

Please don't rock around the Christmas tree

Written by The Conversation

In case you're not sick of it yet ...

Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, Jack Frost nipping at ... zzzzzz snoooooore. It's that time of year again, and at the risk of promoting bah humbug over chestnuts roasting, I'm very Ebenezer Scrooge when it comes to traditional Christmas music.

This Christmas, please don't put another lump of Bing Crosby on the radio. Once we reach December we seem to forget the golden rule that excess does not lead to happiness, so that repetition of any song leads to us hating it.

But before you get me up in the middle of the night to show me the Ghost of a Music-Free Christmas Future, let me give you a timely reminder - there is an alternative to Bing, Nat, Spector and the gang. Last week Apple switched on no fewer than [10 different Christmas music stations](#) that you can access via iTunes Radio, including the magnificent 'Country Holiday'. And of course the broader internet is a music-lovers' dream at Christmas. You can wallow in the celtic mid-winter festival via [The Snows They Melt the Soonest](#) or the usually-dark Christmas edition of the always excellent [Arctic Circle Radio podcast](#); you can bathe in the warm tranquil glow of [Hawaiian Christmas](#); you can check out [Kerrang Radio's 13 \(of course\) totally rocking heavy metal Christmas songs](#); or you can listen to all those well-worn Christmas songs mashed up with classic Beatles tracks by searching Spotify for "The Fab Four Hark!". And of course there may be non-Australian readers who don't know [Six White Boomers](#), which to me overcomes the baggage to evoke the perfect Christmas down under.

And given that so many of us already do this, it is all the more surprising that shops, bars, hotels and the like don't, and instead just rely on the same tired old songs that go on a loop from late October. Just before going to university I worked in a supermarket over December and January, and must have heard *White Christmas* 20 times a day. To a point they need to do this. Customers are in-store for only a few minutes and so need their own personal dose of Bing. And there is plenty of evidence now that customers will buy products that are suggested by the

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music they hear in-store -

[of French wine](#)
[music increases sales of everything](#)

[French music increases sales](#)

, [classical](#)

(by making customers feel wealthier) - so businesses can't be blamed for playing Christmas music to Christmas shoppers.

But they could learn something from the way in which the rest of us listen to Christmas music. Start playing it later in the year when people are really engaging with Christmas (rather than simply doing their shopping before the stores get crowded), and use the fruits of the digital age to play us something new and wonderful.

Have a happy and musically-varied Christmas!

Adrian North does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.

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