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Where to Buy Vinyl Records Online or in Person



PHOTOGRAPH: MASTER1305/GETTY IMAGES

The best way to get your music fix is by going straight to the artist or your favorite indie record shop.

I USUALLY DECIDE what record I want when a familiar song comes on Spotify. *That would be great to grab on vinyl*, I think to myself. But these days, I don't buy 'em right away on Amazon. As a local musician who has put out vinyl (in very limited quantities), I've come to realize there are ethics when it comes to buying physical music. It's best to ensure your favorite musicians are seeing as high a cut from your purchase as possible.

That's why rule number one for buying records is: If you can buy what you're looking for straight from the artist—whether on their website, Bandcamp, or via their label—do it that way. That's how they get the highest cut. Still, many records that become the objects of your desire might not be available from musicians or original labels for various reasons. That's why I've pooled together some other alternatives to help you on your vinyl hunt.

Interested in learning more about analog and high-end audio? Check out our guides to the [Best Turntables](#), [Best Vinyl Accessories](#), [Best Gear for Aspiring Audiophiles](#), and [How to Upgrade Your Home Audio](#).

Updated May 2023: We've added Boomkat, Presto Music, and Amoeba Music.

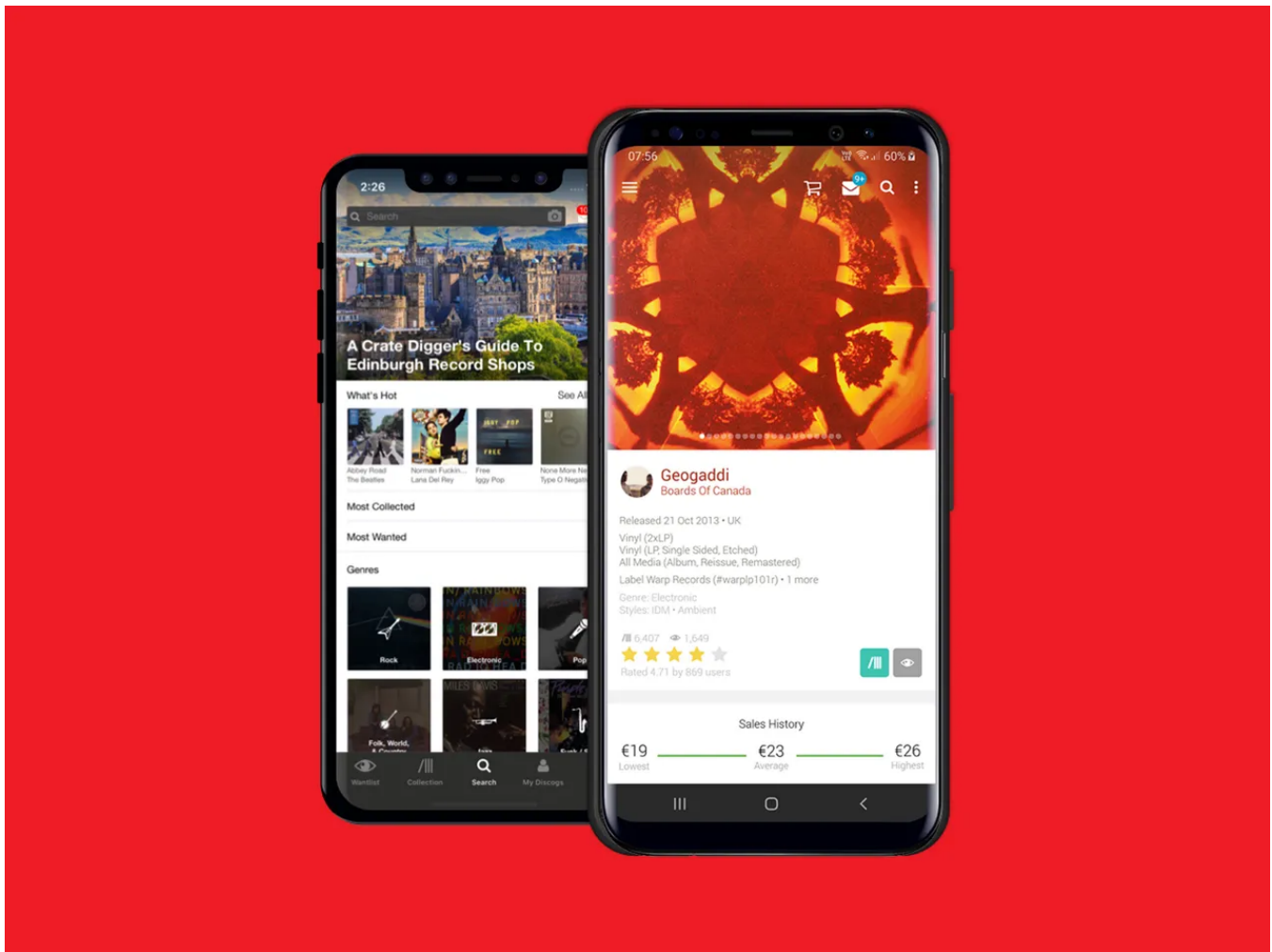
Your Local Record Store



PHOTOGRAPH: HALFDARK/GETTY IMAGES

It helps that local record stores are among the coolest places on the planet to browse. Depending on where you live, there might be different local options that specialize in various styles of music or aesthetics. Be sure to **inspect the record** to make sure it is **flat and free of scratches**—unless you're buying from a bargain bin.

Independent record stores are also a great way to buy new releases, as they often give higher cuts to smaller artists than bigger stores do, especially if you're buying music from someone local who can drop off records on consignment.



Discogs COURTESY OF DISCOGS

Discogs

Discogs is a mix between a personal catalog of your own record collection and a marketplace to purchase hard-to-find records from others. Prices can often be high for super-rare vinyl, but this is a good place to browse to get an idea of the relative prices of releases you're looking for.

With more than 600,000 contributors since its inception in 2000, Discogs is easily the most popular place on the internet for vinyl collectors to showcase their catalogs (and sell valuable items) to others. The database on the site includes over 15 million releases, spanning 8 million artists and 1.7 million labels (!). Needless to say, if you can't find it here, it's pretty darn rare. Discogs also sells CDs, cassettes, and other musical media (though it sells mostly vinyl).

Experience Vinyl

