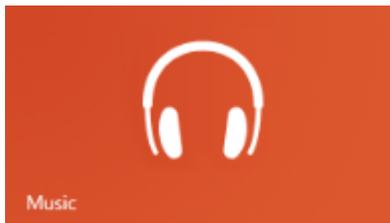




Import iTunes Library to Surface



Original Post: June 25, 2013 – Windows 8.0

If you've been wondering how to import your iTunes library and playlists to your Surface, this post is for you.

I'll cover how to import your iTunes music AND playlists to your Surface Pro and Surface RT.

iTunes and the Surface Pro

The Surface Pro runs a full blown version of Windows 8.x. This means you can install iTunes as you would on your desktop and you don't have to import anything.

If for some reason, you don't want to install iTunes on your Surface Pro, you can still import your iTunes library by following the procedure for the Surface RT in the next section.

No matter what, you'll want to be careful of the size of your library. If you have a lot of music you might fill up the rather limited space on your Surface Pro and that could be bad.

iTunes and Metro

Apple has (so far) declined to create a Metro version of iTunes. Unfortunately, this means that there is no "native" way to get iTunes on a Surface RT.

However, all is not lost. Microsoft included a Music app in Windows RT and it is pretty easy to import your music from iTunes but there are a few "gotchas" that might prevent you from easily importing your playlists.

It might sound minor but if you have a huge number of songs it can be quite a pain to recreate your playlists. So much so that I know of at least one person who gave up on the whole idea of importing their songs to their Surface.

Before You Start...

I'm assuming you're using a Windows 7 PC as the machine from which you're importing your music. If you're using a different version of Windows or a Mac, you should be able to make some minor modifications to this procedure to make it workable.

I'm going to outline two versions of the procedure. The first is a simple import of your music without the playlists and the second includes the playlists

OK? Let's get started....

Import iTunes Library (Without Playlists)

- **Copy your songs:** iTunes probably put your songs into an “*iTunes Music*” folder under your user profile on your PC. Just in case something goes wrong, it's a good idea to make a copy of these songs as opposed to working with the originals. So, copy the entire **iTunes Music** folder to the root of **c:**. When you're done, you should have a **c:iTunes** folder with all of your songs in it in their various sub folders.
- **Remove the Movies & Books folders:** iTunes stores more than music and album covers in the iTunes Music folder. It also keeps movies and books you've downloaded in there. You don't want to import them because they'll take up extra space on your Surface. In the **c:iTunes** folder you just made (don't mess with the original) find and delete the following directories if they exist:
 - Automatically Add to iTunes
 - Books
 - Movies (especially this one)
- **Copy your songs to the Surface:** This part is pretty easy, just copy your songs from the **c:music** folder on your PC to the **Music** folder on your Surface. You can do this in any way you're comfortable (I used a USB key). You can find the Music folder on your Surface by going into **Desktop** mode then bringing up the **Explorer Window**.



- That's it, when you go into the **Music** app in the Metro interface, your songs should all appear under the "My Music" section

Import iTunes Library (With Playlists)

On your PC

- **Copy your songs:** iTunes probably put your songs into an "iTunes Music" folder under your user profile on your PC. Just in case something goes wrong, it's a good idea to make a copy of these songs as opposed to working with the originals. So, copy the entire **iTunes Music** folder to the root of **c: drive**. When you're done, you should have a **c:iTunes Music** folder with all of your songs in it in their various sub folders.
- **Remove the Movies & Books folders:** iTunes stores more than music and album covers in the iTunes Music folder. It also keeps movies and books you've downloaded in there. You don't want to import them because they'll take up extra space on your Surface. In the **c:iTunes Music** folder you just made (don't mess with the original) find and delete the following directories if they exist:
 - Automatically Add to iTunes
 - Books
 - Movies (especially this one)
- **Export your playlists:** Next you need to **export** your playlists from iTunes as **m3u** files. Apple provided a nice little (archived) KB article on how to do this [here](#) but the instructions they give say XML. You don't want to use the XML format. You want to select the m3u format. Aside from that, their directions are spot on. When you do it, make sure you export them to the **c:music** folder.

