

**The Rod's Classic Rock Method**

# How to Build a Radio Station

A workshop-style course, student workbook, and legal path guide for U.S. radio-style streaming

## **What this course does**

This course gives you a workshop-style, student-workbook path for building an online radio station with clear lessons, checklists, and deliverables.

It adds a full radio-only U.S. licensing lesson near the front so students choose the correct legal path before they build the station around the wrong one.

It is designed to guide students toward a legally operated U.S. radio-style streaming station, while still reminding them to verify current requirements with the proper entities before launch.

## **Student support**

Questions or coaching: [bigrod@rodsclassicrock.com](mailto:bigrod@rodsclassicrock.com) | [thebigrodshow@gmail.com](mailto:thebigrodshow@gmail.com) | [rodsclassicrock.com](http://rodsclassicrock.com)

Best use of this course: work lesson-by-lesson, save every deliverable in your Station Blueprint, and do not skip the licensing lesson.

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# How to Use This Course

- Work lesson-by-lesson in order. Each lesson ends with a worksheet page and a checklist page.
- Save every answer in one folder or document called Station Blueprint.
- Do the licensing lesson early. It exists to keep you from wasting time and money on the wrong path.
- Use the appendices for contact routes, outreach templates, and final legal-launch verification.

## Recommended schedule options

10-day plan: one lesson per day.

Weekend build: Lessons 01-06 on Day 1, Lessons 07-11 on Day 2, then finish appendices and contact work.

Slow-and-steady: two or three lessons per week.

## What you need

A computer and internet connection.

A music library you can legally use for your chosen station path.

A place to store notes and screenshots.

Later in the build: a microphone, headphones, and a simple audio path if you plan to go live.

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## Lesson 01

# Start With Rules, Rights, and Your Broadcast Path

Choose the station path, rights assumptions, and content standard before you load a single song.

### Build outcome

By the end of this lesson, you will write a one-sentence description of your station, choose a broadcast path, set a content standard, and start a station blueprint folder that will hold every later decision.

### Why this matters

Most stations fail early for one boring reason: the owner built the station on assumptions they never verified.

This lesson slows the build down just enough to prevent expensive rework, false starts, and ugly surprises later.

Once these decisions are locked, the rest of the build becomes faster, cleaner, and more confident.

## What you need before you begin

- A rough idea of your genre, era, and target listener.
- A document, notebook, or folder called Station Blueprint.
- 15 to 30 minutes of uninterrupted thinking time.

## Key concepts

- Your station is a product with boundaries.
- Hosted paths usually simplify launch; self-managed paths increase control and responsibility.
- Content standards are set at the station level, not argued song by song.

## Step-by-step build

### Step 1: Write your one-sentence station description

- Use this format: I run a [genre/era] station for [listener] that delivers [core promise] without [main exclusions].
- Circle the phrase that best describes your promise.

- Underline the exclusions. Those become your music rules later.

### Step 2: Choose your path

- Pick hosted platform or self-managed.
- Write 2 or 3 sentences about why this path fits your time, skill, and risk tolerance.
- Write the first tool or platform you plan to use.

### Step 3: Set your content standard

- Pick a standard such as family-safe all day or a clearly managed mixed standard.
- Write your always-excluded list now so later playlist work does not turn into case-by-case chaos.
- Decide how you will handle borderline tracks: clean edit only, review later, or exclude entirely.

### Step 4: Start your Station Blueprint folder

- Create one folder or document that will hold your promise, rules, categories, workflow notes, and launch checklist.
- Save every worksheet answer in the same place so your station becomes repeatable instead of guesswork.

## Student deliverables

- One-sentence station description.
- Broadcast path choice and short explanation.
- Content standard policy and always-excluded list.
- A Station Blueprint folder or master document.

## Knowledge check

1. What is the job of your one-sentence station description?

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2. Why does your content standard need to be decided before playlist work?

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3. What is one tradeoff of a hosted path and one tradeoff of a self-managed path?

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4. What is one risk of skipping this lesson?

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### What to do next

Lesson 02: Choose the correct U.S. radio-streaming licensing path before you stream music.  
Keep your answers in the Station Blueprint so the course becomes a repeatable operating

system, not just a one-time read.

### **Rod's Classic Rock method note**

Lock the boundaries first. It is much easier to build a station than to unbuild a bad decision.