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America's Top Christmas Songs 2023

P1 Media Group's annual Christmas Music Research is here. P1 Media Group, a global leader in media research and strategy, surveyed radio listeners nationwide likely to listen to an all-Christmas music radio station during the holiday season. We tested the appeal of the 40 most-played and 40 most-streamed Christmas songs from the 2022 Holiday Season, a total of 60 unique songs, thanks to Luminate's holiday charts.

Key Findings

"Jingle Bell Rock" by Bobby Helms is America's #1 research Christmas song, reclaiming the #1 position it has held for six of the last seven years. "Christmas music's appeal remains as strong as ever amongst American radio listeners who listen to All Christmas stations 'frequently' or 'sometimes' and personally enjoy Christmas music on a local radio station during the holiday season," says Ken Benson, Partner, and co-founder, of P1 Media Group. "As we often see, there is much to learn when we compare radio airplay to on-demand streaming data, even with holiday music. Understanding streaming data can help broaden the appeal of your station."

- The Holiday Classics rule the Top 20, including two versions of "Jingle Bell Rock," "Holly Jolly Christmas," and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer."
- 2022's #1 Stream and Airplay song "Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You," ranked #26 in total appeal this holiday season, albeit it trails this year's #1 song by less than three percentage points. Mariah's classic ranks #1 with 18-24s.

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- This list includes the 16 Christmas songs from the Top 40 most-streamed that didn't make the Top 40 most-played airplay chart. The research suggests that these 16 songs test well enough to be considered for airplay.

Streaming Rank 2022	Airplay Rank 2022	Title	Artist	18-54 Appeal Score
6	72	Santa Tell Me	Ariana Grande	79.33
8	41	Underneath the Tree	Kelly Clarkson	81.47
12	45	It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas	Perry Como	80.74
16	16	Deck the Halls	Nat King Cole	79.78
21	57	Run Rudolph Run	Chuck Berry	76.82
22	98	Santa Baby	Eartha Kit	75.25
23	48	Little St. Nick	Beach Boys	75.71
24	159	Hallelujah	Pentatonix	75.77
27	216	Snowman	Sia	74.99
30	85	Christmas Time is Here	Vince Guaraldi Trio	73.51
32	120	Mistletoe	Justin Bieber	72.67
34	179	Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas	Michael Buble	81.40
35	184	Winter Wonderland	Darlene Love	78.55
37	259	Baby, It's Cold Outside	Dean Martin	79.10
38	52	Holly Jolly Christmas	Michael Buble	81.89
40	206	You Make it Feel Like Christmas	Gwen Stefani	70.48

Christmas Music Study 2023

- Kelly Clarkson’s “Underneath the Tree” from 2010 and Ariana Grande’s “Santa Tell Me” 2014 are the two highest-testing original Christmas songs from the 2000s, ranking #11 and #29, respectively. Both songs scored much higher this year.
- Christmas songs tested considerably higher this year, with 50 of the top 60 Christmas songs testing with an appeal score of 75 or higher on a 100-point scale.
- More say Christmas Music should begin on Thanksgiving last year.
 - 23% Early November
 - 20% Beginning of December
 - 27% Thanksgiving (21% in 2022)
 - 19% mid-November
 - 12% mid-December
- The most surprising finding in the study is that 60% (48% in 2022) say Christmas music programming should stop on New Year’s Eve.
 - 13% on December 26th
 - 17% Christmas Day
 - 7% December 27th
 - 3% some other time

America’s Top 60 Testing Christmas Songs 2023

Rank	Title	Artist	Year	18-54 Score
1	Jingle Bell Rock	Bobby Helms	1957	83.29
2	Holly Jolly Christmas	Burl Ives	1964	82.56
3	Feliz Navidad	Jose Feliciano	1970	82.39
4	Last Christmas	Wham!	1986	82.35
5	Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree	Brenda Lee	1964	82.22
6	Jingle Bells	Frank Sinatra	1957	82.02

