


Don't Be
a Copycat!





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These days it seems that almost everybody is copying music CDs. It's very easy to do on a computer, or even on some CD players. You probably know someone who has done it. Perhaps you think there is no harm in copying a CD. All you have done is made yourself a disk for free. You haven't hurt anyone—right? Wrong!

Imagine someone is playing a guitar on a street corner. The singer has written the music. It's a sound that you can't resist. People stop to listen. Some drop coins into the guitar case. Then someone reaches down, steals the coins, and melts away into the crowd.

Copying a CD is not very different from stealing those coins. Whenever you copy a CD, it is as if you have reached down and grabbed a handful of coins from the guitar case. That's because musicians and others in the music industry make money by selling albums.

When you buy a CD, only part of the money you pay goes to the store. Some goes to the recording company, and a small part goes to the musicians who made the CD. Musicians make a lot of money only if the album sells really well.

What happens when people copy CDs rather than paying for them? The recording companies make less money. This means they will have less to spend on producing new CDs, especially albums featuring artists who are not yet well known. Many young musicians might not have a chance to make an album, and you won't have the chance to hear their music.

The musicians, too, make less money. They might not be able to make a living by playing music. Some might stop making CDs altogether. Again, you might be the one who loses out.

Don't be fooled by the superstars you see on TV. Most musicians are not rich. Most never will be. They make music because that's what they love to do. Yet even artists have to pay the rent. Besides, many of them have spent years studying and practising. They deserve to be paid for their work, just like everyone else.

When I Buy a \$10 CD, Where Does My Money Go?

This pie chart shows how the money we pay is divided when we buy a music CD.