The important piece to remember is to export them as m3u files. Did I mention you should use the m3u format?

- **Modify your playlists:** This is the important part and is the key to this process working. You need to modify the paths in the playlist to point at the songs. Fortunately, the playlists are pretty easy to modify. Here's how you do it:
 - Go to the **c:\iTunes Music** folder
 - Right-click on the playlist (*.m3u) and select **Open with**
 - If it's one of the choices, select **Notepad**. If it's not, go to the **choose another program** option and add notepad to the list. Just make sure you **uncheck** the **Always use the selected program to open this kind of file** checkbox
 - OK, here's where it gets a little harder. You need to use the *Replace* function to alter the paths to the music. First thing you need to do is figure out the existing path. It will probably look something like this example:

C:\Users\Tim\Music\iTunes\iTunes Music\Ozzy Osbourne\Bark at the Moon\Bark at the Moon.m4a

The part you care about is everything up to where the album names start. In The above example that would be: *"C:\Users\Tim\Music\iTunes\iTunes Music"*

- Next, you need to figure out the equivalent path on your Surface. It will look very similar. You can find it by getting on your Surface in desktop mode then browsing to your Music folder from Explorer and finding the path in the top bar. It will also look like this: *"C:\Users\Yourname\Music"*
- Use the **Replace** function in Notepad to replace the old path (from your PC) with the new path (from your Surface). It will "fix" all of the paths at the same time.
- Save the file
- Repeat until you've fixed all of your playlists

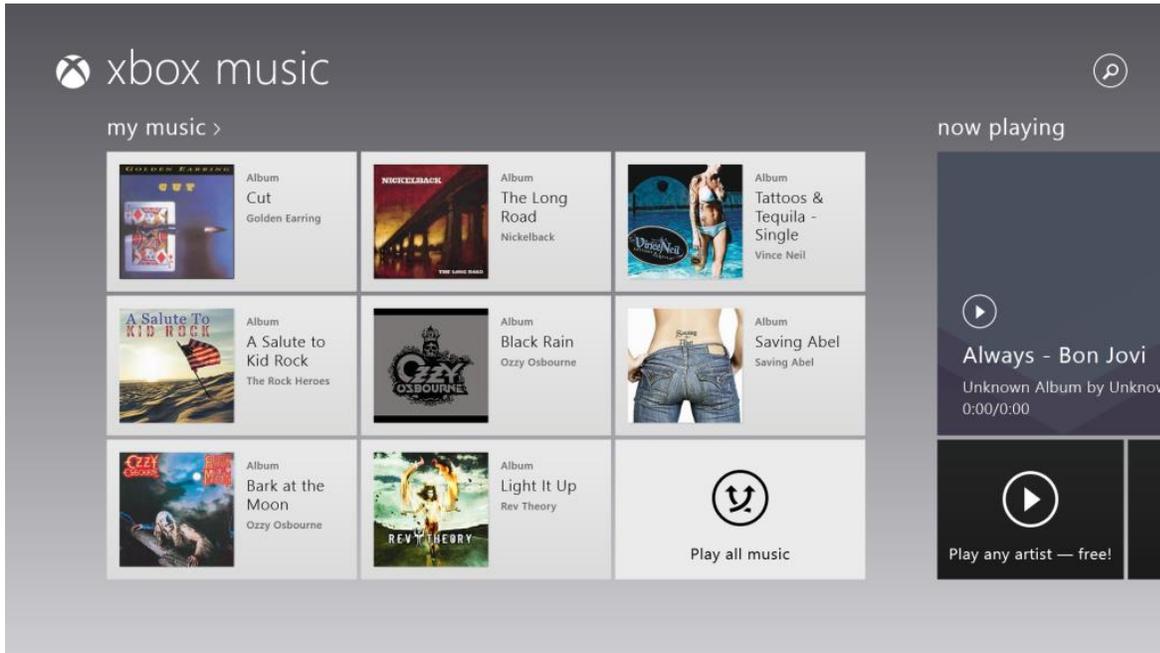
On your Surface: In Desktop Mode

- **Copy your songs & playlists to the Surface:** This part is pretty easy, just copy your songs & playlists from the **c:music** folder on your PC to the **Music** folder on your Surface. You can do this in any way you're comfortable (I used a USB key). You can find the Music folder on your Surface by going into **Desktop** mode then bringing up the **Explorer Window**.

