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Glossary of Rhyme Schemes

Poetry is formed by a group of lines called a *stanza*, or scheme.

Many songwriters fall into a rut with regard to rhyme schemes—that is, using the same patterns over and over again. It's important to avoid this by learning and experimenting with as many rhyme schemes as possible to add variety and interest to your songs.

The Basics

Here are a few of the most common rhyme schemes found in poetry and songs all over the world. Letters (**A**, **B**, **C**, etc.) are used to notate the scheme (the recurrence of the rhyme).

A B C B

A

Roses are red

B

Violets are **blue**

C

Sugar is sweet

B

And so are **you**

10 Tips to Better Lyric Writing

1. **Save Everything.** Don't throw away any lyrics you write. Keep them in a box, a folder, a file, your sock drawer, wherever—save them even if you immediately dislike them. Later, when you're having a bout of writer's block or just want other ideas, looking through the proverbial junkyard of songs-gone-wrong can be helpful. Even if most of the lyrics are bad, later you may look back and spot one line that was really good—and then want to lift it for your new song. Or you may say, “this is all so bad, but I like the idea of the second verse...” and be able to make it into the chorus of a song that has at this point been chorusless. Or, you may just want to see how far your lyrics have come.
2. **See the Big Picture.** In those moments when you are inspired and can't write the words you hear in your head fast enough, don't get bogged down with the details—always look at the big picture. For example, if you get an idea for the first verse but get stuck halfway through the second verse, don't let yourself lose the feeling by staring at a blank line. Leave it blank and go on to the chorus. Only have one line for the chorus? Fine. Go on to the third verse. Write as much as you can, even if it means leaving holes in your work. When you go to look at it later, maybe finishing the second verse and a chorus will come to you easily...and, meanwhile, you'll have a skeleton frame of a great song to work with.