

New release strategy

An artist's step-by-step playbook for making the most of new music and videos on YouTube

Use this playbook to plan your next release on YouTube. From setup to post-release promotions, it's full of steps that are proven to help you and your music get views, win fans and reach ears around the world. You put a ton of work into your new music and videos. Now, make sure that they get the exposure that they deserve.

STEPS

1

Set up strong

Start with Premieres

2

Boost song views

Upload multiple videos

3

Reconnect with fans

Go live and get personal

4

Reach more viewers

Share fan videos

1

Set up strong

Lay the foundation for a big release day. Use the tips below to build fan hype and set your release up for a grand debut. Why? Because a strong first 24 hours can earn your video extra views for a week (or longer).

Premieres

Make it an event with Premieres. Premieres gives you an early watch page for your video, letting fans hype it up in the chat before it drops.

Checklist:

- ☐ **Upload the video that you want to premiere** and schedule it for a later date and time ('Set as Premiere').
- ☐ **Customise the countdown clock** to match your brand.
- ☐ **Promote it** by sharing the Premiere watch page URL, teasing it in the Community tab and on social media.
- ☐ **Tell fans to set reminders** so that they don't miss out.

Upload audio tracks

First, prepare to release your audio tracks on release day. Songs with same-day releases often get more views, more plays, more engaged fans – even more audio streams off YouTube.

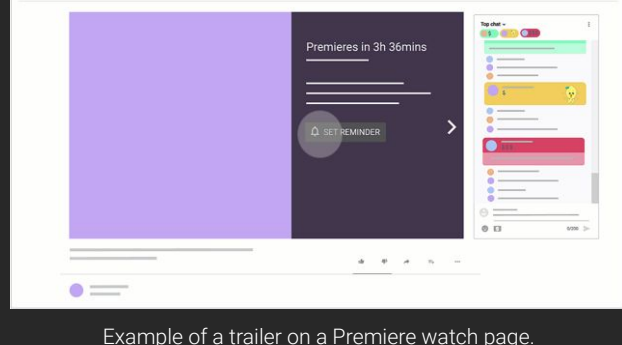


twenty one pilots used Premieres to release their video for 'Level of Concern'.

Trailers

Add a trailer to your Premiere watch page. Trailers are exactly what they sound like: short videos or sizzle reels that tease your release to get fans excited for what's coming on the big day.

- ☐ **In the Trailer, communicate what fans can expect** in the Premiere, and remind them to tune in. Suggest that they set a reminder for the event.
- ☐ **Mirror branding** from your Premiere in your trailer.
- ☐ **Preview the watch page** to make sure that everything looks right.

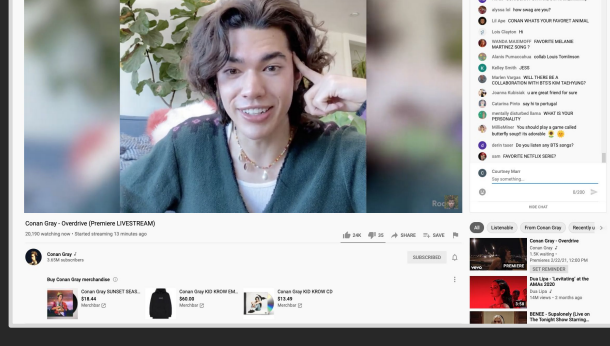


Example of a trailer on a Premiere watch page.

Live Redirect

Set up a Live Redirect and talk directly to fans in a live stream before the Premiere. Give them a personal moment with you, time for a Q&A, and boost early views and fan engagement for your release.

- ☐ **Tell fans what's happening:** Let them know what you're about to Premiere and why they should tune in beforehand.
- ☐ **Promote the pre-show on social media** with a message like 'I'll be hosting a live stream that includes the debut of my new music video'.
- ☐ **Share the Live Redirect link** so that fans get the full experience when they come for the Premiere.
- ☐ **Take the first couple minutes of the live stream to hype up the Premiere** and tell viewers to stay tuned.
- ☐ **Set expectations:** Tell fans that to see the Premiere, they just have to wait – not hit refresh – because the Premiere will auto-play on the same page.

