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COGS187A - Project 4

Good vs. Less Good User Experience/Workflow Comparisons

Create Playlists:

1. Finding the “Create Playlist Button”
2. After Creating the Playlist
3. Create an Empty Playlist

Manage Playlists:

1. Reorder/organize songs in a playlist
2. Add songs to a playlist
3. Delete songs in a playlist

Other Scenarios:

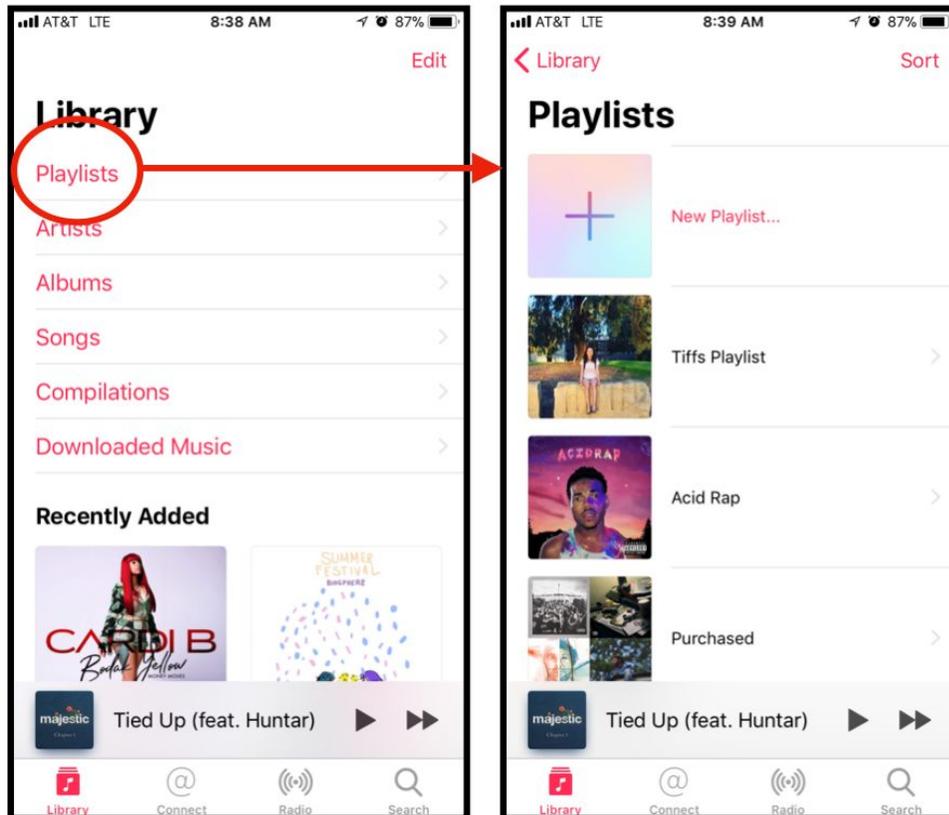
1. Navigating through your Music
2. Making Music Available Offline
3. Hands-Free Searching

Create Playlists

1. Finding the “Create Playlist Button”

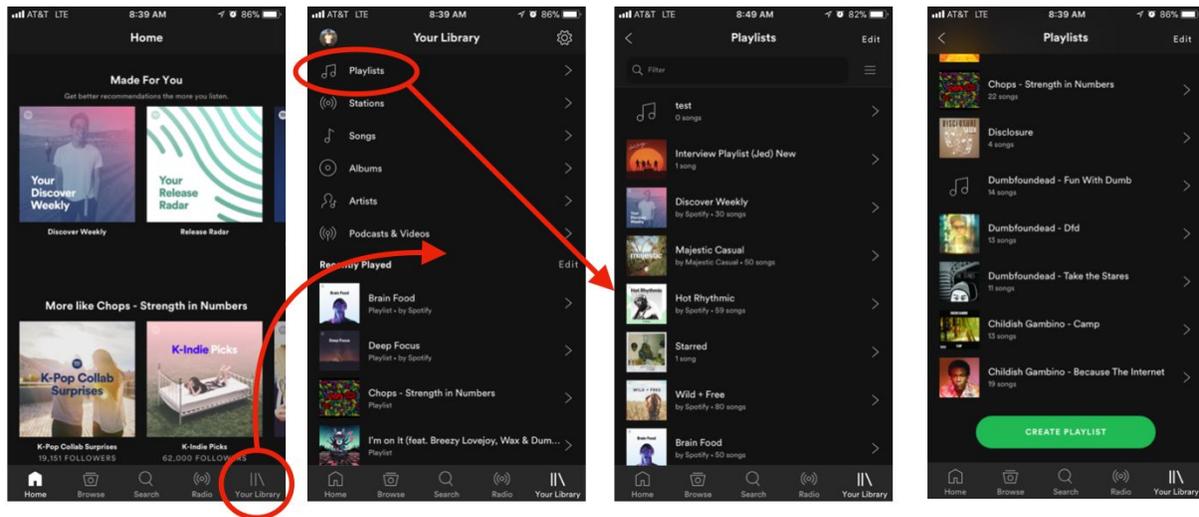
Scenario: Your friend is driving you somewhere. They ask you to make them a new playlist using their music app on their phone.

Good: iTunes



The iTunes app’s home-screen displays various music groupings within the User’s library as well as recently added songs/albums. Since this is the first screen users are met with when opening the app, navigating to the app’s Playlists page is straightforward. Once at the Playlists page, users can view their playlists in sorted order. While users have different options of sorting their playlists, the “New Playlist...” option is always at the top of the Playlists page. As such, the option is immediately discoverable when the page is displayed. Overall, among interviewees, the playlist functionality proved to be most easily discoverable with this navigation scheme.

