

BBC Richest Songs in the World

Royalties from sync-rights: video, film, websites, etc.

Typically works out at 7-8p for each track sold

Nowadays it is more 3-4p per track for iTunes downloads etc

10. The Christmas Song, Mel Torme, £12.5M
9. Pretty Woman, Roy Orbison + a friend, £13M
8. Every Breath you Take, Gordon Sumner, Sting, £13.5M
7. Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Haven Gillespie + a friend, £16.5M
6. Stand By Me, Ben E King (Liber & Stoller), £17.5M
5. Unchained Melody, Alex North & Zarants (lyrics), £18M
4. Yesterday, Paul McCartney, about 3,000 versions, £19.5M
3. You've Lost that Loving Feeling, Mann, Weil & Phil Spector, Cilla Black & Righteous Brothers, £20.5M
2. White Christmas, Irving Berlin, Bing Crosby, 100 Million Unit sales, £24M
1. Happy Birthday to You, Pattie & Mildred Hill 1890's, £30M

Conclusion: The secret to writing popular songs is to write about women or Christmas