



**Official Artist Channel
Playbook**

Official Artist Channels (OAC's) unite an artist's full body of work and subscribers under one channel which the artist, label, and manager can control. For artists this means access to 100% of their audience. For fans, this means a single artist destination - one channel to subscribe to & experience an artist's full depth of work.

Below, we'll walk you through the basics of setting up an Official Artist Channel and how to use YouTube fully to engage with fans, drive video views, and promote concerts & tours.

① Set up your own YouTube channel

An owned & operated channel is the first requirement for an Official Artist Channel

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- In order to get an Official Artist Channel, you'll need the following 3 things on YouTube:
 - An owned & operated channel
 - A YouTube-generated [Topic channel](#) (see below for steps to take if you do not have a topic channel)
 - At least 1 official music video
- If you have all of the steps above currently on YouTube, you may already have been upgraded to an Official Artist Channel. You can check by visiting your channel and looking for either a music note 🎵 next to your name, and/or two shelves titled "Music Videos" and "Albums."

CREATING AN OWNED & OPERATED CHANNEL

- In order to have an Official Artist Channel, you need to have or create an owned channel that is separate from your YouTube-created Topic channel or any 3rd party channel where your music currently lives. There are two kinds of channels you can create - one that only one log-in can manage using their Google account, and one that can have multiple managers or owners. If you'd like multiple members of your team to have access to edit your channel without using the same log-in, create a channel using a brand account. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to get step-by-step instructions. You may also create a general account and later switch this to a brand account to give multiple members of your team access.
- Once the channel is created, it's important you use the official artist name as the channel name. Good channel names can help fans easily find the official channel in search results and an artist's official videos across YouTube. Poor channel names can make discovery of the channel and artist's videos more difficult for fans and potentially have a negative impact on analytics. Some things to consider are: using proper capitalization, proper spacing, avoiding extra words, and choosing a primary language. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to learn more about artist channel names.
- Finally, you should make sure you pick a high-quality, high-resolution image as your artist profile picture and ensure that is updated both in the channel itself and within Artist Center in Creator Studio. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to read more about Artist Center in Creator Studio.

MAKING SURE YOU HAVE A TOPIC CHANNEL

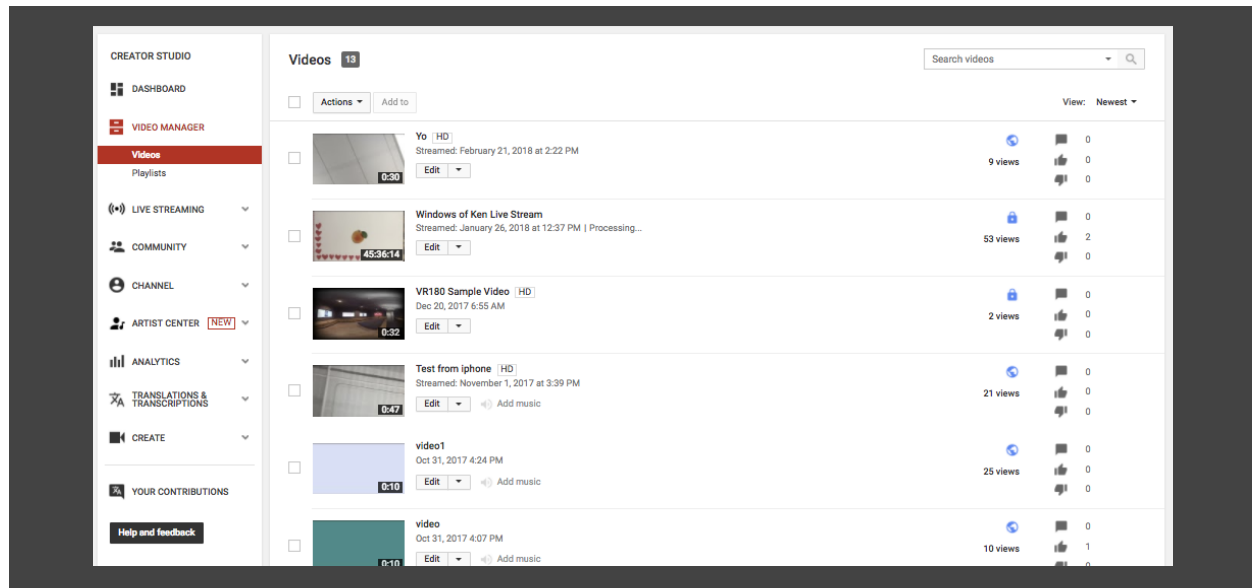
- You can currently see if you have a topic channel by searching for artist name + topic channel' on YouTube and looking for the channel with Topic in the title. You can tell it's a topic channel because it will read "your name - Topic."
- If you do not yet have an Official Artist Channel, you can also search for the artist name name and click on the image that appears on the right-hand side of your screen. Once you have an OAC, clicking on that image will direct you to that channel. In the absence of an OAC, clicking on that image will direct you to your topic channel.
- If you do not have a topic channel, it is because you have not delivered an official music video and/or art track to YouTube. Reach out to your partner manager directly, or contact artist-support@youtube.com for instructions on getting a topic channel.

