

# Fight List! Lyrics Guidelines

Updated 2018-04-27

## Overview

These are the guidelines that I use when choosing lyrics. They're suggestions, not rules, so you can break them if you want. They just help keep things feeling fairly consistent between cards.

You definitely won't be able to follow all of them all the time. Sometimes there aren't *any* good lyrics (many KISS songs, for instance), and sometimes there's a great line in the chorus that just says "fuck" over and over again [citation needed].

## Albus Einstein

Use genius.com to find lyrics because they're the best. If the lyrics aren't there, compare a few other lyrics sites, and maybe listen to the song yourself to be sure. If you can't find them anywhere, listen to the song and hope that you can discern more than one word.

## You're A Poet And You Didn't – No, You're Not A Poet

We're writing prose, not the first page of a Dr. Seuss book. Try not to rhyme. This is not the time.

Don't split lines up into stanzas. Write them as sentences. Don't add punctuation where there wouldn't be any if you spoke the line conversationally rather than sang it. They won't always be complete sentences, but they usually will be (although some songs are just gibberish [by Relient K]).

In "Champagne" by K.Flay, it sounds like "I'm looking. For something. To make me. Feel nothing." but we'd just write "I'm looking for something to make me feel nothing".

It looks better on the card because of how the lines wrap, and can be a fun game in itself to try to remember how the lyrics actually fit in the song. Yeah, that's a fun game, right?

## Don't Mock The Music

The song might be a ridiculous piece of trash, but somebody probably chose it because they like it. So be cool, man. As Children 18:3 say in their wrongly titled song, "It's alright. It's a stereotype, and I don't mind if you use it. It's alright. You can say what you like. Just don't mock the music".

## Star Wars

Don't use lyrics that say the name of the song. That's lame. It's like if you were watching Star Wars, and Luke said "I sure can't wait to shoot lasers as a pilot in these Star Wars" and then winked at the camera. We get it, you know the title!

## Water Under The Bridge

You thought this was going to be the guideline where I tell you which part of the song to check first, but no, that's the next one. This one is about cliches.

Go for poetic lines. Interesting lines. Leave the straightforward sentences, boring phrases, overused emotions, cliches, and idioms in the dust. You're usually lucky to find a single line like this in most songs, but sometimes you get a band like Queens of the Stone Age where you want to squeeze the entire song into the little box at the bottom of the card.

## Water Under The Chorus

First check the bridge (What, your song doesn't have a bridge? Come on!). It's usually the most unique lyrically and musically. Then move on to the verses, because they're still unique lyrically. Go to the chorus as a last resort. We hear it over and over in the song, so we can probably already remember it just by reading the title. "Don't bore us, get to the chorus" is the title of an Emery song that isn't especially relevant here, and is actually completely counter to what I'm saying we should do. Don't bore us, get away from the chorus.

## Crescendo! Bass Drop!

Pick lyrics that are at a strong musical moment. Reading it is going to pull you into an exciting part of the song. Better lyrics are probably more important, but sometimes this is too good to pass up.

Example: "I swear to god you don't want to test me!" in "Black Wave" by K.Flay. (Second K.Flay reference in this guide. Bet you can't guess what I'm listening to... trick question, it's Foster the People! But they're both on the same playlist, so I'll give you a point anyway.)

## Kid Tested, Mother Indifferenced

Avoid explicit lyrics (whatever that means) because my mom may have wanted to throw away all of my cards if one showed up like that. Then again, they're listening to the song, so what's the difference in seeing it written down on a piece of paper?

Sometimes they're too good to pass up!

## I Before U, But Leave Me Outta This

If some words are weird or shortened, let them stay that way. We can use non-OED words like “gonna” and “’cause” without getting in trouble. You might want to double-check the lyrics on another site if it’s something especially strange though.

Example: “I’m just that type-a lyrical rhyme sniper” in Unbelievable by Thousand Foot Krutch. “Type-a” is “type of” but that’s what the lyrics say and how they say it in the song, so good enough to me.

Maybe they know what they’re doing, intent. Maybe they just don’t know words. Either way, leave it alone.

## St-St-Stutter

Drop repeated words and sounds. We don’t need all the “yeahs” and “ohs” that show up to fill out the flow. We’re making sentences, having a conversation, remember?

Here’s an example of a few things to avoid in “Hold Me Tight Or Don’t” by Fall Out Boy: “A-na-na-na-na-nother day goes by, so hold me tight. Hold me tight, or don’t.” Pick a different line, compadre.

## Harder Better Faster Stronger

Don’t use samples as lyrics if you know that they’re samples. Also try to avoid lyrics that aren’t sampled, but the words are taken from somewhere else.

Example: “I’ll stop wearing black when they make a darker color” in Fall Out Boy’s song “Wilson (Expensive Mistakes)” is from an Addams Family movie.

Example: “Yes! Oh my god!” in Skrillex’s “Scary Monsters and Nice Sprites” is a sample, so just use “[Instrumental]” instead.

## Conclusion

“Rules are meant to be broken” said some criminal once upon a time. Just have fun with it. Be nice. Make it look pretty. Nobody’s going to know who chose the lyrics (I bet they’ll guess though), so be in it for the love and the game (and paltry commission) instead of notoriety.

Oh, and try to keep it within 100 characters (including spaces) because there’s not much room.

K THX BYEEEE