Less Good: Spotify

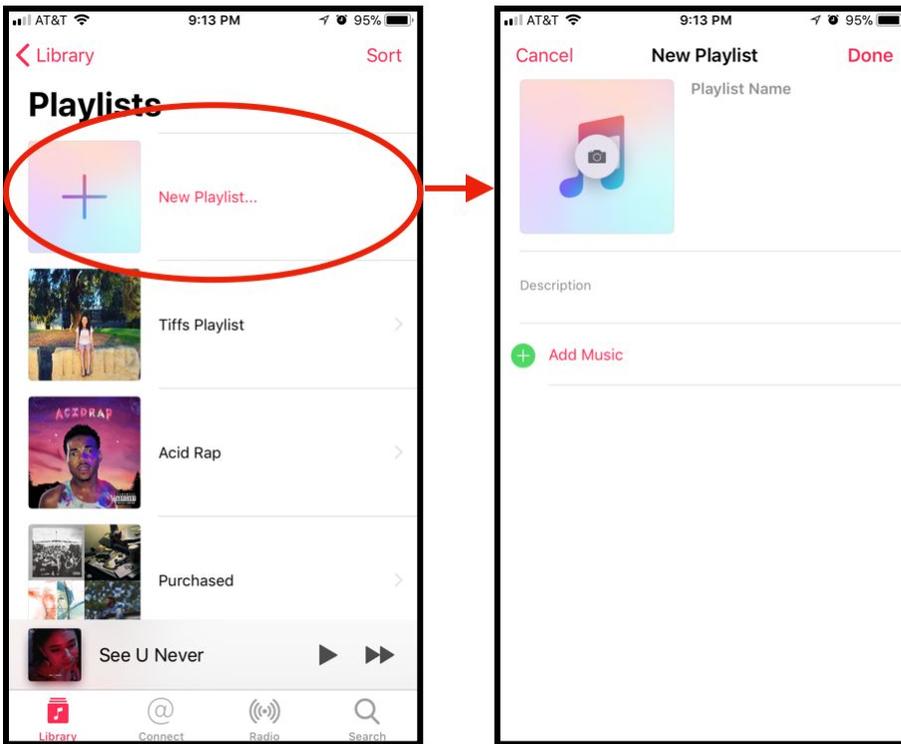


Interviewees who were new to the Spotify app typically had trouble searching for the “Create Playlist” option. While Spotify’s home screen does advertise pre-made and suggested playlists, the option for users to create their own custom playlist is somewhat hidden. Whereas iTunes users were immediately greeted by a Library page, a similar page in the Spotify app requires an additional tap on the bottom tab bar. Once finally at the Playlists page, however, most users had trouble discovering the option to create a playlist, looking mostly to the Edit or hamburger menu buttons at the top right of the Playlists page. Instead, the “Create Playlist” button is actually found at the bottom of the user’s list of playlists. For users who had a particularly long list of playlists, this is not the most obvious location. This was most apparent when asking interviewees to use the app according to a scenario where they are given someone else’s app to use (e.g. their friend is driving and asks the user to make a playlist on their Spotify app).

2. After Creating the Playlist

Scenario: Make a playlist for use when at the gym.

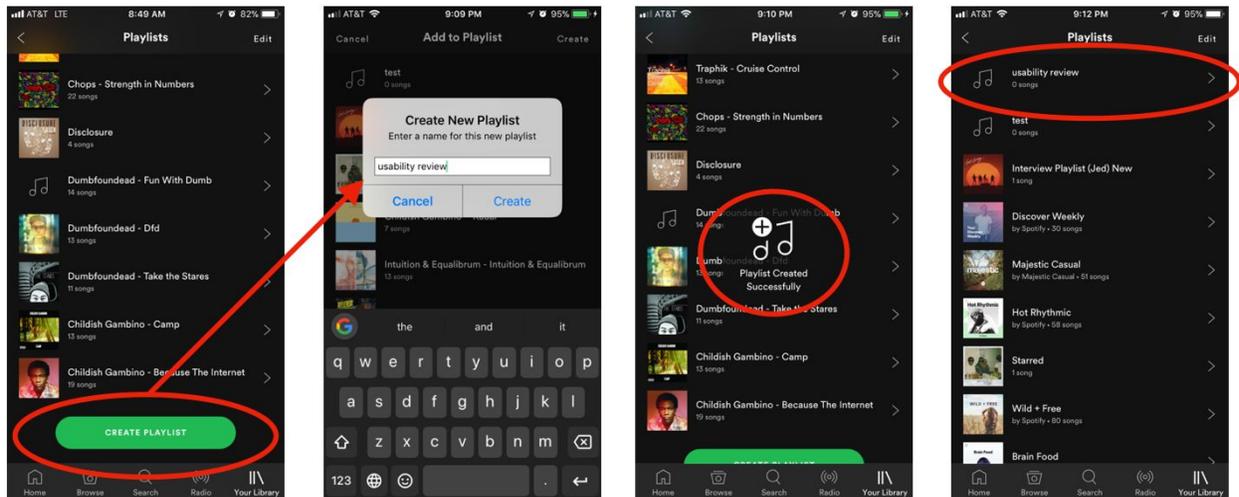
Good: iTunes



After choosing to create a new playlist, users are brought to a new page where they can add songs to the playlist, change the playlist name, and add a playlist cover photo. Optionally, they can do none of these by selecting “Done” at the top right corner of the page, and an empty, un-named playlist without a cover photo will be added to their list of playlists.

Interviewees agreed that when they were looking for the option to create a new custom playlist, they usually did so because they wanted to make a playlist for a specific occasion or purpose (i.e., they already had songs for that playlist in mind). As such, after opting to create a new playlist, it makes the most sense for users to be immediately brought to a page where they can edit that new playlist.

Less Good: Spotify



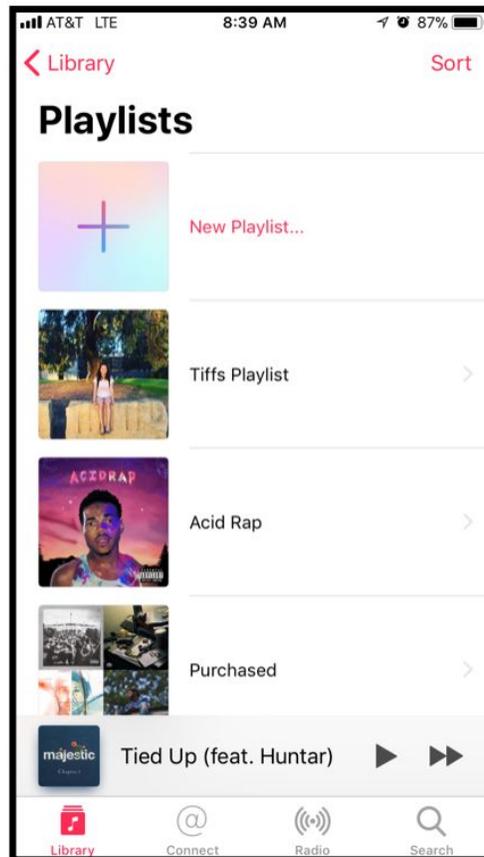
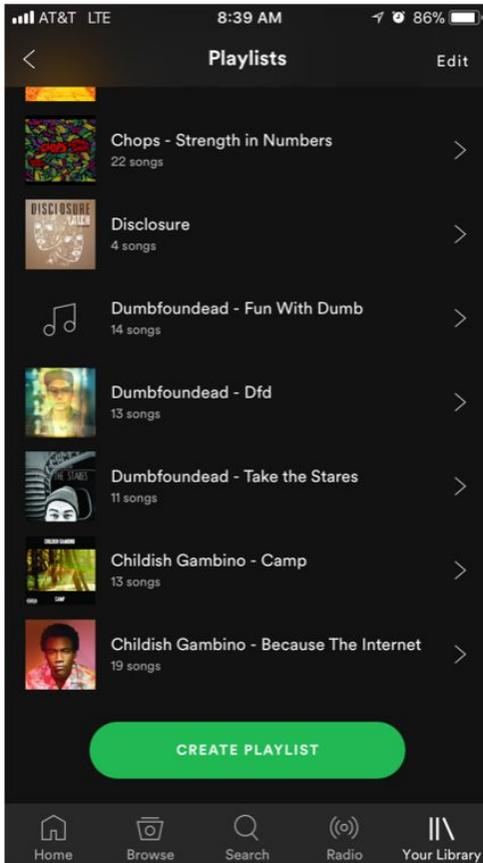
After opting to create a new playlist on the Spotify app, users were asked to name this new playlist. Once they submitted a valid name, a new empty playlist was added to the top of the user's list of playlists. This proved to be confusing to interviewees for a few reasons:

1. Although the Spotify app displays a banner confirming the successful creation of a new playlist, because the Create Playlist option is located at the bottom of the page and the newly created playlist is added to the top of the page, and out of sight, interviewees struggled to find the new playlist.
2. While users are given the option to create a playlist with a custom name, unlike in the iTunes app, they are not immediately brought to a page where they can manage the playlist's content. As such, when performing tasks for scenarios where interviewees had to create playlists for specific occasions or purposes, after successfully creating the playlist, interviewees still had to search their list of playlists for the new playlist and edit it accordingly, requiring extraneous navigation.