REQUESTING AN OAC UPGRADE:

- Once you have an owned channel, a topic channel, and one official music video on your channel, you're ready to request an OAC upgrade!
- **If you have a partner manager**, reach out to them with your channel URL & let them know you want an upgrade. This process will take between 2 and 4 weeks.
- **If you do not have a partner manager**, email artist-support@youtube.com with your name and YouTube owned & operated channel URL. This process will take up to 1 month.

GETTING FAMILIAR WITH CREATOR STUDIO & ANALYTICS FOR ARTISTS

- You can use Creator Studio in YouTube to organize your official artist channel, manage videos, and interact with fans. To navigate to Creator Studio, sign into the channel and on the top right, click the account icon. Then, click Creator Studio. [[CLICK HERE](#)] to learn more about Creator Studio.

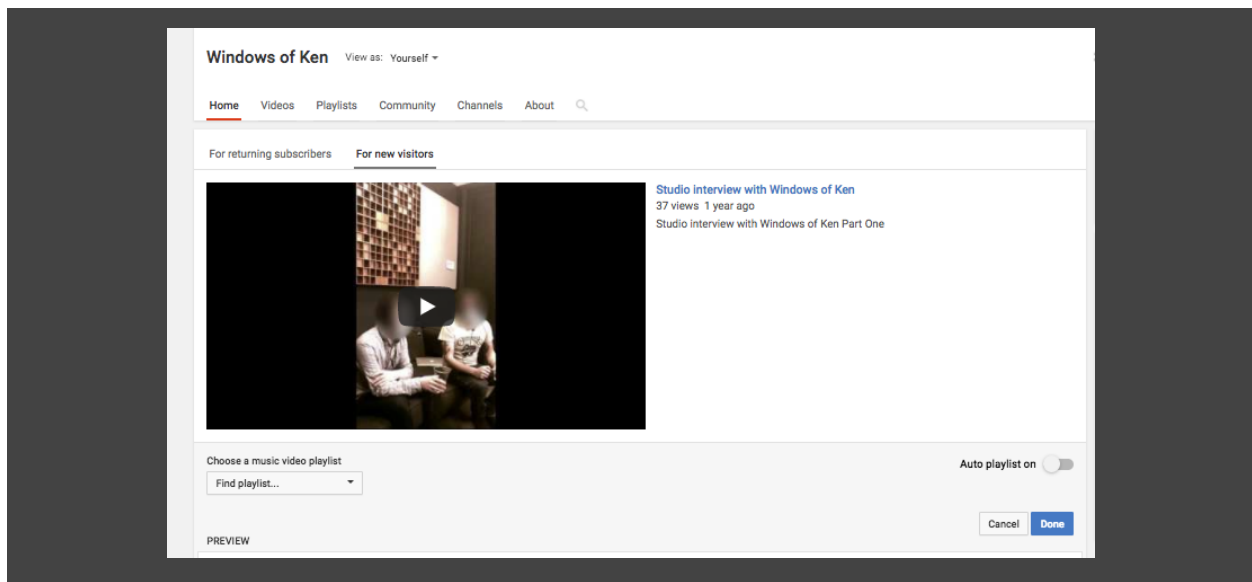


- Within **Creator Studio** you have access to the following:
 - **[Dashboard](#)**: notifications / alerts from YouTube, including the latest updates and stats.
 - **[Video Manager](#)**: organize and update videos, adjust video settings, use tools to optimize a video, tweak settings, or bulk update across videos with a single click.
 - **[Community](#)**: communicate and collaborate with your fans! Here you can respond to comments, read private messages, see videos where you've been credited, or review a [list of subscribers](#) (if your channel has at least 10,000 subscribers). More on this in section (3).
 - **[Channel](#)**: adjust settings that affect your channel overall, such as signing up for monetization, controlling upload defaults, or enabling live streaming.
 - **[Artist Center](#)**: access to manage the artist photos and bio on YouTube. Content here may also be displayed on YouTube properties such as your channel and YouTube charts, as well as other Google sites, such as Google+ and Google Play, and our third party partner sites.
 - **[Event tickets](#)**: if you're enabled for ticketing, you can see your ticket sales, revenue, and where your tickets are sold out within the "Events" tab within the Artist Center in Creator Studio.
- Within the **YouTube Studio mobile app** you have access to all of the above (with the exception of event tickets) PLUS **YouTube Analytics for Artists**.
 - Once you're enabled for an Official Artist Channel, download the YouTube Studio app for [iOS](#) or [Android](#).
 - Navigate to '**Artist Analytics**' to see artist & track-level performance data including views over time, traffic sources, search referrals, and top playlists.

② Optimize your OAC content & layout

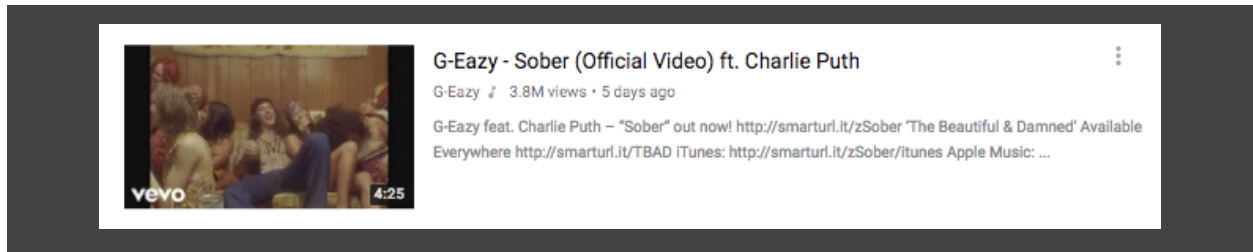
Set up a trailer video, shelves, and playlists to make OAC your new home

