



Tennessee Songwriters Week FAQ's

Q: What is Tennessee Songwriters Week?

A: In 2019, a state statute passed to designate the last full week of February each year, typically a slow time for travel, as Tennessee Songwriters Week. The goal is to support music venues, songwriters with live performances across the state, drive visitation, and inspire travelers to experience the state's music stories, history, attractions and venues.

Q: When is Tennessee Songwriters Week?

A: Tennessee Songwriters Week showcases will take place Feb. 22-Feb. 28, 2026.

Q: What's the difference between a qualifying round and showcase event?

A: In 2026, venues will host in-person qualifying rounds Jan. 25-Feb. 7, 2026. Select songwriters from the qualifying rounds will advance to seven pre-determined showcase event venues across the state from Feb. 22-Feb. 28, 2026.

Q: I'm a venue, partner or city interested in Tennessee Songwriters Week. How can I find out more information?

A: Please email the TSW team at tnsongwritersweek@tn.gov

Q: I'm a venue. How do I host a qualifying round?

A: Venues and businesses interested in hosting a qualifying round must [sign up](#) and fill out and agree to a Memorandum of Understanding and be responsible for managing their own sign-up process for songwriters. Sign-ups for qualifying round venues run Sept. 8-Dec. 5, 2025.

Q: I'm a songwriter. How do I sign up?

A: Songwriters must perform in official qualifying rounds which will take place across the state from Jan. 25-Feb. 7, 2026. Songwriters can sign-up for qualifying rounds starting Dec. 11, 2025 until all venue slots are full. Songwriters can find complete information and the full list of official qualifying round venues at tnsongwritersweek.com. Venues listed are responsible for managing the sign-up process. **Songwriters cannot perform at multiple qualifying rounds. If a songwriter performs at more than one qualifying round, they will immediately be disqualified.** Please thoroughly read the [Songwriter FAQ sheet](#) for timeline, process and full details.

Q: I'm a songwriter. Can I perform with multiple people or have accompaniment?

A: Songwriters may sing acapella or have live accompaniment. Light percussion is allowed if there is no set-up time necessary. This is a plug-and-play acoustic format. Songwriter may bring up no more than two performers to play an instrument. Back up tracks are permitted if it's an

original track. Please note the additional performers will be considered one act/one entry. The original song must not disparage any group of persons, religion, be considered inflammatory or inappropriate. The original song will be performed at every stage of the competition, at the qualifying round, showcase and finale. Entrant must provide lyrics to song ahead of the qualifying round.

Q: How are performances judged?

A: Songs will be judged on two categories: Category 1) Quality of Song (original lyrics/melody, lack of cliches, clear or unclear narrative). The first category will be scored 1-10 (10 being the highest) Category 2) Performance (instrument in or out of tune, ability to understand lyrics, connection with audience. Category 2 will be scored 1-6 (6 being the highest)

Q: What is the schedule for performers in Tennessee Songwriters Week?

A: Songwriters must perform in one qualifying round. Qualifying rounds will take place from Jan. 25-Feb. 7, 2026. Select songwriters from the official qualifying rounds will perform during one of the seven Tennessee Songwriters Week showcases in the following cities: Franklin, Gallatin, Memphis, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Pigeon Forge and Kingsport. Finalists from the showcases (seven total, 1 from each showcase) will get a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to share their original songs on the historic stage at The Bluebird Cafe in Nashville on March 29, 2026. Each of the seven finalists also receives additional prizes, including a one-year membership to NSAI and commemorative guitar.