AIRDROP RECORDS PRESENTS

The Player Guide

How the league works. Free to play.

SEASON ONE
NO TIERS · LABEL ROULETTE
BY THE COMMISSIONER · THELABELLEAGUE.COM

01 · THE GAME

Your artists score points for the label based on what they actually do in real life.

You are a record label executive. Sign a roster of real artists under a salary cap, then score points all season as they perform in the real world. Points post weekly; standings are cumulative. The season opens with the draft and closes when Spotify Wrapped is announced — the last Friday scores posted before the announcement, and that week's late items, are your last chance to get points on the board; anything after that won't count. Season ends after Wrapped. A couple weeks to do your research then you draft again. Season One's draft is the weekend of January 9.

THE PRIZES

$100 a week, $1,500 for the season.

The label with the most points each week wins the $100, paid once that week's points lock. The label with the most points for the whole season wins the $1,500, paid in December. Labels tied for a week split the $100; a tie for the season goes to the label whose artists won more awards at the scored shows. Labels can be one person or a team, and teams split the prize (or your table head takes everything, it's up to yall how you want to split it). One label per person or team. The Commissioner (Lake) cannot field a label and rules on all disputes; rulings are final. No league fees.

02 · JOINING

Free to play. Apply every season.

Joining Label League is free. You can fully participate and are fully eligible for the cash prizes. There are no tiers and nothing to buy up to: the rules, the point values, the price curve, the ratings methodology and the media lists are all public.

Getting in. A label gets into a season two ways: the Commissioner approves its application, or the Commissioner brings it back. Labels don’t carry from one season into the next — apply again. Twelve labels a season.

We'll publish a research guide that teams can buy, if anyone is interested. But our guess is you'll want to do your own research.

03 · YOUR LABEL

The cap, the draft, the roster.

CAP
3,000
points · unspent cap banks

DRAFT
5
artists · lottery order · snake

ROSTER
5–10
five minimum, ten the hard max

Season one's draft order is pure random; after that the worst teams pick first. A label must have at least five artists on its roster all season, and ten is a hard maximum. Unspent cap banks and stays usable all season. Contract prices run on a **continuous price curve** between the 1,600 ceiling and the 100 floor, and prices mark to the Spotify listener chart every Friday. The shape of the ladder:

ZONE	PRICE RANGE
The top of the market	**1,510 – 1,600**
The chase pack	**900 – 1,500**
The middle class	**500 – 890**
The climbers	**150 – 490**
The floor (the flier shelf)	**100**

The top of the market is priced so no two top-market contracts fit under the cap together — the superteam is impossible by construction. The bigger artists have bigger contract prices, so they take up more cap space; you can't just spam drafting the biggest names. Artist identity is carried by **ratings** (OVR + seven categories — see Ratings). The pool opens at more than 550 rated artists; any unlisted artist can be submitted and is rated at add time.

Who's eligible. Solo artists: alive at draft day. If the act is a group or band, you can draft them if they are still active (releasing music and/or touring) and have at least one living and active original member. A band and its members are separate picks, if its members have solo careers, like Migos vs Quavo or Offset. Deceased artists are not in the pool. Fictional acts are not draftable (we're not going back and forth with yall over this one).

— 0R · RATINGS

The league office rates every artist.

Every artist in the pool carries **ratings** — 0–99 on seven categories and an OVR composed of a weighted blend of those ratings, the way a sports videogame rates its players. Ratings are the league office's scouting read on the **artist as an asset**: study them before the draft, argue about them in the chat, and use them to figure out who you'd want on your label (or ignore them). Ratings refresh at the December list-lock alongside the reprice (the Ratings Release comes before the draft), with in-season revisions logged for members.

