

Chapter 3: Where Can I Find MP3 Music?

- Web Sites
- What's FTP?
- Searching for HTTP and FTP Music Files
- Newsgroups—MP3s the Hard Way

Someday MP3s—or some improvement on current MP3 technology—will completely replace the CD recordings we buy over the counter these days. Getting a small, high-quality audio file will be as simple as turning on the water tap. Too bad. We'll have lost the thrill of the hunt. Collecting music is like any collection—each item added individually, only after it's pulled from the morass of pop culture, and each item has a history, a story, a separate *raison d'être*.

So here's the skinny on this chapter: Two types of Internet sites let you download MP3s and other forms of music: HTTP, which in practical terms often translates to "legal," and FTP, which means "jail bait." We'll look at how to find music on both types of sites, using online search sites and the software included on the book's CD-ROM. At the end of this book, musician Michael White has written detailed reviews of the top 101 MP3 sites. We'll also see how to find songs hiding as text messages.

Web Sites

If you look at a Web address your browser displays, you'll see it prefixed with "http," which means simply that the site uses hypertext transfer protocol. This isn't as foreboding as it sounds. If you already surf the World Wide Web, you're already familiar with HTTP sites, because that's the only kind the Web has. It really has to do with the fact that HTTP lets site creators use programming code called hypertext markup language (HTML) to design sites with graphics and fancy fonts and all the other bells and whistles that so enchant us.

With a dedicated, full-time connection to the Internet, you can set up an HTTP Web site on your own personal computer. But it's not a good idea. If the site's successful, you can forget about using the computer for anything else. It will have its circuits full just responding to requests for pages and downloads from surfers, especially if you post your MP3 collection. Usually Web sites are not located physically in the same building as the person or company that created it. Instead, you rent space from Internet hosts, who have scads of storage, fast file servers, and multiple links to a high-speed T1 or T3 Internet connection.

Although HTTPs can generally be interpreted as "legal sites," this isn't always true. There are perfectly respectable-looking Web pages that contain enough outlaw MP3s to fill a clandestine Tower Records. The record industry's enforcers regularly patrol MP3 Web sites, and when they find unauthorized songs, they lean heavily on the company that is physically hosting the site to close it. But usually no trail leads to the individual who set up the site, and it may appear again on a different rented server.

Generally, though, you can download anything you find on an HTTP site without getting the law hot on your trail. These legal downloads include two species of artists. The first is bands you've actually heard of, or as they're known as in the wilds, BYAHO. At the same time, you have a chance for another adventure—discovering new artists who are happy to give away their music for free just for the chance to break into the big time, where they actually get paid by a record company.

What's BYAHO? - While writing this book, I quickly tired of writing "bands you've actually heard of." But everything else I thought of—"star bands," "brand bands" didn't sound right. And so I gave birth to an acronym. And I know. I should be ashamed.

Only a few of the songs at legal Web sites are by BYAHO, at least with the blessing of the bands or their record labels. But with persistence and frequent trolling of the major MP3 sites, such as MP3.com, you can find big-time band downloads that are perfectly legal. The songs are placed there by the record companies to get you hooked so you'll buy the albums they come from. Often you listen to the song in a streaming format rather than downloading it to your hard drive. Occasionally, there are no strings attached to the download. But more often, they'll have some sort of digital rights protection built into them, particularly if they're offered as .WMA or Liquid Audio files.

The requirements of the secure digital music initiative (SDMI—see Chapter 2, "Is This Going to Get Me Thrown in Jail?") are flexible enough to enable record companies to attach different strings. Sometimes a time bomb is built into the file so that it won't play after 30 days. Or, the file might play only on the computer to which it was downloaded. Other schemes won't allow the song to be copied to a writable CD or converted to a wave (.WAV) file. The record industry still hasn't figured out exactly how it wants to use free downloads, and you can expect different strategies from song to song. And way too often, the BYAHO songs are actually simply previews. You get about 30 seconds of Nine Inch Nails, and then nothing (a small file size is usually the tipoff here). Often you'll only be able to download after giving something to the record company—such as your email address. In Chapter 7, "How Do I Play MP3s? And How Do I Keep Track of 1,000 Songs?" you'll see how you can record streaming audio so that you can listen to it offline and how to skirt some of the copy protections so your song doesn't go belly up in a month.