Experience Vinyl is a record club without the hassle of a monthly membership. The company presses interesting and rare releases every month, but you're under no obligation to buy them. These include a 500-disc limited edition of Elliott Smith's *From a Basement on the Hill*, a blue pressing of Leon Russell's self-titled LP, and a red vinyl pressing of Sly & the Family Stone's *Fresh*. Prices range from \$25 to hundreds, depending on what you're buying.

Dusty Groove

Looking for cool and obscure records? Check out Dusty Groove, a Chicago-based store that was one of the first to sell vinyl online, selling its first records in April 1996. Dusty Groove feels like a local record store on the internet, because that's essentially what it is. Each day, tons of records are added to the homepage, along with some of the best descriptions you'll ever read on a shopping site—making it immediately clear that this is a store for music lovers *by* music lovers.

EIL

EIL looks like it hasn't been updated since the early 2000s, but the rare vinyl marketplace is still the only place you'll find some exclusive releases. With 250,000 different records in stock, the UK-based outlet is a great place to find rare European music that may never have made it stateside. "Yes, we know the design of our website looks a little bit dated to some, but others think its cool retro looks match the records we sell, and we focus our time on buying and selling mint condition records, not design," reads the EIL website.

eBay

The world's most popular online auction site is a decent place to find rare records, though you'll want to be specific in your search. Make sure you get photos of the record's condition before you buy. I prefer buying from actual stores, or from private sellers on Discogs, but sometimes eBay is the only (or the cheapest) place

you can find something.



Secretly Store COURTESY OF SECRETLY STORE

Secretly Store

The Secretly Group consists of famed indie labels Secretly Canadian, Jagjaguwar, and Dead Oceans, which essentially means that if you like a modern indie band, there is a good shot they are on the label. The company's monthly record club

costs \$240 per year (you can divide it into cheaper six- and three-month increments), and it grants you access to limited-edition new releases from its artists. Angel Olsen's *Big Time* is the June 2022 release, in stunning pink and blue vinyl.

Amoeba Music

This is the website for the largest independent record store in the world, California's Amoeba Music. It's a great place to find mainstream stuff you can't buy directly from the artist, and it lets you shop in a way that gives a cut to an independent record store. It also has a pretty cool [YouTube channel](#).

Presto Music

If you're looking for [Western Classical music](#) on vinyl, Presto Music is a great place to start. The site has hundreds of options spanning multiple eras and styles, with everything from solo performances to full orchestras, operas, and soundtracks.

Boomkat

Those hunting for modern obscurities and art music will appreciate this small digital retailer, which shares limited-edition releases from hand-selected musicians around the globe. You always get free MP3s with your records. It's a nice place to hear everything from jazz to electronic and instrumental folk music, the type of site Radiohead's Thom Yorke likes.