3. Create an Empty Playlist

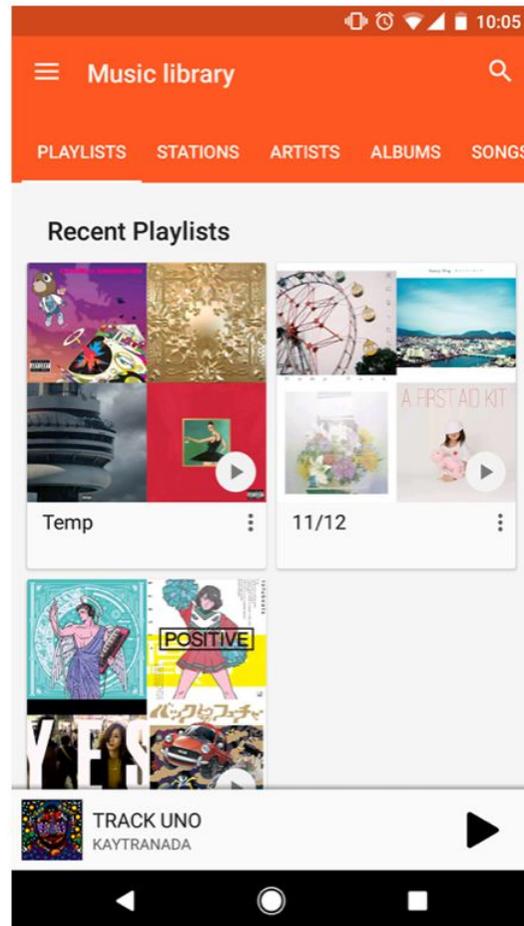
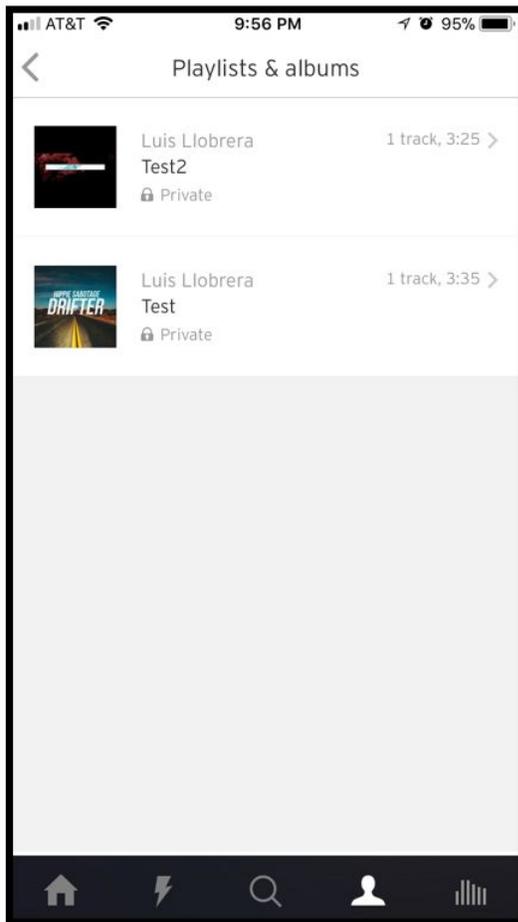
Scenario: Create an empty playlist for no particular reason

Good: Spotify or iTunes



Both Spotify and iTunes give users the option to create playlists either by initially selecting a song elsewhere in the app, and opting to add it to a new playlist or by selecting a Create Playlist button. While some interviewees did not find the latter option absolutely necessary, most agreed that it was nice to have and that the omission of that option presented some initial confusion when given the task of creating an empty playlist.

Less Good: SoundCloud or Google Play Music

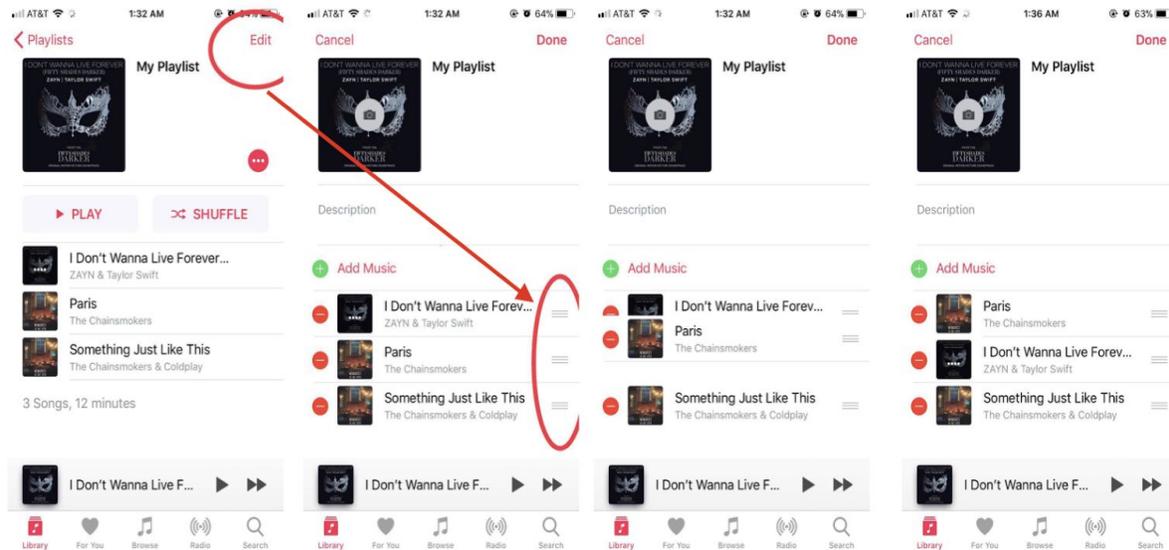


On the SoundCloud and Google Play Music mobile app, the only way to create a new playlist is by selecting a song and opting to create a new playlist containing that song. While the newly created playlist is still editable, thus allowing users to add new songs, rename it, etc., interviewees spent time looking for the option to create empty playlists and were confused by its absence.