CATEGORY	WHAT IT READS
STREAMING	Catalog · Growth — the size of the listener base and which way it's moving
HITS	Charts · Album Sales — the chart track record and the first-week muscle
AWARDS	Grammys · Other Awards — hardware pedigree and live nomination presence
TOURING	Venue tiers · dates on the biggest headline tour — room ceiling and road work
PRESS	Presence across the league's media world — covers, features, podcasts, streams
INTERNET	Instagram · TikTok · YouTube — the platform footprint and engagement
BUZZ	Album drops · single drops · video drops · tour announcements · growth — how alive the artist is right now `(arrives in December)`

Who sees them. Rating values are for league members — on the site once you're logged in — and they show inside play: after you finish a round of Label Roulette, Blind Rank, or Trivia, the cards of the artists you played open up. Outside that, ratings appear only as content we post and on the site's masthead ticker. The methodology is public; the blend weights are the Commissioner's.

> **Ratings are for scouting, not for pricing.** They never move scoring, prices, or cap. The game's point system runs on a rank-based price curve and the ledger. Research and insight will ultimately help you properly scout the gap between an artist's rating and their contract price.

Archetypes and tags. Every artist carries a primary and a secondary archetype (Complete Package · Cover Star · Road Warrior · Hitmaker · Awards Darling · Social Media Star · Legendary Catalog · Crossover Star · Breakout Act) read from their ratings, and up to three **tags** from the league's taxonomy — Singer-songwriter, Consistent, Mixtape Legend, Multi-hyphenate, Pure vocalist, Rising Star, Artist-producer, Mogul, Hometown Hero, Disney Pipeline, Global Icon, Mentor, Protegé, Leak Legend, Went Solo, Breakout Star, Owns Christmas, Holiday Favorite, Niche (and one of one: Vampire). Archetypes drive the spins in Label Roulette; tags are the taxonomy.

04 · IN-SEASON

Moves: signings, drops, trades, dividends.

Free agents sign from banked cap at their **current market** contract price, and those prices are updated weekly (every Friday), so a breakout could go up in price before you get to them. Waivers clear, scores post and prices update every Friday at 12 PM ET; a claim pays the price in force when you filed it. Every claim filed during the week counts as simultaneous — two labels on the same artist go to a blind auction at the clear (that week's price = minimum bid), paid from banked cap. Your own claims fill in the order you filed them; anything that no longer fits your cap or your roster when its turn comes is kicked back to you, and nothing is charged. If an auction's winner can't fit the artist, it goes to the next-highest bidder if it fits them, or back to free agency. A signing earns only from the moment it clears to you. A show, or anything else with a date, on the day of the clear splits that day by the hour, and the hours before the clear pay whoever held the artist then, or nobody. **Drops:** when you drop an artist, you get back half of what you paid (the buyout fee) — never the artist's current market price. A dropped artist's contract is priced off what you paid, not what they're worth today. That makes dropping the expensive way out; we want to encourage folks to look for a trade first. You keep what the artist earned while you held them; after the drop they're a free agent, and free-agent time pays nobody. A show, or anything else with a date, on the day you drop them splits that day by the hour: you are paid for the hours you held them. **Trades:** contracts and/or cap points, both sides consenting (cap points you send come out of your budget and go into theirs); traded contracts keep their original book price. A trade clears the moment the Commissioner ratifies it, and each label is paid for the time it held the artist. A show, or anything else with a date, belongs to whoever held the artist that day; a trade that day splits the day by the hour. A chart line splits across Billboard's Friday-to-Thursday tracking week; a weekly follower, listener or view line splits across the week from Friday noon to Friday noon — or, when a missed read stretches a line over more than a week, across all of it. Deadline September 1.

Price visibility. The most important price for any label owner is the one you paid for the artists on your roster. Only label owners can see when their artists' contract prices move up or down. Free-agent contract prices are visible to every label in the league, because nobody has claimed their contracts yet.

Dividends. At the end of every quarter, 10% of your top scorer's points that quarter gets added to your budget. Two monster quarters is roughly one more small artist contract. Q4 runs October 1 through the Wrapped close (a short quarter); its dividend pays after the final week's Sunday close (11:59 PM ET), once its late items are in.