Table 3.1 The Most Popular Internet Audio Sites

Rank	Web Site
1	real.com
2	mtv.com
3	shockwave.com
4	mp3.com
5	newbmgmusicservice.com
6	columbiahouse.com
7	tunes.com
8	www.com

9	windowsmedia.com
10	listen.com
11	peeps.com
12	launch.com
13	vh1.com
14	ubl.com
15	nsync.com
16	riffage.com
17	audiohighway.com
18	lyrics.com
19	harmony-central.com
20	sonymusic.com
21	netradio.com
22	korn.com
23	emusic.com
24	musicmatch.com
25	discjockey.com

Source: PC Data, June 2000

Most of the songs offered for downloads unfettered by copy protection or legalities are from indie bands. Indies are independent groups that don't have a contract—at least not with any of the major labels. The Web has given rise to indie labels—online companies trying to figure out how to crash the big time by publicizing their bands through MP3 files. Most of the indie bands, however, are associated with no label at all. These are garage bands who are leveraging PCs to put them on the same playing field as bands backed with more money for recording and promotion. PC sound editing and mixing software let the musicians produce an MP3 without the expense of studios and tape mixers. The Internet gives them a way to distribute their songs, build up a mass following, and get signed by the record companies, who will then use, exploit, and abandon them to a life of playing nostalgia gigs at beer halls.

How Do I Find Which Garage Bands Are Hot? - Surf on over to this book's own Web page, <http://www.mp3under.com/>. There we've posted links to the top song lists at the top Web music sites, including mp3.com, Rolling Stone, the Big Five music labels, Amazon, and a slew of others.

A lot of the indie bands will never get anywhere near MTV. In addition, some songs are remixes, while others sound like musical parodies. When you open up the music world to anyone with a band and a PC, you're going to get a lot of crap. But you're also going to uncover some treasures you never would have had a chance to hear under the old, oppressive record regime. You might be one of five

people in the United States who like Narcoleptic Lovers, and it's only through the Web that you could know about them at all.

There are several different types of MP3 sites. Most specialize in music downloads. But others are better for software, news about music and digital downloads, fan chat rooms, buying CDs, Webcasts, and Internet radio stations.

Some offer it all. These are rich sites with one-stop shopping for all your music needs from free downloads to CD sales. Among the biggest megasites are mp3.com, rollingstone.com, listen.com, and tunes.com. mp3.com is the seminal MP3 Web site. What you can't find at mp3.com, you'll at least find a link to. MP3.com, the company, has set the standard for music sites on its pages and in the courts, where it battles the record companies (not always winning). Any of the sites associated with record labels have lots of pizzazz and some promotional downloads of performers as wide-ranging as Alanis Morissette and Shania Twain. Others to check out are askmp3.com, which is great for technical background on MP3, and rollingstone.com, which is good for a smorgasbord of downloads from brand-name bands.

At the end of the book, musician Michael White reviews the top 101 MP3 sites. And check out this book's official site, <http://www.mp3under.com/>. We are a modest link site where you can click through to the latest versions of the software on the book's CD-ROM, as well as programs we didn't have room to include on the CD-ROM. We also have links to the top 100 MP3 sites and many of the also-rans.

MP3—It's Everywhere! - Just for laughs, try going to the address field of your Internet browser and typing *anything mp3.com*. Any combination of mp3 preceded by any word in the English language has been registered as a domain name by someone. Not all are working sites, but you can make a game out of trying to come up with a cool-sounding name for an MP3 site that hasn't been spoken for already.