Manage Playlists

1. Reordering/organize songs in a playlist

Good: iTunes

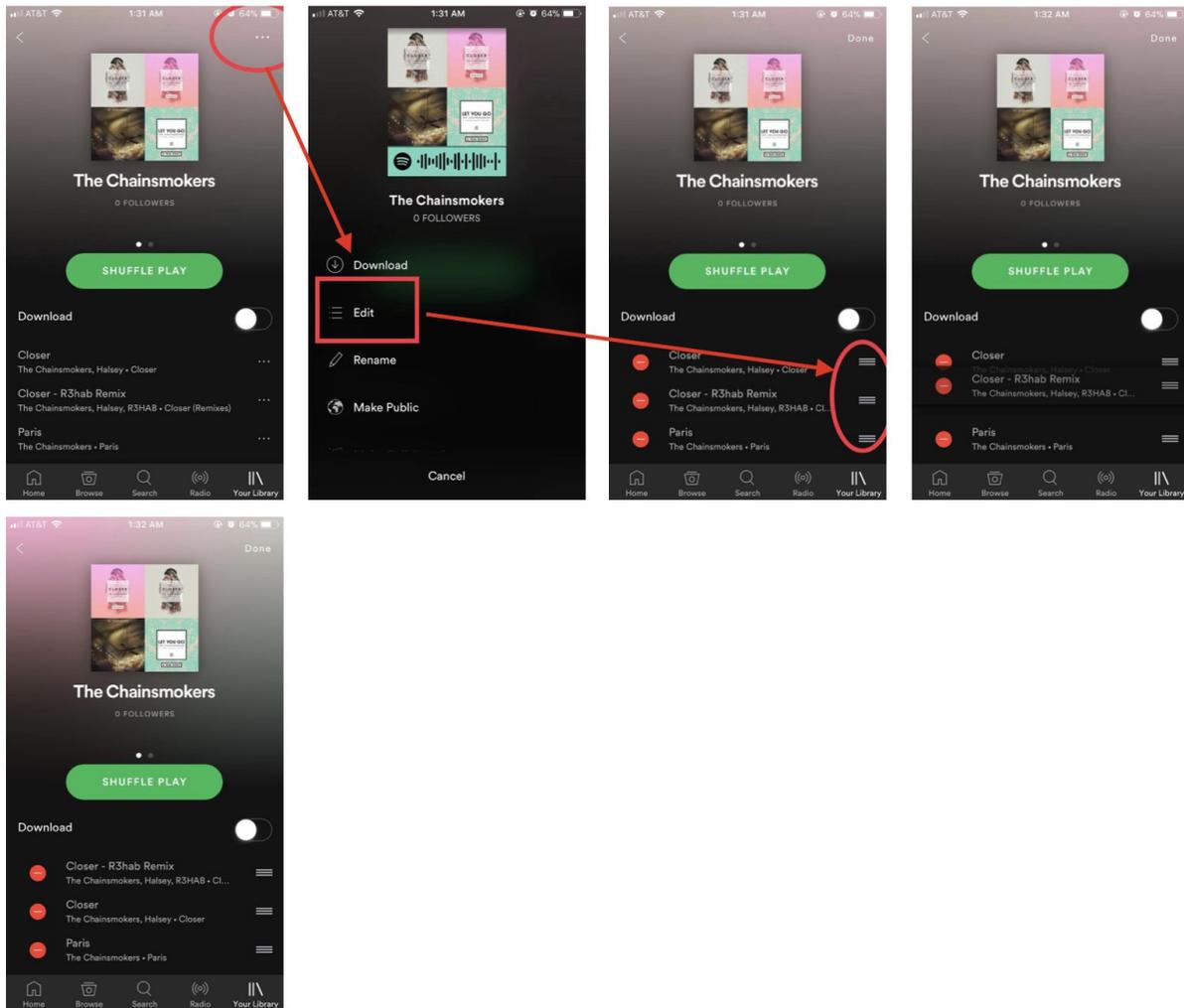


The iTunes app provides a more simple and obvious way for users to reorder/reorganize their songs in a playlist. Once a user clicks the “Edit” button, the option to reorder the songs is displayed right away (three lines to the right of each song). The user can then easily press and hold to begin reordering/reorganizing their songs. The placement of the Edit button at the top of the Playlist page implies its functionality - to provide a means for users to edit any aspects of their playlist. This is particularly important because of the presence of the circular menu button. While it might be unclear to new users what affordances the menu button will provide them, if asked to change or edit any aspect of their playlist, the Edit button becomes an obvious first try for new users.

From left to right, top to bottom:

- (1) User clicks “Edit” to edit the playlist
- (2) User is directly given the option to reorder the songs in the playlist
- (3) User presses and holds the three lines to the right of a song they want to reorder and can move up or down
- (4) User’s reordering is reflected

Less Good: Spotify



Unlike the iTunes app, the Spotify app adds an extra level when a user wants to reorder/reorganize their songs in a playlist, making this option hidden. A user has to first click on the three buttons of the playlist in the top right corner and then proceed to select “Edit” to edit the playlist. At the point, the user can start reordering and/or reorganizing their songs in the playlist. This is not as obvious with the Spotify app as it is with the iTunes app. Because the Edit button is presented on a new popover page, which also includes an option to Rename the playlist, it is not obviously clear what the user will be able to edit once they click the Edit button.

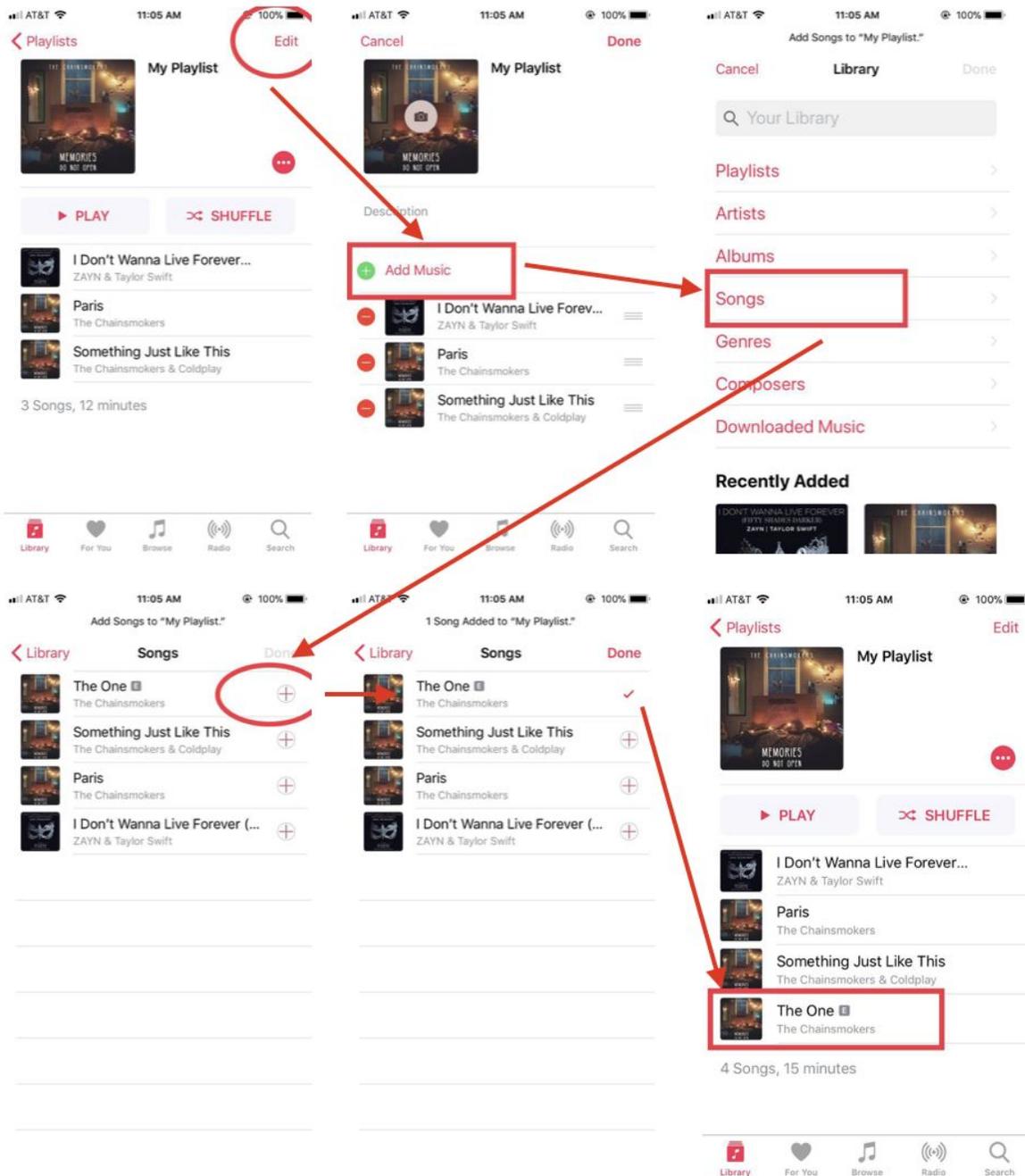
From left to right, top to bottom:

- (1) The user selects the three buttons of the playlist in the top right corner.
- (2) User selects “Edit.”
- (3) User presses and holds the three lines to the right of a song
- (4) User can move it up or down to reorganize their songs

(5) Playlist correctly shows user's reorganized songs.

2. Adding songs to a playlist

Good: Itunes app



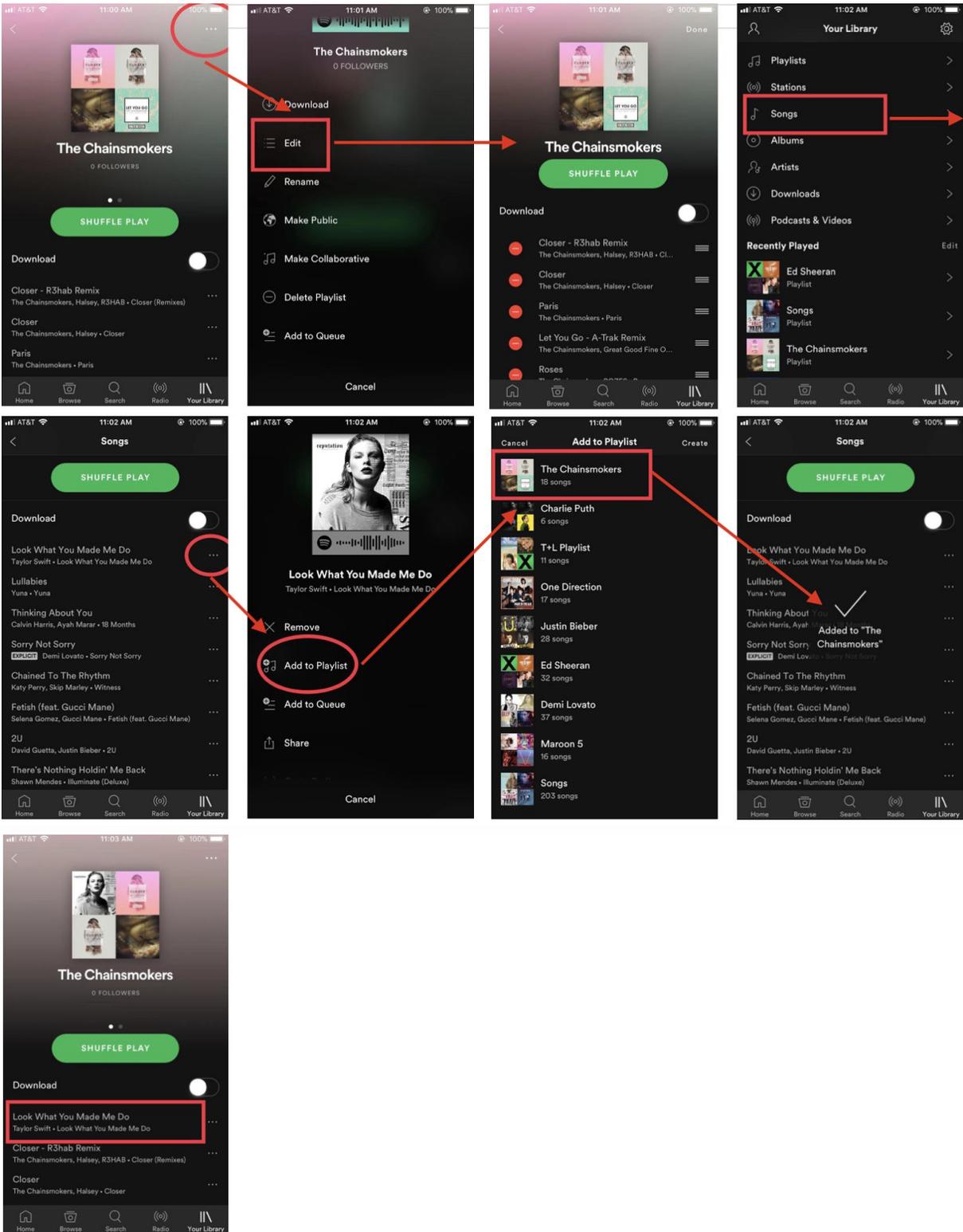
The Itunes app provides an accessible way to add songs to a playlist. Once user clicks “Edit,” the option to Add Music is visible with a green plus symbol, signaling to add music. The user

can then select from a range of places to add their songs. Each song will have a plus symbol to the right so the song can be added if selected. The iTunes app gives the user an easy way to add songs to a playlist when they want to, making it obvious firsthand.

From left to right, top to bottom:

- (1) User clicks “Edit”
- (2) User can easily click on “Add Music” to begin adding songs; this is clearly visible and easily accessible and obvious
- (3) User selects “Songs” to choose a song to add
- (4) User can add a song they want by clicking on the ⊕ symbol on the right of each song
- (5) Song is successfully selected to be added to playlist
- (6) Selected song is successfully added to the playlist