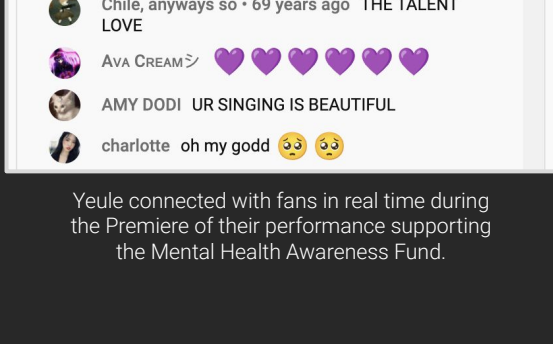


Conan Gray used Live Redirect to chat with fans who were anxiously awaiting the Premiere of 'Overdrive'.

During the Premiere

Be present. The more that you chat and engage with fans during a Premiere, the more they'll engage with you and your release over time.

- ☐ **Have fans ask questions** in the chat.
- ☐ **Use moderators** to find and reply to comments more quickly.
- ☐ **Enable chat replay** to help late-comers feel just as hyped about your Premiere.
- ☐ **Thank viewers** who showed up to support you.



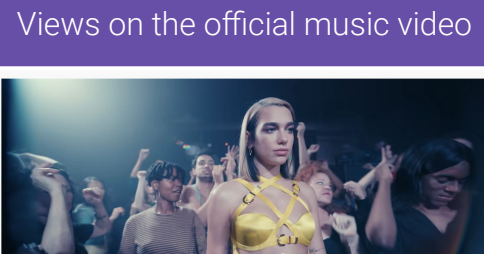
Yeule connected with fans in real time during the Premiere of their performance supporting the Mental Health Awareness Fund.

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Boost song views

After the release, upload different types of videos to boost the total views for your song. When fans like a song, they'll watch it in multiple video formats, which can lead to more overall views for the song.*

In a study of the top 1,000 artists on YouTube, the official music video accounted for 87% of views for a song, while other official content earned 13% of the total views (example below).



Dua Lipa strategically released 11 videos over six weeks to support the release of 'Don't Start Now'.

Views on other videos

Live videos



Lyric videos



Other videos (e.g. official remix)

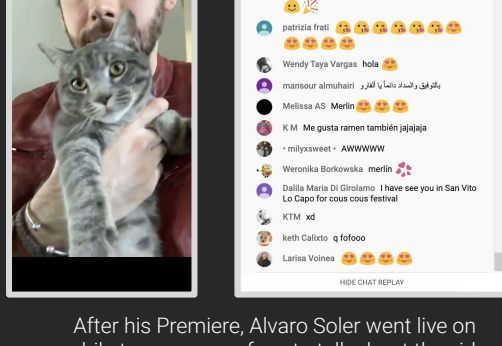


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Reconnect with fans

Go live after your release to keep the momentum going. Going live with fans can boost your channel views, as well as how often fans stream your music outside of YouTube.

- ☐ **Experiment with formats.** Try live performances, fundraisers, fan song requests, 'ask me anything', live vlogs, behind the scenes, or celebration or milestone videos.
- ☐ **Use Super Chat, Super Stickers and Merch** to monetise the stream and get fans involved in the fun.
- ☐ **Promote on social media and the YouTube Community tab** before AND after you go live.
 - ☐ Include the live stream URL in all social posts.
 - ☐ BEFORE: Remind fans to tune in.
 - ☐ BEFORE: Use a poll to grow fan interest in the songs to be performed.
 - ☐ AFTER: Post highlights or celebrate with fans who joined.



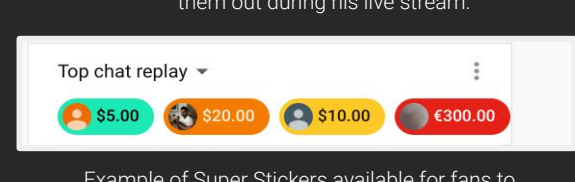
After his Premiere, Alvaro Soler went live on mobile to encourage fans to talk about the video and to personally thank them for watching.

Super Chat and Super Stickers

Earn revenue and connect with your biggest fans in the live chat. Turn on Super Chat and Super Stickers when you go live and use it to interact with your fan base.

- ☐ **Tell fans why they should participate,** what you're raising money for and how to use Super Chat.
- ☐ **Answer fan questions.** Tag a fan (@) to answer their question directly.
- ☐ **Give shout-outs to fans** to show your appreciation. When fans feel like they're getting something in return, they may be more likely to show their support.