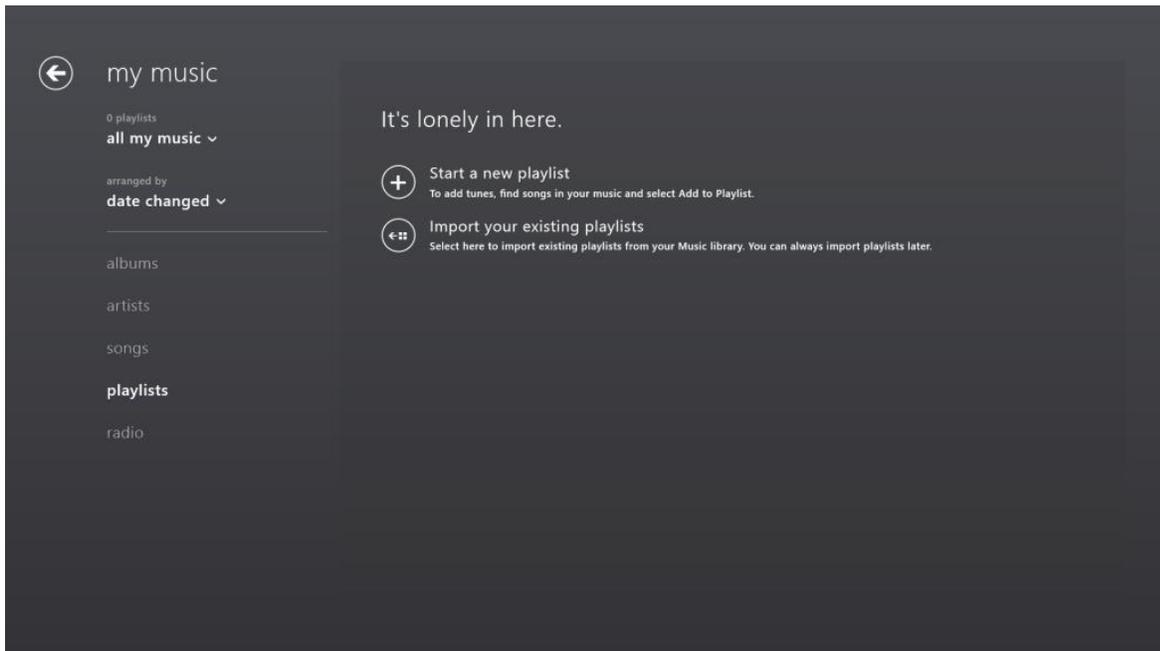


On your Surface: In Metro Interface

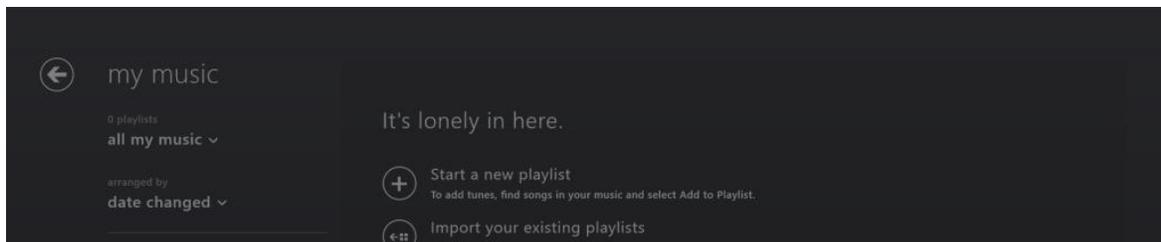
- Open the **Music** app in Metro.
- Check that your music appears in the *My Music* area. You should see something like below (don't judge me by my music) If it doesn't appear, check that you copied the files into the right location.