Most downloads on Web sites are simple to snag. You're probably already familiar with how to do it. (Clue for the clueless: You click something.) But even if Web downloading is old hat to you, check out Chapter 4, "How Do I Download MP3s Once I Find Them?" where I'll show you a better way of downloading using the free software Go!Zilla, included on the book's CD-ROM.

Buying Music Online

Among the megasites, many allow you to buy music online. Currently, online shopping for music is in a Neanderthal stage of development. Most sites, such as Amazon.com, only allow you to buy a pre-pressed CD, which shows up at your house a few days later via UPS or mail. Sites slightly higher on the evolutionary scale, such as towerrecords.com, riffage.com, and musicmaker.com, let you pick songs from different artists and burn you a custom CD with your personally chosen mix of tracks. Okay, that's nice, but it shows how the record companies are still mired in *The Way Things Used to Be*.

It's as if they can't imagine selling music any way except on real, hard CDs that must be sent from one end of the country to another on planes, trains, and delivery trucks. It's like settling down to watch a

pay-per-view movie on cable, paying for it, and then being told you can watch it in three days when it arrives on a videotape.

Right now only a handful of music sites offer CDs and tracks for sale and immediate download over the Internet. One of the best sites for immediate gratification from sucking down BYAHO track by track is [emusic.com](#). Finding a particular artist or album is chancy, but if you page through the alphabetical listings, you'll find performers you recognize. Just in the A's are Ian Anderson, Average White Band, and April Wine. Okay. Not the hottest acts this century, but you can download Liquid Audio or .WMA tracks recorded at an excellent 120 bits a second for 99 cents each.

Earlier in 2000, two of the big name labels, Sony and BMG, announced plans to offer their catalogs for sale as downloadable files. But the companies are experimenting with different types of copy protection and different music formats. By the time you read this, there should be more BYAHO songs sold for immediate download, but don't expect it to be straightforward until the labels figure out exactly how to do it.

Search Wizards - If you can't find the band you love, love the band you find. When some search engines don't come up with a match to what you're looking for—or even when it does—the engines suggest songs and artists who are supposed to be similar to what you asked for. Sometimes the results are tenuous. A failed search for Barry White at one engine drew suggestions that I might like, instead, to listen to Orson Welles. Yes, sir. Nothing's better for that romantic evening than a fat man reciting Shakespeare. Usually the suggestions aren't that silly, and the search wizards are particularly helpful when you're trying to find the hidden gems among indie sites.

Part of the reason more sites don't offer pay-per-track downloads is the cost of processing a credit card charge. The 99 cent charge costs as much to process as \$20 for an entire CD. One site, [Mjuice.com](#), handles the problem by letting you charge Mjuice Dollars—as little as \$2 at a time. Then you can download songs, some as cheap as a quarter, until you run out of Mjuice bucks. A record of your purchases are kept with your account so that if, for example, your hard drive dies, you can redownload the song without paying for it again. Another marketing plan you'll see sites experiment with is subscriptions. [Ministryofsound.com](#) has two plans, one \$10 a month, the other \$24.95 for three months. With the subscription, you can download anything from a certain collection, to which about 10 songs a week are added. Don't expect these to be the current top ten from Rolling Stone's best-seller list.

This situation is changing. Several record labels have announced partnerships with online music sites to sell their music as downloads. A lot of the credit for this breakthrough in common sense goes to Liquid Audio, whose versatile copy protection/compression format gives the record executives control over how music is protected. More importantly, it and Microsoft's secure .WMA format are security blankets so the execs don't feel they're giving away the store. But until the record industry finally makes its peace with the Internet, searching for pay-per-track downloads is for people who have very little left to do in life. Using a PC to page through pay sites manually is really contrary to what computers are all about. They're supposed to do dull, monotonous, detailed tasks that would take humans hours, all in a matter of seconds. Why, you ask, can't software do my searching? And as long as you asked, the answer is in the next paragraph.

