

What Personal Computers can do that Tablets or Phones Cannot do

Do you still own a personal computer? You know that machine sitting over there that has an attached

Keyboard and a pile of dust on it? It's ugly and takes up a lot of room in your home. Why don't you sell it? (hint....it's not worth much...)

The world is a changing place. If I was to say those words 5 years ago you would of thought I have lost my mind. I need MS Office! I need to check my email! I want to play my music. Your PC can do all of that. However, so can a tablet!

It's 2018..... why do I need a PC?

Eight years ago, the late [Steve Jobs](#) said that a PC was like a truck. He was comparing tablets to traditional computers the way you would compare a car to a truck, claiming the PC was for work and to do the "heavy" things while a tablet was all we needed to do everything else.

[Tablets](#) are currently the pinnacle of mobile technology. They are compact, very lightweight and extremely easy to carry. However, they do not possess the processing power of a laptop. Their functionality as a computing device is very limited, although sufficient for some people's uses. Tablets can be ideal for those who browse the Web casually, such as read the news or popular websites, and those who play "lightweight" games, or want to watch TV or films while traveling. Additionally, tablets can be used in a variety of specialized careers like design and music. They are the ultimate media consumption devices.

What they can't do – they cannot be upgraded, cannot use a mouse, cannot store your entire photo, music and video library unless it is very small and can be uploaded to cloud storage which take a lot of time. It is difficult to share documents between applications because there isn't a file manager built into them. You cannot play DVD's or blu-ray disks easily on a tablet. You cannot run multiple monitors from a tablet or a phone. Tablet/Phone software is usually not as full featured as PC software. Also, if you want to experiment with different operating systems this might not be an option on your tablet...with a PC or Mac computer you can do this fairly easily.

Personal Computers – Can have more memory and storage which can be expanded. They handle all of your printing needs – either wired or wirelessly. Play all of your media and if so desired – simultaneously! Open up many documents at once and share them across multiple screens. Store all of your documents locally and make multiple copies. You can even access your PC and stored documents from anywhere in the world. There is a lot of sophisticated software available paid as well as free. And let's not forget about games! All kinds of standalone and networked games are available. Everything is not all roses with PC's – it is imperative that you backup your PC every so often and protect yourselves from viruses. Upgrades are more difficult for PC's than on tablets which are pretty much defined to local storage if anything.

Tonight I will share with you a skill that tablets absolutely cannot do – make music files out of any CD's you might have lying at home. This is one of the big functions that made PC sales take off about 10 years ago. Your music became portable – you can make mp3 files out of your CD's and play them in the car! What a concept! Now combine your mp3 library with cloud storage and you can play a lot of music from your phones or tablets too.