Less Good: Spotify



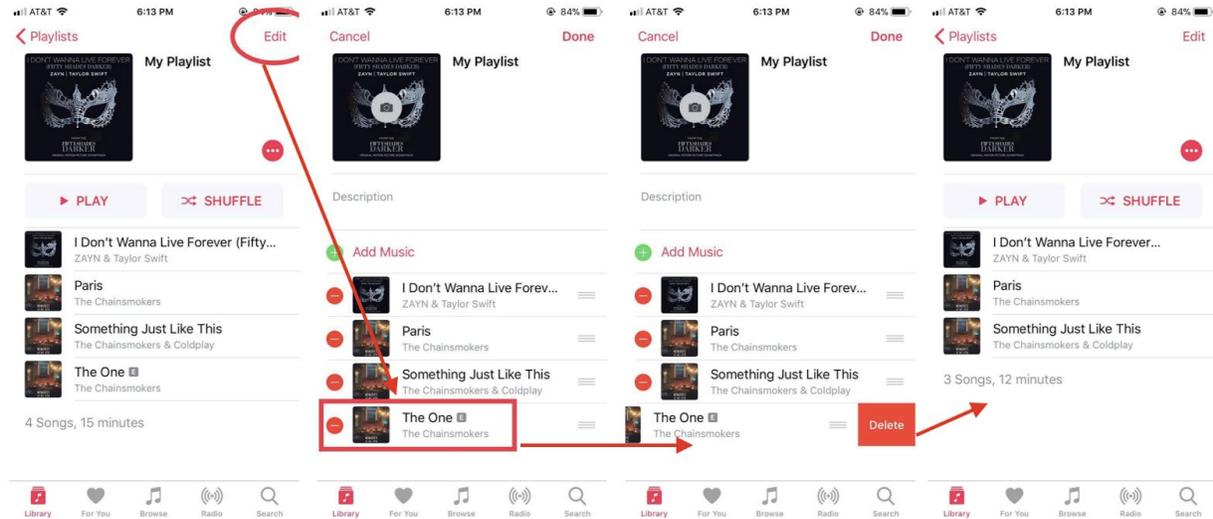
Adding songs to a playlist requires significantly more steps on the Spotify app compared to the iTunes app. When on a playlist on Spotify, a user is not able to add songs to their liking within that playlist. Unlike the iTunes app, Spotify does not have the option to add music within a playlist. To be able to do this, the user would have to go back one level to the main library, search for a song they want, then be able to add that song to their playlist. This is not as intuitive and not as simple as the iTunes app. Spotify requires user to perform more steps and back up several levels.

From left to right, top to bottom:

- (1) User clicks on three buttons of playlist in top right corner
- (2) User clicks "Edit" to find if they can add music there
- (3) There seems to be ways to delete songs from the playlist, but no indication to add songs to playlist
- (4) User goes up one level, clicking the back button in top left corner and is shown a range of places where they can find songs. User selects "Songs"
- (5) User selects a song and clicks the three buttons to the right of the song
- (6) User can now add the song to their playlist by clicking on "Add to Playlist"
- (7) User selects the playlist they want to add the song
- (8) Song is successfully added to the playlist
- (9) The selected song is reflected in the playlist

3. Deleting songs in a playlist

Good: iTunes

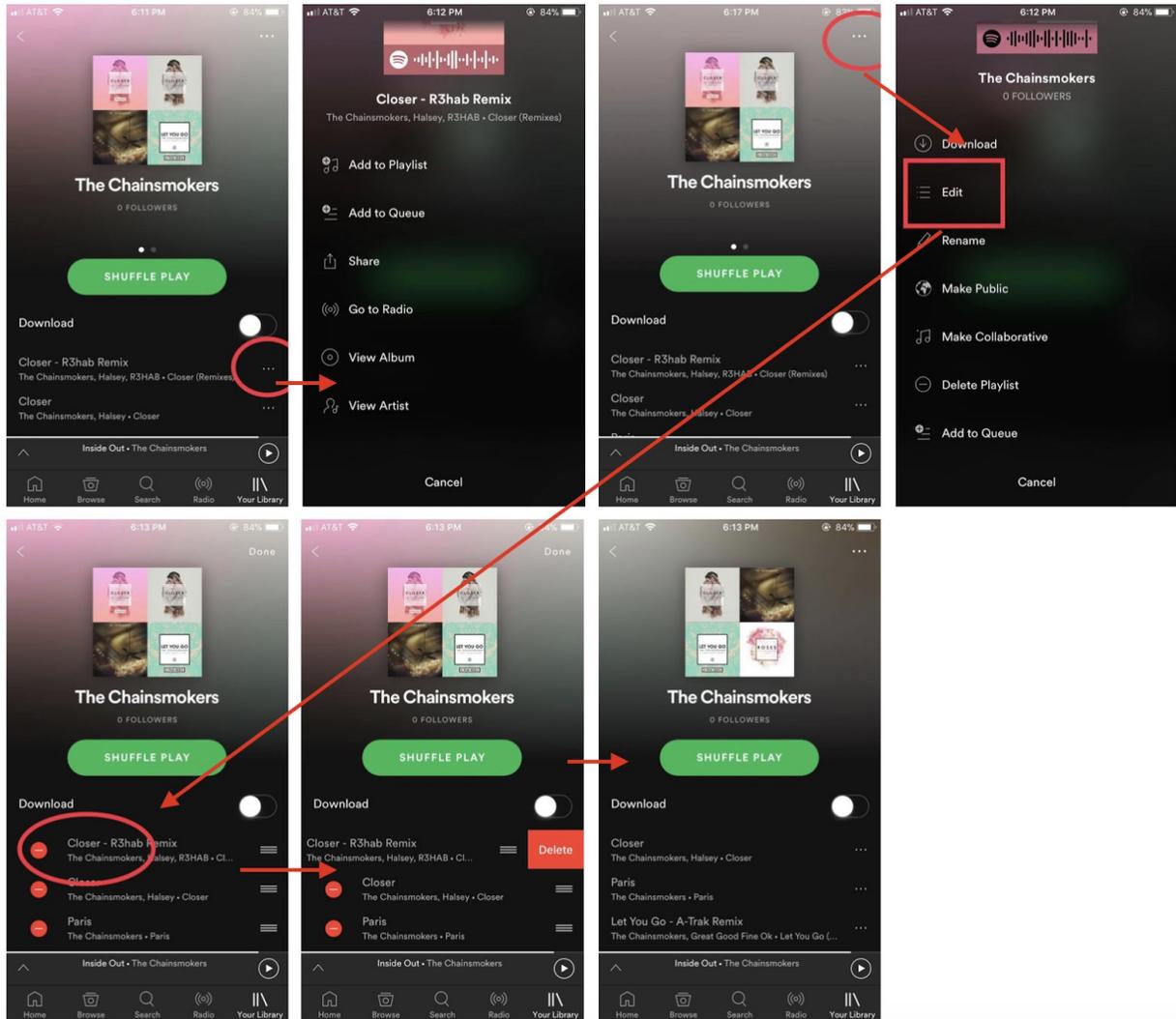


The iTunes app provides users a simple and easy way to delete songs in a playlist. Once a user clicks “Edit,” it becomes clearly visible and obvious that songs in the playlist can be deleted right then and there. With the iTunes app, it takes only three steps to accomplish this task.

From left to right, top to bottom:

- (1) User clicks “Edit” in hopes to delete songs
- (2) When clicking “Edit,” user is presented with options to add and delete songs, change photo of playlist, and rename the playlist. Here, user can already begin to delete songs in the playlist by clicking the ⊖ symbol in red to the left of a song
- (3) User is notified to delete the song they selected and clicks on “Delete”
- (4) Song is successfully deleted from the playlist

Less Good: Spotify



Unlike the iTunes app, the Spotify app requires a little more effort for users when deleting songs in a playlist. Users are not able to select songs within the playlist and just delete from that song. Rather, the user would have to go to the three buttons of the playlist in the top right corner, click “Edit,” and then be able to delete the songs in the playlist. Even if a user clicks on the three buttons of the playlist first, it requires one extra step to read through the options and click “Edit” to then delete songs as opposed to iTunes displaying “Edit” already on the screen and allowing for users to delete the songs on just one click.