DECIDING ON YOUR TRAILER VIDEO



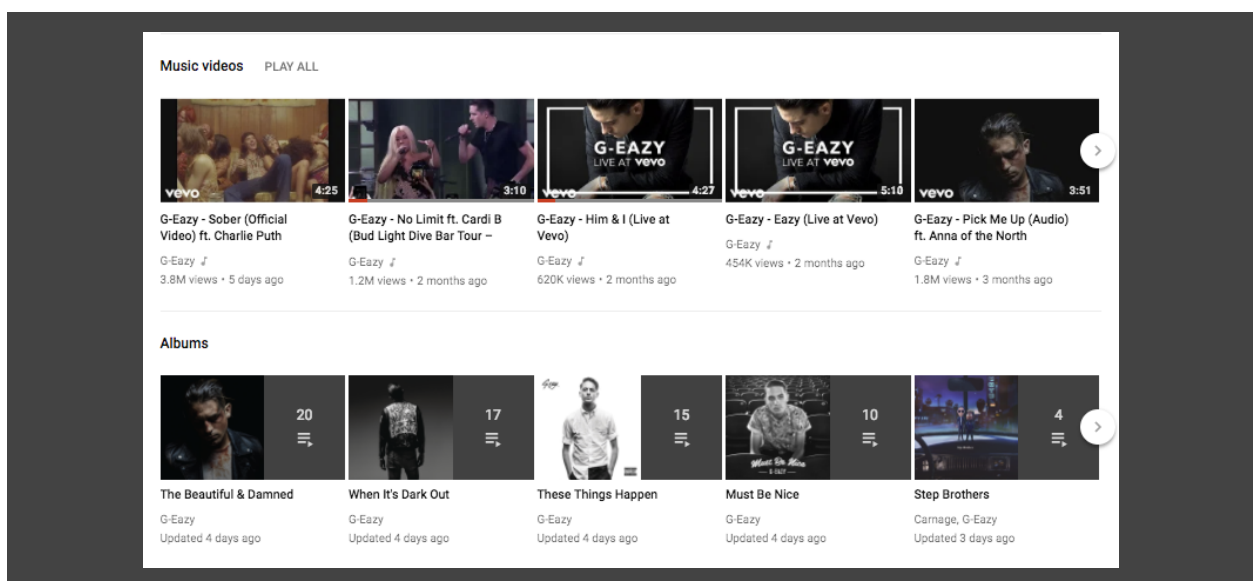
- An artist's welcome / trailer video is the first piece of video content visitors will encounter when they land on your Official Artist Channel. Ensure it's your most recent piece of content or what you want to draw immediate attention to as it will start to play with audio upon landing on the channel. With OACs, your welcome / trailer video **can be from any channel across YouTube**. Also, you can set a different welcome video for new versus returning visitors. Follow the steps below to update your trailer video:
 - Navigate to the top right of the page when logged-in on youtube.com. You should see your profile icon and upon clicking, see an option to click **'my channel'**
 - Click **'customize channel'**
 - Hover over any video to make the **edit pencil icon** appear on the right, and click on it to add or edit your trailer video