Search Sites

Some Web sites don't always have a lot of songs to download, but they'll tell you where they can be found. These are search sites with online programs that search all the other sites for MP3 and other audio and video files. Now practically every MP3 site you can find has some sort of search function. But the searches are usually of only that site or just a link to a more powerful search engine maintained by someone else, such as look4mp3.com or Lycos. Sites with these limited, simple searches aren't what I mean. We're talking metacrawler—an engine that feeds search requests to half a dozen other search engines. Then it compiles the results into a single list for your reading pleasure. A good search site covers as much of the Internet as their indexing computers can handle. Some search the entire Internet, including the notorious FTP sites. Others limit themselves to music on only the Web.

Most don't perform live, as-you-wait searches. Instead, they regularly scan the Net for files with the extensions .mp3 and .wma, and other tell-tale signs that they contain songs, and store the locations of successful hits in their own databases. The advantage is that you get quick results, but the database is not always up-to-date and can't tell you whether any of the sites it suggests are online.

Before you ask, there is not one, perfect, all-encompassing search site. You'll get different results from one search site to another. But all search sites are pretty simple to use. Many of the search engines find both legal Web sites and those suspicious FTP sites.

We'll look at a couple of the better online search engines later in this chapter. But first, we have to confront the *bête noire* of Internet audio: FTP.

What's FTP? 'Cause If I have to Learn One More Three-Letter Acronym, I'm Going to Hurl

If you're like most PC users these days, you're running Windows. Or maybe you're a Macintosh devotee. Either way, your forays into the Internet take place almost entirely within the safe, comfy World Wide Web. The Web is designed to be easy to navigate, even if it sometimes is frustrating and slow. But the Web is only a part of the Internet. Much of the Net remains the way it was before the Web appeared—running UNIX or Linux operating systems with a text-only interface devoid of graphics and frills that's more akin to working at an antique DOS prompt than the Web. In a word, it's geeky.

Now ask yourself, where do you find a lot of brainy geeks, with no responsibilities, lots of time on their hands, little money in their pockets, a passionate belief that the world owes them something, access to high-powered computers, high-speed Internet connections they don't have to pay for, and who like to rock? Look no farther than the nearest college dorm. The FTP phenomenon has flourished among college students for exactly the reasons described. Using computers hooked to their colleges' powerful servers, they have virtually unlimited storage space and bandwidth. They pull songs off CDs and other FTP sites and onto their computers. Then they open their hard drives to others who spread the songs even further across the Internet.

Not all FTP sites are instruments of the devil. Some are operated by companies as a convenient place to download updates and patches to their software. But generally, any time you see an MP3 for

download from an FTP site, it's illegal. Often you see disclaimers such as this one, complete with misspellings and questionable grammar:

The mp3's on this site can only be used as backup, that means you have to have the original single/album of the song you're downloading, if not, you have to buy it within 24 hours.

There is NO Illegal or Copyrighted material on this Website. There are links to mp3's which may or may not be copyrighted. I am not doing the distribution here so I hold myself irresponsible if you download any copyrighted material from the links I provide. Linking is not illegal, Hosting and Distributing is!! I'am just provideing the links, so the creator of this page or the ISP hosting any content on this site take NO responsibility for the way you use the information/files provided on this site. These files and anything else on this site are here for private purposes only and should NOT be downloaded or viewed whatsoever! If you are affiliated with any government, or any other related group or were formally a worker of one you can NOT enter this Web site, cannot access any of its files and you cannot view any of the HTML files. All the objects on this site are PRIVATE property and are not meant for viewing or any other purposes other then bandwidth space. DO NOT ENTER whatsoever! If you enter this site you are not agreeing to these terms and you are violating code 431.322.12 of the Internet Privacy Act signed by Bill Clinton in 1995 and that means that you can NOT threaten our ISP or any person(s) or company storing these files, cannot prosecute any person(s) affiliated with this page which includes family, friends or individuals who run or enter this Web site.

IF YOU DO NOT ACCEPT THESE TERMS THEN LEAVE.

Of course, that's a crock. But then lawyers make a good living off that. Whether the crime is the act of offering the download, or performing the download, or copying the disk hasn't really been decided. But there's got to be at least one law broken in there somewhere.