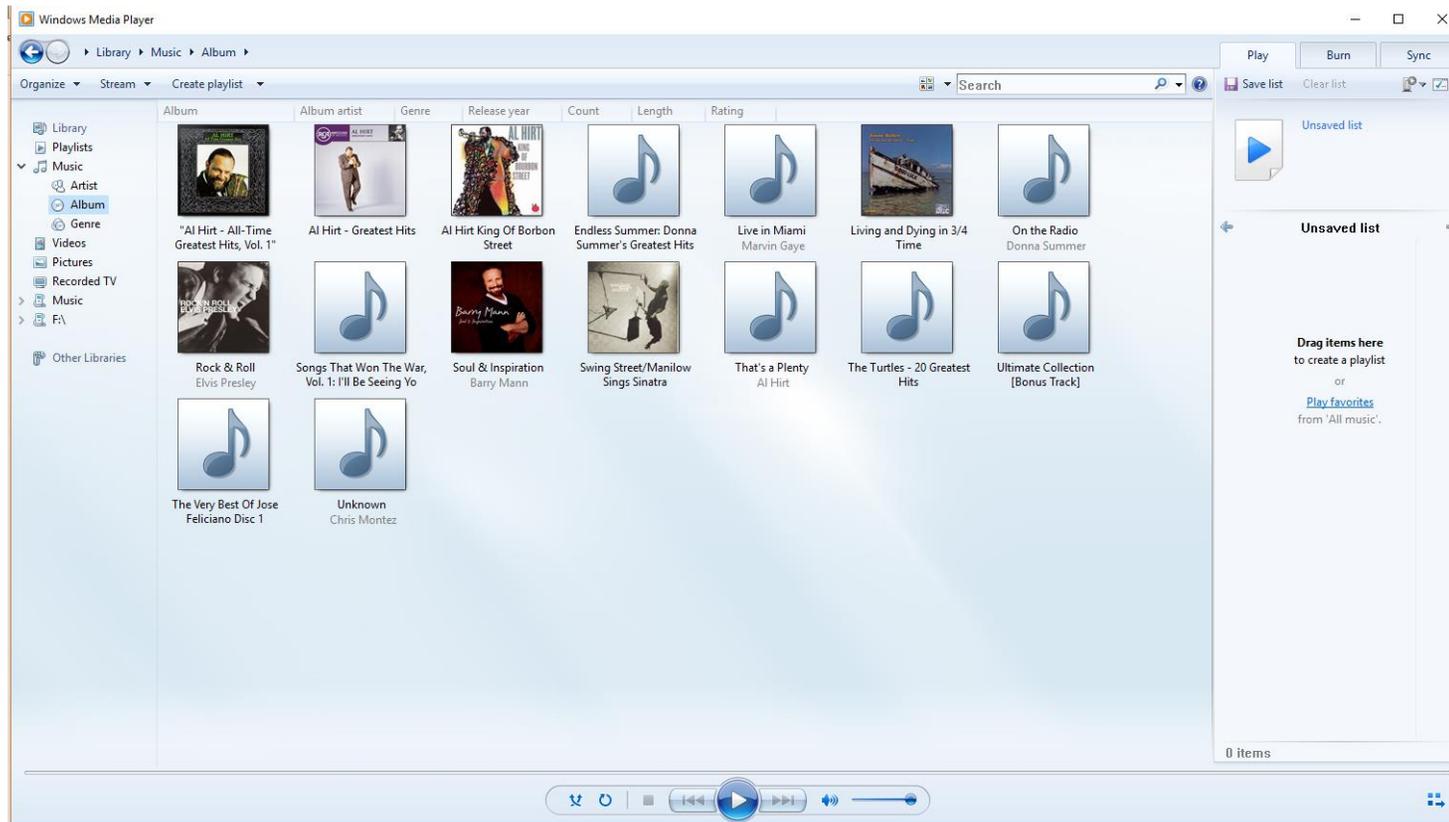
Nowadays, young people “stream” music through their devices. Google Music, Amazon Music, Spotify are all services that let you “rent” music to play on your devices. Pandora allows you to listen for free, but you don’t get to choose what you listen to. These methods require Internet access to be able to listen. You can also copy mp3’s/wma’s to your phone or tablet and play them that way without Internet access. This makes for an ideal method for portable listening walking, jogging, etc. You can even listen to books via your phone, tablet, Alexa or in the car when you make audio files out of them.

Windows Media Player – looks like this when you launch media with the album cover of whatever is playing....



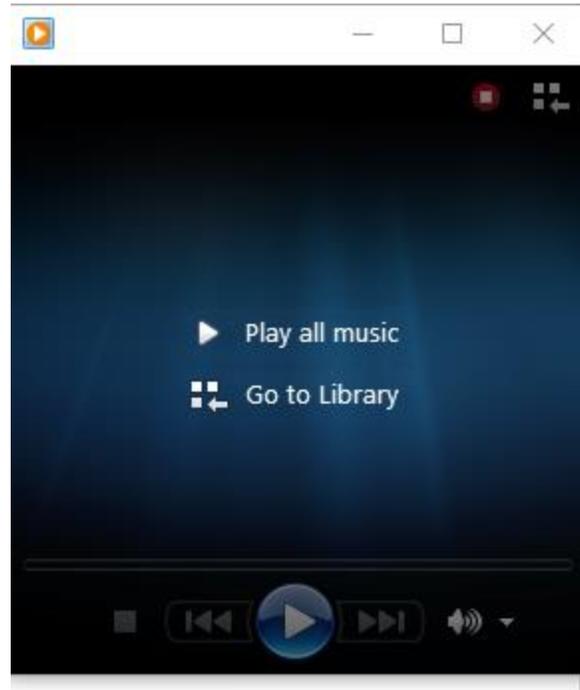
Not real impressive. And it plays along as happily as it can. It will only play one song that you choose....to add more songs you must create a play list... but if you open it up from the program manager it looks entirely different....

