

Song Completion Readiness Playbook

Purpose:

Decide—clearly and confidently—when a song is finished, ready to release, or ready to be archived. No emotion. No endless rewrites.

Step 1: Define the Song's Job (1 minute)

Answer this in one sentence:

- What is this song meant to *do*?
(Show skill, tell a story, set a mood, introduce a new sound, etc.)

If you can't answer this, the song isn't finished yet.

Step 2: First-Listen Test

Listen once, no pausing.

Ask:

- Does the main idea come through?
- Does anything pull attention *out* of the song?

If one moment clearly breaks the experience, fix only that.

If not, move on.

Step 3: Hook & Message Check

- Does the hook communicate the idea within the first 10 seconds?
- Does every verse support that idea?

*Rewrite only bars that don't serve the message.
Do not rewrite bars just to sound smarter.*

Step 4: Delivery Confidence Test

Ask:

- Would I perform this live *as is*?
- Does the delivery feel intentional, even if imperfect?

If yes → delivery is ready.

If no → re-record once, then stop.

Step 5: Feedback Filter

Get feedback from:

- 1 rap peer you respect
- 1 non-rapper

Ask one question only:

“Would you replay this?”

If no one flags a major issue, the song passes.

Step 6: Familiarity Trap Check

If the song feels boring, ask:

- Is it boring because it's bad, or because I've heard it too much?

If listeners react positively and you're just tired of it → that's a release signal.

Step 7: Final Decision (No Middle Ground)

Choose one:

- Release
- Archive
- Rework (set a deadline)

No “almost finished.” No open drafts.

Write the decision down.

Non-Negotiable Rules

- One rewrite round per verse max
 - One feedback round max
 - No comparing drafts to finished classics
 - Finished > perfect
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Outcome

If the song:

- Communicates clearly
- Holds attention
- Feels confident enough to stand on

It's finished.

Use this playbook before you open another session.

Momentum comes from completed work, not polished drafts.