That said, let's get back to the devil's handiwork.

Although FTP sites are part of the Internet, you don't download pages as you do on the Web. FTP sites have no links to click, only something that looks a lot like an old DOS directory listing. To access anything on these sites, you have to work with the file transfer protocol that gives FTP its name. A protocol is simply a collection of code and signals that let different types of computers communicate with each other; it's a sort of common language. In the case of FTP, the protocol was developed specifically to make files publicly available for transfer over the Internet. No messaging. No browsing. Just transfer. Because you can work with more than one file at a time—whole directories, in fact—FTP is simpler than Web links for mass transfers.

When you first connect to an FTP site, you're likely to be given just look-only access to the files. You can check out a site's collection of MP3s, but you can't download them. Such sites usually have a readme file that explains how you can gain download access to the site's files. Some FTP sites require that you first do something, such as send an email to the site's owner, click some sponsor's banner at a Web site, or visit a porn page. But before you can get even look-only access, you must log on to the site with a recognized username and password. More helpful search engines return not only a site's location but public usernames and passwords so you can make the initial connection.

Ratio Sites

At some MP3 FTP sites, you're required to upload files before you get to download any. These are ratio sites. Usually, your uploads are measured in megabytes. That's so no joker can create a bunch of five-second MP3s to satisfy his upload requirements. A site with a 1:5 ratio lets you download 5MB for every 1MB you upload. Ratios range from a stingy 1:2 to as loose as 1:10. In most instances, the credits you get for uploading last only for that session. If you disconnect, you'll have to start over from scratch.

Some sites don't have ratios. Instead, you must go through umpteen porn sites to find the password. Even if the music is free, server space isn't, and so a lot of sites make sponsorship deals with other sites. And stockbrokers aren't likely to sponsor an FTP site; those sponsors are porn. The password deal is to ensure you click the banner ad to make the host site some money. Many FTP sites let you log on with a public password that only allows you to read a text file that tells you what hoops to jump through to get leech access, the ability to download all the songs at the site. Other sites give you the password only by email. A few, called anonymous FTP servers, let you in with no strings. These are as rare as hen's teeth.

Reading FTP

The Internet address, which is called a universal resource locator (URL), for typical Web pages looks like this: <http://www.mp3under.com/>. FTP servers look different from the URL you use for a typical Web page. For example, Microsoft has an anonymous FTP server at <ftp://ftp.microsoft.com/> where you can download updated files. But most FTP sites are weirder than that. Most times you'll be dealing with such unlovely names as `ftp://224.12.343.748` and `ftp://382.409.131.24`. The computers that make up the Internet see site names as four sets of numbers separated by dots. (Actually, URL addresses are also numbers, but the World Wide Web is kind enough to translate the numbers to words, which humans have an easier time remembering.)

In theory, you can go to an FTP address using Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator. But don't. Neither browser was designed for FTP, and so the results are awkward and uncertain FTP connections. They're not worth the effort. Instead, we've included on the book's CD a program that lives to connect to FTP sites: CuteFTP. It's an easy way to connect and transfer files. We'll get to CuteFTP in the next chapter, where we cover downloading files. Right now, we need to get back to the current task—finding MP3 files.

Searching for HTTP and FTP Music Files: The Quest for Billy Idol

One day, for no apparent good reason, I had an urge to hear Billy Idol singing, "Dancing with Myself." I didn't know why, and I couldn't find my CD, last seen in the vicinity of the black maw under the driver's seat. Still, some urges are not to be denied. Surely on the Internet I can find one song by one has-been glam-punk rocker. Because any two searches for the same song or artist can produce different, overlapping results, the consummate MP3 hunter must master more than one way to search for MP3s. Follow me as I look at using online search engines, a metasearch program—MP3 Fiend—and Outlook Express to search newsgroups.