MAKING METADATA WORK FOR YOU

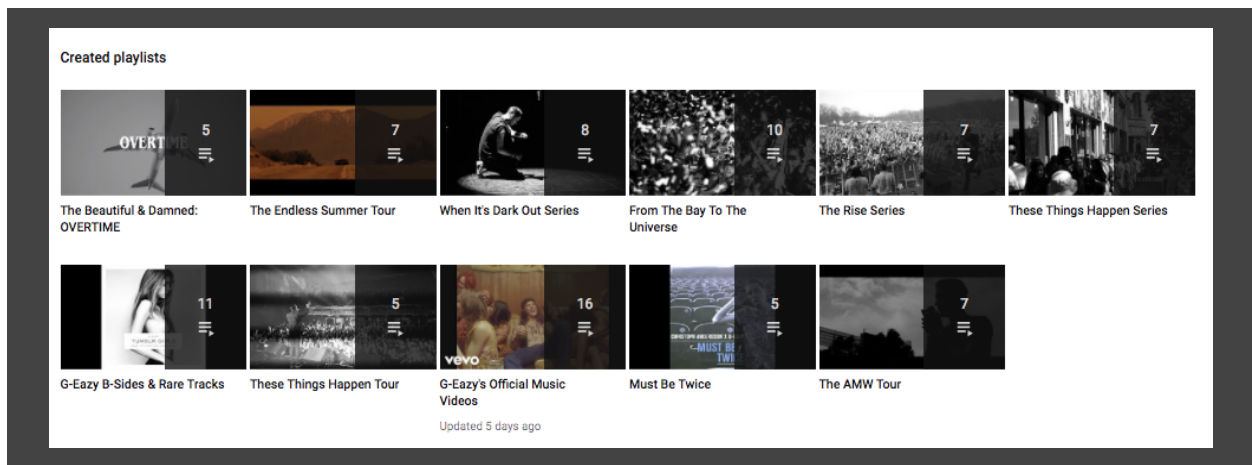


- **Song titles:** Artist and song names are the most significant search terms for music. Use the end of the title to distinguish between creative formats. For example, title your videos “Artist Name - Song Name (Live)” if it’s a live performance, or “Artist Name - Song Name (Official Music Video)” if it’s an official video. Be consistent across the catalog of videos to set expectations with fans.
- **Thumbnails:** Viewers use thumbnails as a primary factor in deciding which videos to watch. As Search and Suggested traffic sources are the main drivers of music viewership, make use of these images to help entice viewers to choose your video. Focus on sizing because of mobile viewership. We recommend clear & hi-resolution images with a resolution of at least 1280x720 (with minimum width of 640 pixels). The thumbnail should have a 16:9 aspect ratio as it's the most used in YouTube players and previews, should be viewable across platforms, and should be consistent across an artist’s social presence.
- **Descriptions:** Video descriptions help viewers decide what to watch and are an opportunity to connect with your fans. Writing a robust description of the video can help get it discovered, so put some effort into it. Focus on what’s “above the fold” and “below the fold,” and consider using this space to promote upcoming single or album release, tour, merch, or links to social.