Let’s take a closer look....



This is what Windows media player looks like when you are playing mp3's. Double click on any of them to launch. You can also double click on any music file to launch it the same exact way. If it has an album cover it will display. If not, it will not.

With a CD in the CD player....it will launch song #1 with the album cover if available. Pay attention to the dots on the lower right-hand side as they will let you toggle between the full program or library and the player. Clicking on them will bring you this...



You can play all your music that is in your music library. Any song that you have previously played is in your music library. The little square will bring up an option to “RIP” a CD. This means to take each track of your CD and make a file out of it that your devices can read and play. The dots will take you back to the library.

When you put in a CD the drive will spin and the Windows Media Player will display all of the songs on the CD and begin playing. If you have it setup – all songs on your CD will automatically be ripped to your music folder on your hard drive. All labeled and ready to be copied to your thumb drive or the cloud to play on other devices.

Well Mr. Kirsch...that is all well and good...but how do I play them in my Car? I don't have an mp3 player.... Well...Amazon to the rescue...

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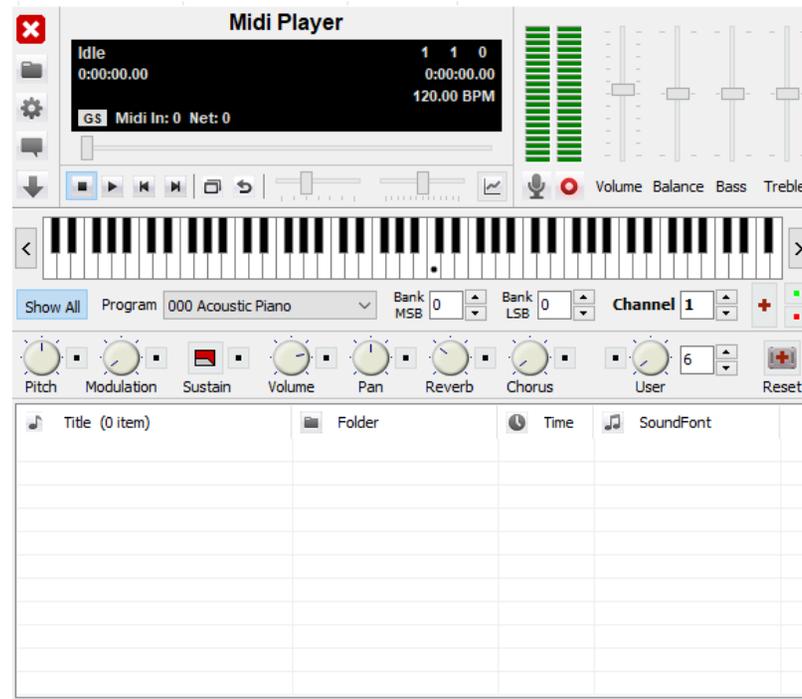


The device will look something like this...

This will allow you to put your music on a micro sd card or a thumbdrive and play it through your car radio and a station of your choosing without wires. You get to select your music by putting your music in folders by Artist names. The song name will scroll by as it plays. The device is powered by the cigarette lighter. Now is this as nice as a built in mp3 player with the album cover art displayed? Heck no, but for \$20 bucks I'm not complaining. By the way this device will also connect with your phone by Bluetooth and you can speak hands free via your phone with it.

Any questions on MP3, ripping music or playing music in your car?

Let's move on to another subject.....an alternative type of music called "MIDI" or musical instrument digital interface. MIDI is a technical standard that describes a communications protocol, digital interface, and electrical connectors that connect a wide variety of electronic musical instruments, computers, and related music and audio devices. A single MIDI link can carry up to sixteen channels of information, each of which can be routed to a separate device. To play a midi file you must have a midi player and a midi song file. In our case the Windows Media player will play the songs quite nicely. What the files are human beings playing an instrument and digitally recording the output and mixing them. There are many midi files on the web some better than others....some free and some paid for. Some like karaoke and some like full recordings...



This Midi player has 16 channels and 127 instruments. Other versions could have more. They allow you to tweak the midi music files as much as you want. Some keyboards have midi ports that will allow the device to connect to your computer so that you can record your songs and then mix them in a midi program.

Any questions about MIDI?