Using a Web Site Search Engine—Audiogalaxy.com

The search engine at Audiogalaxy.com is good for quick-and-dirty sweeps for FTP MP3s. The engine regularly prowls FTP sites, creating a database of the files each site has and sorting them by artist and song. More importantly, it gives you all the information you need in the form of user ID, password, and port number to log on to a site. Although the information is basic, most other sites don't do as good a job as Audiogalaxy in laying it out so you know what's what.

Take Your Choice - Dozens of music search engines besides Audiogalaxy are on the Web. One that deserves special attention is look4mp3.com, shown in [Figure 3.1](#), because it lets you choose whether to search for HTTP sites or FTP sites. If you find downloading from FTP too daunting—even with the terrific CuteFTP program included on the book's CD-ROM—or if you simply want to stay away from pirate-inhabited FTP sites, or want to hunt for the good stuff that's only on FTP—look4mp3's dual search is the best place to go.

Figure 3.1

Pick your path at look4mp3—HTTP or FTP. Choose HTTP for (mostly) legal songs; FTP takes you into the rich but uncharted outlaw territory.

Using your browser, surf to audiogalaxy.com. Right under the banner is a space to enter search terms, such as "Billy Idol." You also can search by title, album, genre—such as techno rock reggae—or anything, really, that someone might have included in the information tags imbedded in an MP3 file. There's a no-ratios box if you don't want the results to list ratio sites, which require uploads before you can make downloads.

Worse than Ratios - The no-ratios check box at Audiogalaxy sounds like a good idea. You'll only download from sites where you don't first have to embark on a life of crime by uploading the latest Mariah Carey warble. But it also means that you're going to run into a lot of banner sites. These sites let you in only far enough to read a message that tells you to go to a Web page and click some of the ads on that page. Doing so eventually reveals the secret password, and you can return to the FTP with full access. At the least, this is a dreary annoyance. At worst, it takes you into one of those pop-up madhouses determined to lure you to a pay porn site. Every time you try to close a site or go back, another banner pops up. I haven't yet figured out the marketing correlation between being irritated and being horny.

If we enter "billy idol" as search terms, the first thing the Audiogalaxy engine does is suggest you narrow the search by choosing one of Billy's song titles, as shown in [Figure 3.2](#). It also suggests other artists that fans of Billy might like, such as Motley Crue and Backstreet Boys. (If you figure out the connection, let me know.)

If you just go barging on down the screen, however, you see a list of FTP sites that carry at least one

song by Billy Idol. (Worshippers of other, more obscure butchy rockers may come up empty. And mind you, I'm not suggesting that people rip off sneering, has-been rock stars. It's just that Billy Idol gives me a good excuse to make smart-aleck remarks.) Anyway, if you scroll on down the suggestions, you get to a part of the listing that looks like the screen in [Figure 3.3](#). The callouts in the screen identify the types of information the search engine returns. Some of the information is critical to negotiating FTP sites successfully.

Figure 3.2

Billy Alikes.

In addition to finding you a Billy Idol song, Audiogalaxy's search engine suggests other performers it thinks you'll also like.

Pick one of the sites based on its chance of being open and how long it has been since the search engine checked that site to see whether it's online. Also consider whether it's a ratio site and how good a selection of songs it has. When you have one in your crosshairs, copy down the site ID, user ID, and password. All the other information Audiogalaxy supplies is helpful, but the site ID, username, and password are absolutely essential if you're ever going to connect to an FTP site. You'll need them when you get to the next chapter on downloading FTP files.

Figure 3.3

Getting the lowdown on FTP sites.

Audiogalaxy lists the particulars of FTP sites that carry at least one matching song.