DESIGNING SHELVES THAT HIGHLIGHT YOUR MUSIC & NON-MUSIC CONTENT



- Channel shelves, also known as sections, are made up of your playlists on YouTube and allow you to highlight the video content you select on an artists' channel homepage. With an Official Artist Channel, a **music videos** section & an **albums** section will be auto-generated. Check to ensure there is little duplication across the videos in your self-created sections and those generated by YouTube. Use the (optional) first-position promo section to highlight timely playlists (e.g. new albums or songs, live performances, etc), and curate the rest of your sections to highlight the playlists and videos you most want fans to see.

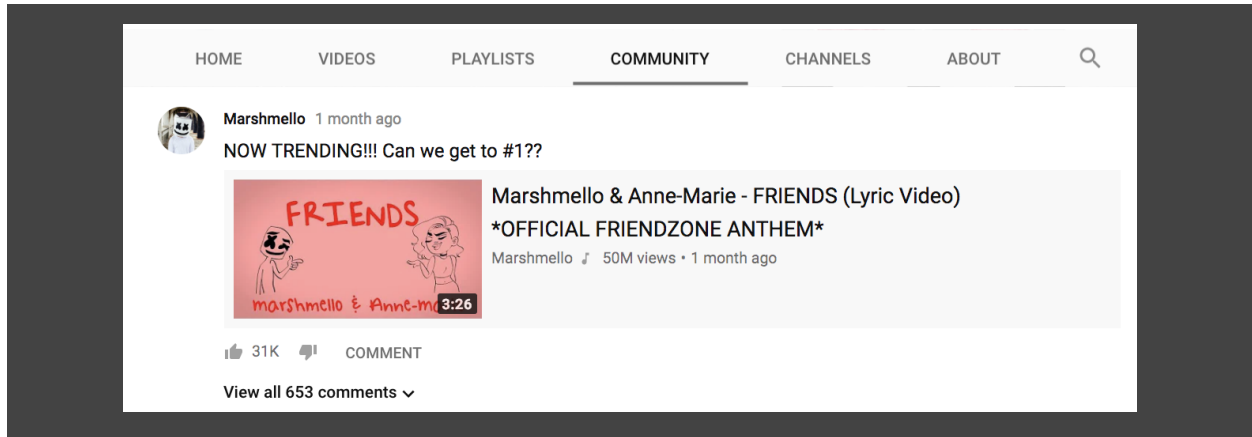


CREATING PLAYLISTS THAT KEEP FANS LISTENING TO YOUR MUSIC

- Playlists are one of the largest traffic sources for music viewership on YouTube. They organize, curate and make content more accessible to users - in turn increasing watch time. You should organize and curate artist content into varied playlists, and update them regularly. Common playlists include TV appearances and interviews, tour content, favorite fan content, album-specific, seasonal, and original content. Make sure to promote playlist links in descriptions and cards to grow fan watchtime.

