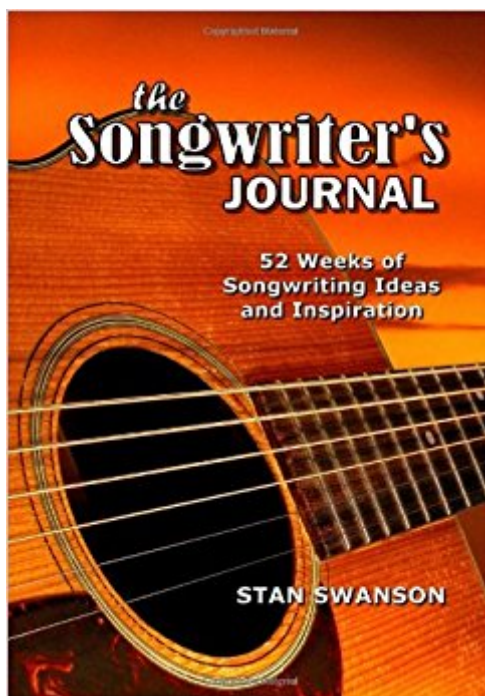


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# The Songwriter's Journal: 52 Weeks Of Songwriting Ideas And Inspiration



## Synopsis

Whether you are new to songwriting or have written hundreds of songs, "The Songwriter's Journal" should be within arm's reach whenever the mood to write a new tune strikes. It is packed with the fuel you need to ignite the imagination and provides you with more ideas than you could ever hope to write about. With hundreds of entries designed specifically to spark the muse within, the book should reside on every songwriter's bookshelf or desk. It includes songwriting exercises, chord progressions for new songs, word association exercises, ideas to write new songs about, note sequences for new songs, power words to include in your lyrics, items that belong in every songwriter's toolkit and much more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In reviewing songwriting books, it is important to ask the question: "Will this one help someone become a better songwriter?" In this case, it should make anyone a more prolific songwriter, which will provide the opportunity for improvement. It should help tickle a sleeping muse awake, and that can't hurt. -- The Muse's Muse, July 2007

This is not a book you read; it's a book you do. It's a great workbook for songwriters, with sections for every week of the year. It includes places to jot down ideas, word games to inspire lyrics, chord progressions and melody lines to play with, and space to write a whole song, plus lists of "power words," quotes from famous songwriters and information about songwriting resources. I just wrote my first week's song, and I'm having a hard time keeping myself from reading ahead to next week.

In fact, if I didn't have other things to do, I could just cuddle up with this book for the winter and write one song after another. Or I could use it whenever I feel stuck. This book would work well for poets, too. It's so much fun.

book gives the songwriter ideas throughout the year. Some good ideas for inspiration and motivation. Lots of room for notes and ideas.

M songwriting son likes the idea joggers in this book.

I really like this book as a means of inspiring songwriting. It's set up like a journal, broken down into 52 weeks. Each week is given several inspirational approaches to get you thinking about and writing a new song. Each week is set up the same and there's room on the pages for you to write down your lyric, melody and chord ideas. For most people, it's not enough room to write a lot, but you wouldn't want to buy a book of blank pages, right? I guess the goal would be to start writing at least one new song every week, based on at least one of these ideas. Since people use a wide variety of things to get them motivated or inspired - starting with a lyric, a saying, a title, a story or news event, a melody, a chord progression or musical groove, by listening to and imitating other songs, etc. - the author provides a wide variety of inspirations each week: \* a song writing exercise or challenge (ex. write on a new instrument) \* song titles - titles can't be copyrighted \* a chord progression - he provides a progression and you use it any way you want \* word associations, cliches, expressions, slang, etc. \* quotes from great songwriters and lyric samples \* short bios and suggested listening \* melody note sequences - like the chord progressions, you're given notes and it's up to you how to use them to begin a melody \* songwriter's "toolkit" - short descriptions of useful items (software, books, websites, resources, companies, etc.) that may help you There is no right or wrong way to use this book. It's not a course and there's no deep critical-thinking involved. The first part of songwriting is to just get to a source and let the ideas come out however they will. Censoring, editing and rewriting all come later, and there are other books for that. This book is only about getting some new ideas to flow. As such, it's good for writers at any and all levels and therefore would be a useful book to many more people. By contrast, skill-building/improving books are only good for people below a specific level. This book does not promise to help you write a "hit" song - the author acknowledges he's written hundreds of songs without having a hit single - only to give you lots of ideas to get you writing new songs. It can be a great resource for anyone with writer's block or who feels like they're in a rut of repeating themselves and need some fresh ideas. If this

book works for you, you could buy another copy for next year and go through the process again. At the end of each year, you'll have collected a lot of song ideas together in one place that you can refer back to later. If I spend \$20 (or less) on something that inspires me to write at least one song, I'd say it was worth it. That's far cheaper than taking any course. I haven't read beyond the first couple "weeks" yet but I've glanced through the entire book and I'm sure it will inspire me to at least start several songs. Whether or not I finish those songs or write any "hit worthy" songs is another story:)

The subtitle, "songwriting ideas and inspiration," accurately describes this book. As one reviewer commented, it is rambling and not "organized." Each of the 52 2-3 page sections is an independent, random unit of ideas and things to spark ideas and images to make a song from. (A shotgun approach to writing one song a week.) I like the idea. Within each "week's" pages, it is completely random. The chord progression, tips, themes, etc. are unrelated to each other. I think the purpose is that if even one bit strikes you, it is worthwhile; which I agree with. I like the idea very much. I found the scenarios to be in the blues style of songwriting; some people may like that, some may not. Scattered among the nuggets of ideas and inspirations were helpful recommendations for best low cost acoustic guitar, best introductory music recording software, best drum machine, and a list of other recommended books (I already own one of those recommended books and found it excellent, which gives me confidence in the author's other recommendations.) This book does not address what to do with your songwriting ideas and inspirations. It does not cover anything like song structure or how to turn ideas into actual lyrics. To be fair, that is not the stated purpose of the book. I think this would be an excellent book for breaking out of writer's block. Then get a songwriting book (which the author kindly provides recommendations for) to turn the ideas into developed lyrics.

"The Songwriter's Journal: 52 Weeks Of Songwriting Ideas And Inspiration" by professional songwriter Stan Swanson was written to both provide aspiring songwriters with ideas and inspirations for new songs, and a forum in which to jot down their daily notes, thoughts, ideas, and musical notations over the course of a year's time. The formula is straightforward: 'An Idea to Write a Song About'; 'Note Sequence for a Song'; 'Power Words'; 'Cliches, Expressions, Slang and Idioms'; 'Rolling Stone Magazine's Greatest Songs of All Time'; and 'Songwriter's Toolkit'; followed by a page of blank lines and a musical score section just waiting to be filled in. Of special note are the sections arranged by the week and devoted to providing an opportunity to address and record

'Songwriting Exercises'; 'Song Titles'; 'Chord Procession for a Song'; 'Word Association Exercises'; and 'Songwriters Hall of Fame' which showcases a particular musician composer. "The Songwriter's Journal" is an invaluable tool and very strongly recommended for the novice songwriter, and has a great deal of utility and value for even the more experienced composer.

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