- Tap on **My Music**. The following screen should appear



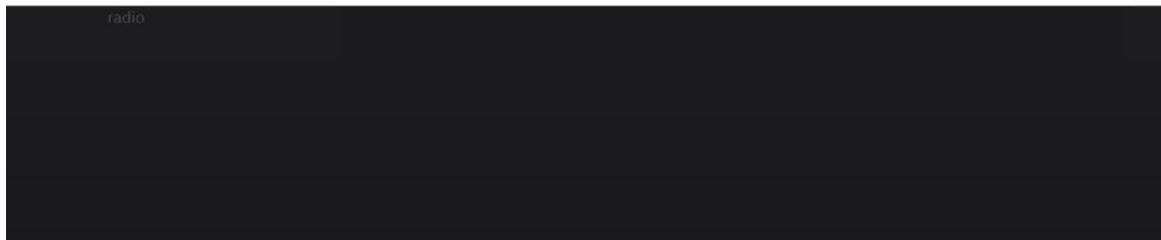
- Tap on **Import your existing playlists**. The following prompt will appear



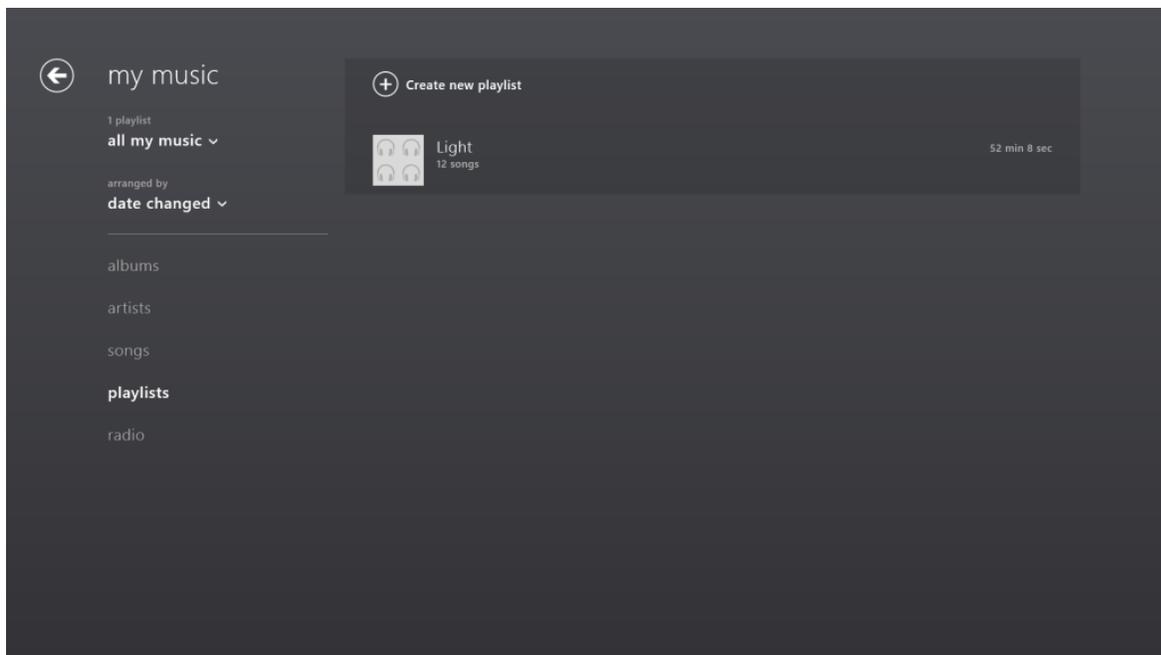
Xbox Music will add playlists to your collection.

We'll look for playlists in your Music library and playlists created in iTunes.

import playlists Cancel



- After a bit of crunching, your playlists should appear



That's it! Your playlists should now be imported so enjoy your successfully imported music on your Surface.

The procedures I outlined minimize things that could go wrong but, as always when you're manipulating files, there's a chance something could go wrong so.... **try this at your own risk.**

I hope this helps you get your music and playlists over to your Surface Pro/RT. As always, feel free to post a comment if you have questions or input.

Tim