When Aminé went live to promote his new album 'Limbo', he pinned a call to action for fans in the Super Chat, and shouted them out during his live stream.



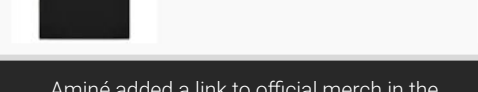
Example of Super Stickers available for fans to purchase in an artist's Super Chat.

Merch

Sell your merch when fans are most excited about your music. Pin merch to the watch page when you go live, and add your merch in other areas on YouTube.

- ☐ **Give fans a verbal call** to take a look at your merch.
- ☐ **Run merch drops and donations campaigns at different times.** If you have donations running on your videos, the merch shelf won't appear. Space out your campaigns to maximise both.
- ☐ **Add merch end screens.** If you're eligible for the merch shelf, you can add merch to your end screens.
- ☐ **Promote your merch on Community.** Link to your shop.

Buy Aminé merchandise



Aminé added a link to featured merch in the description for his live stream to support the release of 'Limbo'.

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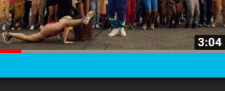
Reach more viewers

Finally, share out fan videos that include your song(s). These videos are a no-cost way of amplifying your release, reaching new fans and increasing your total song views.

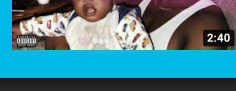
- ☐ **Encourage fans to make their own videos** using your new music or video (after checking with your team).
- ☐ **Check YouTube Analytics** to find the most popular videos that include your release.
- ☐ **Add these videos to a channel playlist.**
- ☐ **Thank fans** who posted their own videos by commenting or giving them a shout-out in a video.

Examples of official and fan-created content for 'BOP' by DaBaby.

Official artist channel content



Other official content



Fan videos (song content)



Fan videos (non-song content)



Checklist for new releases on YouTube

Pre-release

- ☐ **Set up Premieres**
 - ☐ Upload and schedule your video as a Premiere
 - ☐ Promote the link on social media and the YouTube Community tab
 - ☐ Tell fans to set a reminder
- ☐ **Add a trailer to the watch page**
 - ☐ Use the trailer to tell fans what to expect in the Premiere
 - ☐ Match branding
 - ☐ Preview the watch page and make any adjustments
- ☐ **Enable Super Chat and Super Stickers for your channel**
- ☐ **Set up Live Redirect**
 - ☐ Enable chat replay
 - ☐ Tell fans what to expect (Join me before the Premiere)
 - ☐ Share the Live Redirect link on social media

Release day

- ☐ **Make audio tracks available today**
- ☐ **During the Live Redirect, tell viewers to stay tuned for the Premiere**
- ☐ **Encourage fans to use Super Chat and Super Stickers**
 - ☐ Tell them how it works and why they should participate
 - ☐ Pin a message to the feed
- ☐ **During the Premiere, engage with fans in the chat and in comments**
 - ☐ Have moderators answer questions
 - ☐ Like, comment and reply to fan comments on the video
 - ☐ Give shout-outs and thank fans for showing up
- ☐ **Update your channel to help fans discover the new release**
 - ☐ Set it as the featured video
 - ☐ Add it to channel playlists
 - ☐ Update cards and end screens to direct to the release or playlist(s)
 - ☐ Link to the release in your 'About' section and video descriptions

Post-release

- ☐ **Upload other videos for your release (live, lyric, dance, etc.)**
 - ☐ **Go live with fans after the day of your release**
 - ☐ Experiment with formats
 - ☐ Use Super Chat and Super Stickers
 - ☐ Sell Merch (you can do this on release day, too)
 - ☐ Pin merch to your live chat
 - ☐ Tell fans to take a look at your merch
 - ☐ Add merch end screens, if eligible
 - ☐ Add merch on social and Community
 - ☐ Promote on social and Community before and afterwards
 - ☐ Make the video viewable
- ☐ **Use YouTube Analytics to measure the performance of your release and inform decisions for future releases**
- ☐ **Share fan videos that contain your release**
 - ☐ Encourage them to make their own videos
 - ☐ Find the most popular ones on YouTube Analytics
 - ☐ Add the popular videos to your channel playlists or share them in Community
 - ☐ Thank fans who created videos
- ☐ Continue engaging with fans on your videos and in Community

For more information, visit [YouTube for Artists](#).