05 · THE SITE

Label Roulette, Blind Rank, Trivia, the Wire.

The league lives at **thelabelleague.com**. Before the draft it's the games and the wire; from October it's the full site — the draft room, moves, standings, the ledger.

Label Roulette — five rounds. Each round spins an archetype and deals you a hand of ten; sign one. The reveal shows the seven category numbers your five average to and names your label's type — Major Label, Sublabel, Joint Venture, Imprint, Indie Label, Regional Label, Distributor, or Vanity Label (an R&B-focused Indie, a country-focused Imprint, when your five lean that way). Daily = the same spins and hands for everyone, one posted label per name; Free play = fresh spins, nothing posted. **Blind Rank** — five artists, one public fact (Grammys won, biggest first week, TikTok followers…), put them in order; easy, medium, hard. **Trivia** — easy, difficult, hard; 10 questions by default, 20 if you want more points; three plays a day on the daily board. Every game's answers are public facts with sources — never a rating. One board per game. Your title — Intern, Staff, Manager, VP, Subsidiary President, Label CEO, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer — comes from how well you did on a game; the Hall of Fame is earned over many. After any game, the cards of the artists you played open up.

The Wire — the league's daily newswire: every scoring-relevant event in pool artists' lives, first sentence plus source. **The Awards Tracker** — every nomination and win at the scored shows, with the points at stake; Grammy nominations land Nov 16, the ceremony is Feb 7.

06 · SEASON AWARDS

End-of-year hardware.

AWARD	PRIZE
Most Points Scored Touring Trophy	$500 Ticketmaster gift card
Best To Work Out To	$500 Lifetime Fitness gift card
Best To Be On Transit To	$500 Delta Air Lines gift card
Best To Drive To	$500 gas station gift card (if you don’t drive give it to your dad for Father’s Day)

The touring award is computed from the scoring ledger. The three listening awards are voted by the league across rostered artists at season's end; the Commissioner breaks ties.

07 · THE LEDGER

Citing our sources.

Deterministic feeds (charts, listeners, award lists, venues) score the points automatically. We post points every week and cite where they came from. If we can't support it with a source, we don't award the points. When you held an artist for only part of what a line measures, the line shows your share on the ledger and in your email: 59% means you held them for 59% of that time. Labels have 48 hours to protest before points lock. The Commissioner rules; rulings are final. Weekly scores post Friday at 12 PM ET. If that morning's follower and listener read is still going at noon, its rows post as late items when it finishes; anything it missed is re-read Saturday and posted as late items by Sunday 11:59 PM ET. Each late item has its own 48-hour protest window. After that nothing more is added for the week: growth from a read still missing is measured across two weeks the next Friday, at half points. The Commissioner can freeze trading (no claims, offers or drops; the Friday clear waits) or scoring (new weeks are held, then credited or skipped). The mock season’s trading freezes after its final clear, Friday Nov 20. Standings are cumulative.

Contest terms.

Sponsor. The Label League contest is sponsored by Context Creative LLC, 615 Pavonia Ave, Jersey City, NJ 07306, which funds and awards every prize.

Eligibility. Open to legal residents of the United States who are 18 or older, or the age of majority where they live if that's higher. Joining is free, and no purchase or payment of any kind is needed to enter or win. The Commissioner and anyone in the Commissioner's household can't field a label or win a prize. Void where prohibited.

Taxes. Prizes are taxable income. If a winner's prizes in a calendar year reach the amount the IRS requires the sponsor to report, the winner gives the sponsor a completed IRS Form W-9 before that prize is paid, and the sponsor issues a Form 1099-MISC. If a team wins, every member who receives a share does the same. Winners are responsible for any taxes on their prizes.

Apple. Apple Inc. is not a sponsor of this contest and is not involved with it in any manner.