

Norfolk Insider

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“Freegal – Free and Legal Music”



It doesn't cost any money to download this music and it isn't illegal. It's Freegal Music, a new music downloading service offered by the Norfolk Public Library.

Library patrons can now download up to three songs per week onto their computer, iPod or other listening device through the service that the library provides. As long as a person has a current Norfolk Public Library card and is in good standing (no currently overdue library materials) he or she can go to the library's website and download songs.

“We currently have music CDs that we lend out and those are popular. These songs, however, don't have to be returned and don't disappear after a period of time like a downloaded audio book would. There also are no overdue fees,” said Michael Caldararo, Norfolk Public Library Director.

Freegal (a word that combines “free” and “legal”) offers over 550,000 songs available for people to download through Sony Music Entertainment. The Columbia and RCA music labels are included in Sony's vast offerings of music. Freegal is a service offered to libraries and their patrons through the company Library Ideas based in Fairfax, Virginia.

Once the music is downloaded it can be burned onto a CD or flash drive, kept on a computer, transferred to iTunes or used on any MP3 player.

Almost any style of music can be found on the Freegal site. There are over 100 genres and 50 record labels offered at the site.

“Through Freegal we can provide our patrons with anything from jazz to country to classical and everything in between without having to own those CDs physically at our library. A patron doesn't have to wait for a CD to be returned by someone else or for the library to be open. Freegal is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week,” said Caldararo.

People are able to download the music from their home by using their library card number. They can also come into the library and get help downloading the music onto their device.

Caldararo said that a library in Connecticut that offers this service has seen over 600 songs downloaded per month by users.

“Libraries are full service sources for many types of media including movies and audio books. This is another way we can provide patrons with a unique and useful service,” Caldararo said.

Some of the record labels represented by Freegal include American Recordings, Arista Nashville, Arista Records, Aware, Battery Records, Beach Street Records, Black Seal, BNA Records, Cinematic, Columbia Nashville, Columbia Records, Epic Records, Essential Records, Flicker Records, Fo-Yo Soul, GospoCentric, Hitz Committee Entertainment, J Records, Jive Records, LaFace Records, Legacy Recordings, Masterworks, Polo Grounds, RCA Records, RCA Nashville, RCA Red Seal, RCA Victor, Reunion Records, Slightly Dangerous, Sony Classical, Sony Music Latin, Star Time International, Verity Records, and Volcano Entertainment. Sony Music Entertainment is a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America.

For more information on how to use Freegal, contact the library at 402-844-2100 or go to the website at <http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/library>.