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7	You're A Mean One Mr. Grinch	Thurl Ravenscroft	1966	81.93
8	Holly Jolly Christmas	Michael Buble	2011	81.89
9	The Christmas Song	Nat King Cole	1960	81.83
10	Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer	Burl Ives	1964	81.64
11	Underneath the Tree	Kelly Clarkson	2010	81.47
12	Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas	Michael Buble	2011	81.4
13	Sleigh Ride	Ronettes	1963	81.34
14	Jingle Bell Rock	Brenda Lee	1964	81.25
15	Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer	Gene Autry	1957	81.2
16	Santa Claus is Coming To Town	Jackson 5	1970	81.12
17	It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas	Perry Como	1951	80.74
18	Wonderful Christmastime	Paul McCartney	1979	80.71
19	It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year	Andy Williams	1963	80.41
20	Carol of the Bells	Mannheim Steamroller	1974	80.33
21	Linus and Lucy	Vince Guaraldi Trio	1964	80.15
22	Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12/24	Trans-Siberian Orchestra	1996	80.11

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23	It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas	Bing Crosby	1951	79.92
24	Here Comes Santa Claus	Gene Autry	1947	79.88
25	Deck the Halls	Nat King Cole	1960	79.78
26	All I Want for Christmas	Mariah Carey	1994	79.6
27	Sleigh Ride	Leroy Anderson	1948	79.47
28	Jingle Bell Rock	Hall & Oates	1983	79.46
29	Santa Tell Me	Ariana Grande	2014	79.33
30	Winter Wonderland	Amy Grant	1992	79.21
31	It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas	Michael Buble	2011	79.21
32	Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)	Darlene Love	1963	79.17
33	Carol of The Bells	David Foster	1993	79.15
34	Baby It's Cold Outside	Dean Martin	1953	79.1
35	Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let it Snow	Dean Martin	1959	79.03
36	It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas	Johnny Mathis	1986	78.87
37	Winter Wonderland	Darlene Love	1963	78.55
38	Ring Christmas Bells	Ray Conniff	1962	78.25

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39	It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year	Amy Grant	1992	78.1
40	Happy Holiday/The Holiday Seas	Andy Williams	1963	77.88
41	Happy Xmas (War is Over)	John Lennon	1971	77.2
42	I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus	Jackson 5	1970	76.98
43	Run Rudolph Run	Chuck Berry	1959	76.82
44	White Christmas	Bing Crosby	1943	76.42
45	Blue Christmas	Elvis Presley	1957	76.26
46	Do You Want to Build a Snowman	Kristen Bell	2013	75.89
47	Hallelujah	Pentatonix	2016	75.77
48	Little Saint Nick	Beach Boys	1964	75.71
49	Santa Baby	Eartha Kitt	1953	75.25
50	White Christmas	Drifters	1955	75.16
51	Snowman	Sia	2021	74.99
52	Please Come Home For Christmas	Eagles	1978	74.57
53	Christmas Time Is Here	Vince Guaraldi Trio	1965	73.51
54	Christmas Canon	Trans-Siberian Orchestra	1998	73.3

55	Do They Know It's Christmas	Band Aid	1985	72.89
56	Mistletoe	Justin Bieber	2011	72.67
57	You Make It Feel Like Christmas	Gwen Stefani	2017	70.48
58	God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen	Pentatonix	2017	69.91
59	Like It's Christmas	Jonas Brothers	2020	69.12
60	Someday at Christmas	Lizzo	2022	68.16

About the Survey

P1 Media Group conducted the online survey the from November 1-3, 2023. We sampled 400 18-54-year-old radio listeners from the Top 50 American Radio Markets. Participants were required to listen either “Frequently” or “Sometimes” to an all-Christmas Music local radio station during the holiday season and rate their enjoyment of Christmas music on a local radio station during the holiday season a ‘7’ or higher on a 1 to 10 scale. We identified “Heavy Streamers” by asking each respondent, “How frequently do you listen to music on your smartphone, computer, or other listening device from a streaming service such as Pandora, Spotify, or Apple Music.” 62% of the sample responded they stream “every day,” and 31% answered a “few days” a week.

The test list was compiled from the most-played Christmas Songs on American radio in 2022 and the most-streamed Christmas songs in America in 2022, according to Luminate. The full results are available at <http://p1mediagroup.com>

About P1 Media Group

With experience and passion, we’re shaping the future of radio. We offer the power of a large consultancy and the understanding, empathy, and honesty of a small one, with a customized approach to help stations grow and engage with their fans.