③ Welcome your fans using Community

Your community tab lets you and fans interact using text, images, gifs, and videos

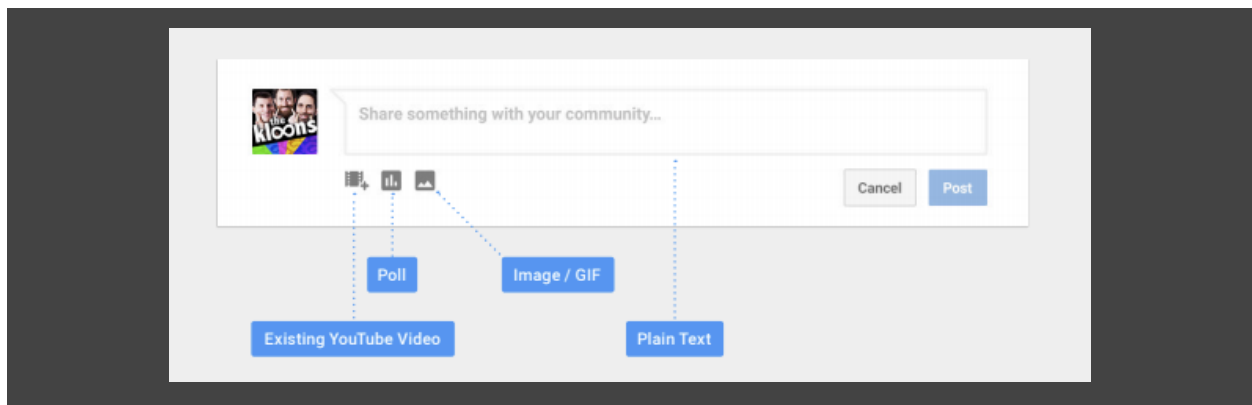


UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY

- The Community tab gives artists a new, simple way to engage with their viewers and express themselves beyond video. Artists can use Community posts to reach and engage their audience with text, live videos, images, animated GIFs and more, providing a lightweight way to engage with fans more often and in between uploads. Subscribed viewers will be able to see artists' posts in the Subscriptions feed, on their homepage, and as notifications, while fans who have recently visited an artist's channel but haven't subscribed may also selectively receive notifications and see posts on their homepage.

BEST PRACTICES FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Your first post:** sign in, tap on the Community tab in your channel, then take your pick of ways to post. Say hi to fans and introduce them to the Community tab and how you'll be using it to interact with them going forward.



- What and when to post:** We recommend having an evergreen strategy on Community to keep your fans engaged when you're on and off-release cycle. Promote videos, songs, collaborations, tours, merch, or other key pieces of content. You can use polls to ask your subscribers how they

feel about your new video, their favorite song off your album, what single to release next, and more. Many artists use Community as a social space to post pictures, behind-the-scenes stills and videos, and custom messages. We recommend having an always-on strategy on Community to keep your fans engaged when you're on and off-release cycle.

- **Cross-promotion:** Repost videos uploaded to your or others' YouTube channels. This gives the video a new life by helping it reach your fans via notifications. You can repost collab videos that were uploaded to another artist's channel to alert your subscribers as well. You can also repost your videos (new or dated) at different intervals to highlight it and bring it back to your subscribers at key dates (e.g. post-release, holidays, anniversaries of release). Get fans involved by asking them what they'd like to see.
- **Remember:** Manage your community and show your subscribers that you listen by replying and hearting comments. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) for more.