From left to right, top to bottom:

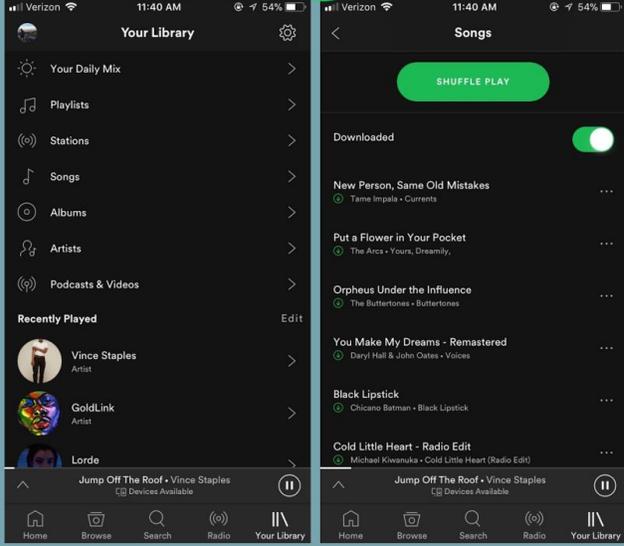
(1) User begins by selecting a song they want to delete. They then select the three buttons to the right of the song to find the option to delete the song

- (2) Given the list of options, there is no option to delete the song from the playlist. The user would have to go back by clicking “Cancel”
- (3) User clicks on the three buttons of the playlist in the top right corner
- (4) User clicks on the “Edit” option
- (5) User can now pick songs to delete by clicking on the ⊖ symbol in red to the left of each song
- (6) User is notified to delete the song they selected and clicks on “Delete”
- (7) Song is successfully deleted from the playlist

Other Scenarios

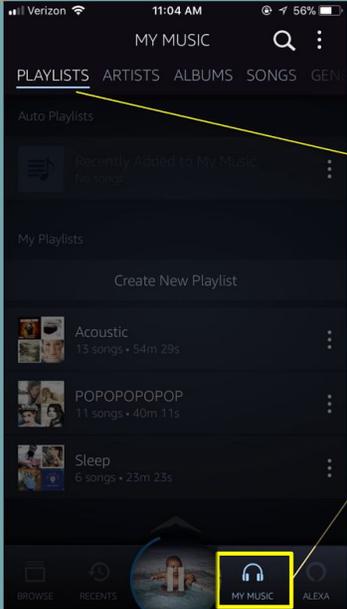
1. Navigating Through Your Music

Less good: 



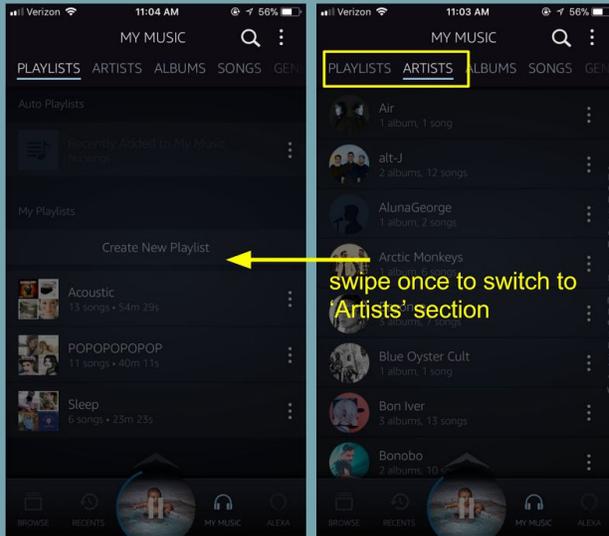
- Has a Your Library homepage, from where you must navigate to Playlist, Artists, & other sections
- Each section of Your Music (playlists, songs, albums, etc.) are in their own **individual pages** - **cannot directly switch into another section**; must go back to Your Library page to switch sections
 - user has to go through **3 screens**, compared to Amazon's one swipe

Good:  amazonmusic



- **Navigation bar** at the top allows you to see which section of Your Music you are in
- The **highlighted icon** on the bottom lets you know that you are in Your Music, not browsing

Good: amazonmusic



- The whole section is laid out like a **single screen**, so sections are interconnected - **can directly switch from section to section** instead of having to return to a Your Music homepage unlike spotify
 - uses swipe gestures instead of screen changes to keep uniform flow
- Navigation bar will also shift to accommodate what direction you go

Navigating Playlists Comparison:



flow of movement

- Have to tap specific areas of the screen - user must remember locations of these buttons
- Page changes with each tap; less cohesive design, much more effort to keep track of location.
- Multi-directional flow is confusing

Navigating Playlists Comparison: amazonmusic



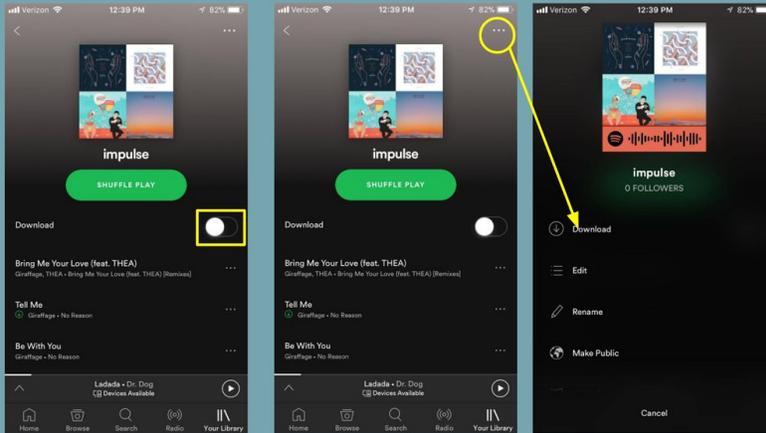
flow of movement



- Can swipe from anywhere on the screen to switch sections
- Navigation bar on top highlights what area you're in
- Formatted like a single wide page → flows in one direction

