AIRDROP RECORDS PRESENTS

The Team Guide

The reference: the point tables, the price curve, the ratings methodology.

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.

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**

ANCHOR RANK (SPOTIFY LISTENERS)	PRICE
1	**1,600**
25	**1,510**
50	**900**
100	**500**
200	**150**
Outside the top 200	**100 floor**

Price assignment. Between anchors the curve interpolates smoothly (log-log, rounded to 10s) — no band cliffs. The rank is the artist's **global Spotify monthly-listener rank**. Prices move **once a week**: at the Friday 12 PM ET clear every artist reprices at its latest daily rank, and the price holds until the next clear. Prices hold still through a live draft, and from the December list-lock until the Season One draft is ratified. Every top-25 pair exceeds the cap (cheapest 3,020) — the superteam block is engineered into the curve.

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).

ØR · 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 · HOW IT'S DERIVED
STREAMING	Catalog · Growth — the size of the listener base and which way it's moving. From monthly-listener base and weekly trajectory.
HITS	Charts · Album Sales — the chart track record and the first-week muscle. From Billboard 200 / Hot 100 history and first-week units.
AWARDS	Grammys · Other Awards — hardware pedigree and live nomination presence. From nomination and win history at the scored shows, weighted to the Grammys.
TOURING	Venue tiers · dates on the biggest headline tour — room ceiling and road work. Effective dates on the biggest headline tour of the trailing five years, weighted by venue tier (support slots at half).
PRESS	Presence across the league's media world — covers, features, podcasts, streams. Press points against the league's fixed media lists — a cover counts ten times a written feature, podcasts and streamers five times.
INTERNET	Instagram · TikTok · YouTube — the platform footprint and engagement. Follower counts plus a YouTube engagement ratio (median views per upload against subscribers).
BUZZ	Album drops · single drops · video drops · tour announcements · growth — how alive the artist is right now. Release and announcement cadence plus platform-growth velocity over a rolling window. 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. Every in-season revision cites the fact that drives it, in a change log members can read.

> **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 are priced by the curve at their **Spotify listener rank as of the last Friday clear**. So for example, a breakout act slides up the price curve at the next Friday clear. 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.

R1 · SCORING

The point tables.

Seven categories, scored every Friday on the Billboard chart week (Fri–Thu). Streaming's volume stat is discounted (0.25 per 10M monthly listeners) so it drives without dominating; growth pays full. Season one scores the US market — the shows below, the US charts, the US media lists — with touring global.

SOCIAL GROWTH + YOUTUBE

Growth — Instagram followers, % vs prior week	**1 per percentage point**
Growth — TikTok followers, % vs prior week	**1 per percentage point**
Growth — YouTube subscribers, % vs prior week	**1 per percentage point**
Growth — YouTube channel views, % vs prior week	**1 per percentage point**
YouTube Base — per 5,000,000 weekly channel views	**0.25 per week**

Growth is **uncapped** and pays on **percentages**, not raw numbers — a small artist doubling is worth far more than a superstar adding a rounding error. That is deliberate: every other category rewards size. There is no minimum follower count. Decline never costs points (floored at 0), and a platform your artist has no account on simply doesn't count. Growth starts paying from the second settle.

CHARTS

Billboard 200 weekly — #1 / top 10 / top 40 / top 100 / top 200	**25 / 15 / 8 / 4 / 2**
Album debut bonus — #1 / top 10 / top 40	**100 / 50 / 25**
First-week units — continuous, debut week (50k = 25 · 500k = 250)	**units ÷ 2,000**
Hot 100 weekly per song (max 3 songs/artist/week) — #1 / T10 / T40 / T100	**15 / 10 / 5 / 2**

SPOTIFY

Base — per 10,000,000 monthly listeners	**0.25 per week**
Growth — monthly listeners, % vs prior week	**1 per percentage point, uncapped**

AWARDS · GRAMMYS · BET · VMAS · AMAS · BBMAS · CMAS

TIER	NOM	WIN
Grammy Big Four (Album / Record / Song / Best New Artist)	**50**	**200**
Grammy — any other category	**40**	**75**
BET / VMA / AMA / BBMA / CMA — any category (one tier)	**25**	**40**

Noms score at announcement; wins at the show. Nominations announced before the draft don't score; the wins on show night do. A songwriter or producer nomination pays the named artist in full; an act credited on its own album (art director, producer) counts. On the charts, only Billboard's own "Featuring" credit is half; "&", "With" and other co-billings pay in full to everyone named, and a co-billed album pays in full to each credited artist. Non-US shows (Latin Grammys, Brits…) don't score in season one.

TOURING

Tour announce — 10+ new dates / 2–9 on the artist's Songkick or Bandsintown listing since last week's read (a run of dates: tour, leg, residency)	**25 / 10**
Date played, by venue type — club / theater / arena / stadium	**8.3 / 10.8 / 13.3 / 15**
Festival set / TV & broadcast performance	**5.8 / 4.2**
On a shared bill, any act but the biggest on Spotify	**0.75× that venue tier**
Sold-out show — checked after the tour's last show	**+50% of that date**
Date marked CANCELED on Songkick / ten or more at once, the tour (supersedes — one or the other, never both)	**–10 / –100**

When artists share a show, ours or not, the biggest one on Spotify gets the full date and everyone else gets 0.75 of it, so one of ours opening for someone outside the league gets 0.75. Artists billed as co-headliners both get the full date. Festival and TV sets pay everyone in full, and so does any night when four or more of our artists play the same room: that's a festival night, and everyone gets the festival rate (an awards show pays everyone the TV rate). A sold-out show pays after the tour's very last show, when we check every date: each one that sold out gets +50% of that date. A tour that ends after the season pays nothing extra. A single announced show is not a tour announcement (it pays as a date when played). Neither are new dates that just add onto a run already on the listing, within a week of it. Postponed-and-rescheduled is not cancelled.

MEDIA · FIXED LISTS, LOCKED AT DRAFT — THE LISTS ARE PUBLIC

Magazine cover — print flagship / digital (40-publication list)	**30 / 20**
Podcast appearance (20-show list)	**10**
Streamer appearance, 20+ min (25-streamer list)	**5**

LEGAL

Felony booking (graded by most severe count)	**–150 per booking**
Misdemeanor booking	**–50 per booking**

Arrests cost points. It's points per booking though, not per charge, so breathe easy — one 14-count arrest is one booking. It counts in the week of the arrest, even when the news comes out later. Civil suits and investigations: zero.

Artists earn points for every charting album they've released, per album and per week. Deluxe reissues and catalog re-entries get points for additional chart weeks only — no debut bonus and no units bonus (you only get credit for an actual first week, i.e., when the album debuts on the Billboard 200). Year-end releases earn points in the game week where the chart events happen. A band and its members are separate draftable entities — a member's solo cover or nomination scores points for the member only, not for the band. Media lists, pool, and rank sources lock at draft day.

R2 · ADJUDICATION

The ledger, protests, and locks.

Deterministic feeds 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. 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. Events and points are public to the league; the workbook that computes them is the Commissioner's.

R3 · NEXT SEASON

Every label applies again.

Labels don’t carry from one season into the next: apply again, or the Commissioner brings your label back. Nothing rolls over, unspent dividends included.