HOW TO BE ENABLED

- While many channels have already been enabled, the channel in question does not have the feature if there isn't a "Community" tab visible. Remember that you will generally need 10,000 subscribers in order to get Community.
- **If you have a partner manager,** you should reach out to them with your channel URL & request the feature. [This process will take between 2 and 4 weeks.](#)
- **If you do not have a partner manager,** reach out to artist support at artist-support@youtube.com. [This process will take up to 1 month.](#)

4 Go live to give fans sneak peaks


You can livestream straight from your YouTube mobile app when you want to give fans a sneak peak, go behind-the-scenes, or make a big announcement

HOW TO GO LIVE

- There are a number of options for configuring a livestream. For basic mobile livestreaming, follow the steps below. Make sure you have the YouTube app downloaded on your phone.
 - Open the YouTube app
 - Select the camera button.
 - Grant permissions for the YouTube app to access the Camera, Mic and Storage.
 - If prompted, verify your account.
 - Select GO LIVE.
- [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to learn more about these options and the process of setting one up.

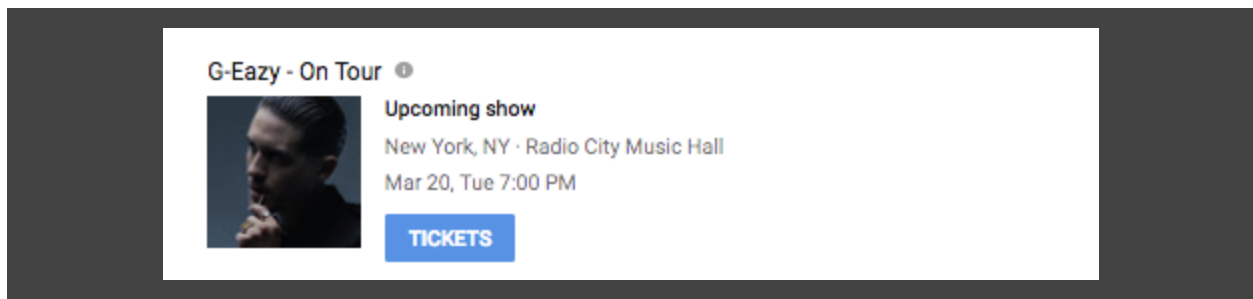
WHEN TO GO LIVE

- Live is an incredible way to create an exclusive moment with fans. Live viewership tends to be strongest with the artist's most engaged fanbase, and so is a great way to announce tours or albums, give an exclusive acoustic performance, or even answer questions in a Q&A.

- Subscribers who have rung the bell  will get a notification when you go Live. Consider posting on Community encouraging your fans to subscribe so they don't miss when you go live! [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to learn more about notification settings.
- Key moments for going Live: while on tour, behind-the-scenes, while shooting official video content, while in the studio, or on the red carpet.
- Going live is easy on your mobile phone, but if you're interested in doing a special livestream performance, first listen, or Q&A in partnership with a YouTube space or your upcoming performance, contact your partner manager for more information.

5 Promote your tour on your videos

If you're going on tour in the United States and are selling tickets via Ticketmaster, YouTube will feature your tour dates on your video watch pages



HOW WE PROMOTE YOUR TOUR

- Once enabled, viewers who are watching official music content from your YouTube channel will see a shelf containing your tour dates just below the video. Artist tour dates will be visible to fans watching content on both mobile devices and computers. The shelf will pin the event that is geographically closest to the viewer, as well as show them more available event dates. Please note that sold-out events will not be displayed in the shelf. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to learn more and see how to track your tickets sold through YouTube.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- An Official Artist Channel
- An upcoming concert or show that is ticketed by Ticketmaster
- Does NOT have to be the headliner

HOW TO BE ENABLED

- Presently, you do not need to take any action to have ticketing enabled. If you fit the minimum requirements, your tour dates should automatically populate once your dates are confirmed on Ticketmaster.

- **If you do not see ticketing enabled across your videos and you have a partner manager,** reach out to them with your channel URL & request the feature. [This process will take between 2 and 4 weeks.](#)
- **If you do not have a partner manager,** reach out to artist-support@youtube.com. [This process will take up to 1 month.](#)

⑥ Give us feedback!

We're happy you're creating and using an Official Artist Channel on YouTube! We strongly believe this will provide the best experience for artist teams and fans alike. Please give us feedback on your experience by contacting your Partner Manager directly. If you do not have a partner manager, you can email artist-support@youtube.com.