2. Making Music Available Offline

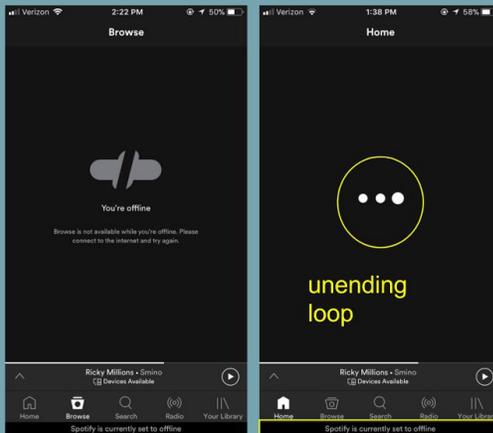
Less Good: Spotify Downloading Music



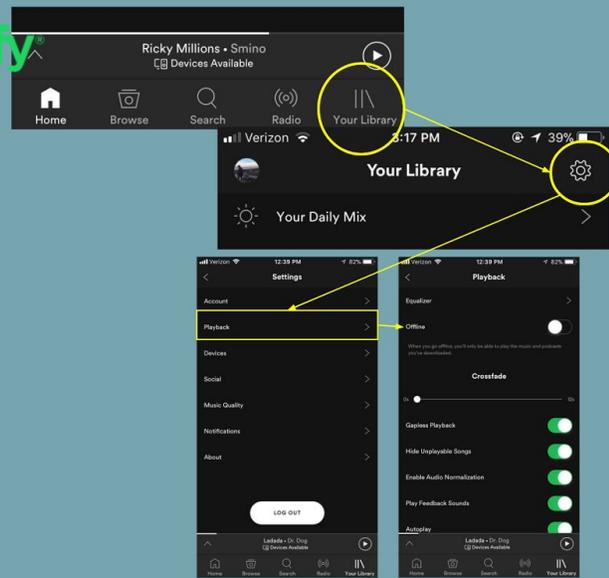
In a playlist

- Can only download playlists and albums, not individual songs
- Toggle download in the playlist itself
- Alternatively, toggle download in the playlist settings

Less Good: Spotify Toggling Offline Mode

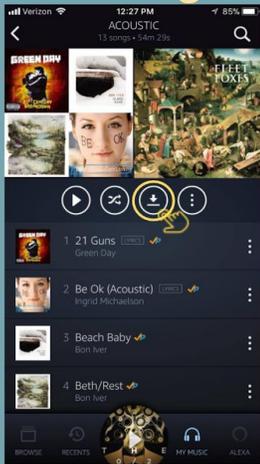


What it looks like



Toggling offline mode on in Settings requires multiple steps

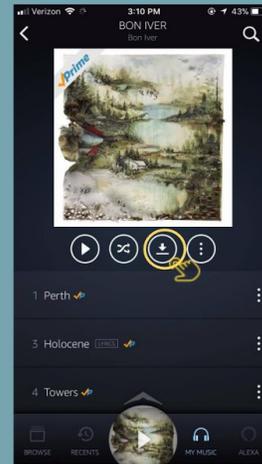
Good: amazonmusic Downloading Music



Download a playlist

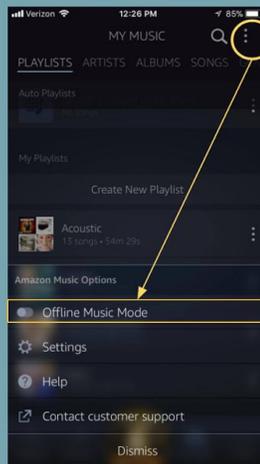


Download an individual song



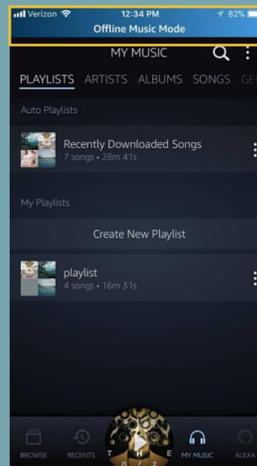
Download an album

Good: amazonmusic Toggling offline mode

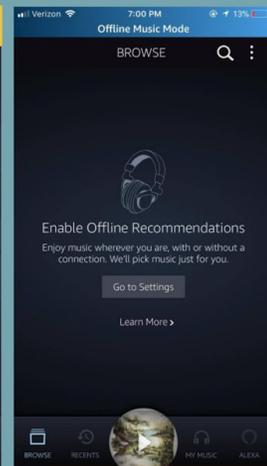


Can toggle anywhere in app - don't have to go through settings

Clearly shows you're in offline mode from anywhere in app



Browsing is clearly disabled



Offline Music: Spotify vs. Amazon



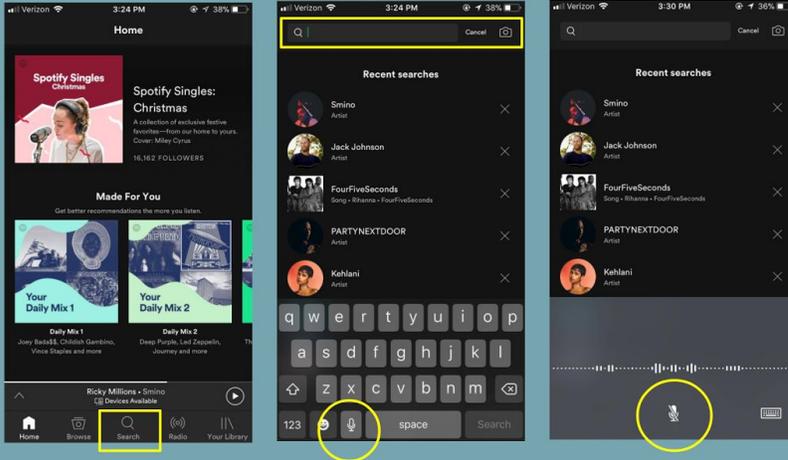
- Not very clear you're in offline mode - low contrast, bottom of screen bar
- Homepage shows an infinitely looping loading animation in offline mode...
- Toggling offline mode requires multiple steps & only one pathway
- Cannot download individual songs



- Clearly shows you're in offline mode with highlighted header
- Easily toggle offline mode from anywhere in the app - don't have to go through settings
- Can download individual songs

3. Hands-Free Searching

Less Good:



press search → press the search bar → use your phone's voice to text → press to stop recording voice [iPhone] (minimum 3 steps)

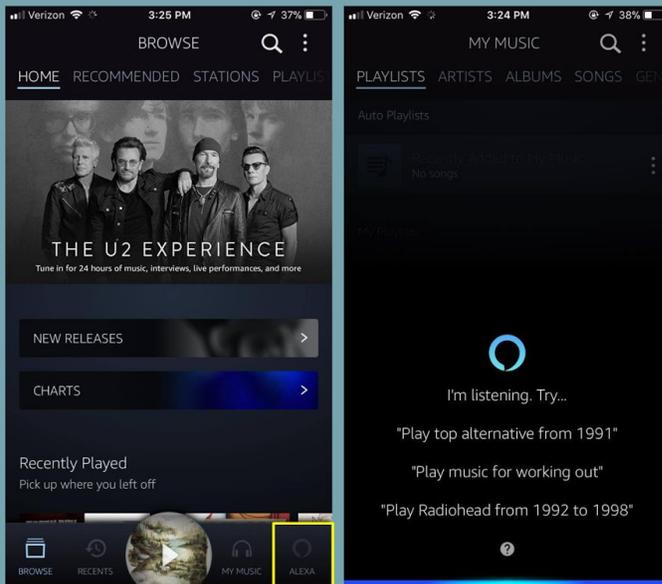
Spotify lacks a native voice search.

Must use your phone's voice-to-text in the search bar, which takes multiple steps.

Your phone's voice-to-text may require you to press to stop recording, eliminating the point of hands-free search.

There's also the possibility that your phone doesn't have voice-text function.

Good:



Amazon has a built-in Alexa function that lets you search music with voice

Located in the first-level navigation bar so that you can access from anywhere in-app