1. **FTP Hot Copy:** An easy way to use some Windows FTP programs such as CuteFTP, included on the book's CD-ROM. CuteFTP watches the Windows clipboard and connects automatically to any FTP URL you copy.
2. **Logon:** The word the new user must enter as an identity.
3. **Password:** A supposedly secret word needed to connect to the FTP site. If the site does not require ratio uploads, there may be still another, second password you can find only by following the directions you find at the site, which typically take you to a Web page loaded with advertising.
4. **Chance of Being Open:** This is the chance, expressed as a percentage, that a user will be able to connect to this site. Many sites will allow only a set number of users to access the site at one time. If a site is very popular or the number of users allowed is very low, this percentage will also be low.
5. **Site Speed:** A rough measurement of the average speed of a site, rated from one (slowest) to five blocks (fastest).
6. **Ratio:** If there is a γ or a ratio here, this is a ratio site. You will be required to upload songs before you can download any. A 1:10 ratio requires you to upload 1MB of files before you can download 10MB.
7. **Directory path:** The location of the following song file on the MP3 server.
8. **Last Checked:** The last time the search engine checked the site's status—whether it's online or

offline.

9. **Port:** A location on the server that listens for access requests. The conventional port number for FTP is 21, but other numbers are acceptable, depending on the server's configuration. If either the port or the IP address is wrong, you won't be able to connect to the site.
10. **Site Name:** This is a text name for the benefit of humans. It's not necessary to connect to a site. Some sites have no text names.
11. **Song Lists:** Titles and artists of songs found at this site.
12. **IP Address:** This is the Internet protocol address—the way computers on the Net see it, as a group of four three-digit numbers separated by decimals (for example, 123.456.789.012).

Finding Music with MP3 Fiend

As good as Audiogalaxy, or any search engine, may be, it's necessarily limited by the fact that no single, mortal database can exhaustively search the ever-growing, amorphous Internet. To get the best results, you may have to search in several different MP3 databases because the same search terms on different engines will produce different results. (Another popular search engine is Scour.com. Check the reviews of the top search sites in "Top 101 Internet Audio Sites" at the back of the book.) You can find all those sites and other good search engines at this book's Web page, mp3under.com. But first, you should know there's a way to expand the scope of your MP3 searches without trotting from site to site.

MP3 Fiend (see [Figure 3.4](#)), a program you run from your own PC, searches 11 of the Web's best MP3 engines simultaneously and then combines the results to display on a single page. What's better, it verifies the results so you don't spend a lot of time trying to connect to an FTP site only to find out it's dead for some reason. The creator of MP3Fiend did not respond to several emails asking permission to include the program on the book's CD. Our killjoy lawyers say we can't distribute it without permission. Instead, surf on over to MP3Fiend.com and download the software. It's worth the effort and connection time. Then install MP3Fiend, and then we'll embark on a metasearch, which spans the array of search engines.

Figure 3.4

MP3 Fiend's main screen.

Most functions of MP3 Fiend are launched from this screen. The only menu selections are the words under the large, empty window. They produce a whippoorwill-like sound when you pass the arrow over them. You can turn off the sound.

The first thing you notice when you launch MP3 Fiend (refer to [Figure 3.4](#)) is that it has a non-standard look for a Windows program. In fact, in the MP3 world, non-standard, even bizarre, looks are the norm. Some of them are really quite lovely, although incomprehensible. Anyway, don't make any assumptions that something you're used to in other Windows programs still applies. Luckily, MP3 Fiend is so easy to master that you'll get it under your belt in about five minutes. Most of its interface is taken up by a large, blank window where the results of the search will be displayed.

WinMP3Locator Can Locate MP3s, Too - As this book went to press, ReGet Software

had just released its WinMP3Locator software. Similar in operation to MP3 Fiend, but seemingly a little slower, WinMP3Locator integrates with your Web browser and download software (such as Go!Zilla and CuteFTP, as well as ReGet's own creation) to search numerous Internet sites for songs. I don't think it's as good as MP3 Fiend, but you can download a free copy at <http://www.winmp3locator.com/>.

Pay for Play - The free version of MP3 Fiend is fully functional but advertising-supported. To get rid of the ads, you have to pay. Registration is \$25, and for your money you also get your name in the title bar, no ads, and tech support. Fiend's creators will also accept contributions of less than \$25.

MP3 Fiend itself does not search the Internet. Instead, it conducts a metasearch among the databases that have been created by other sites' MP3 search engines. It's a search of searches.

To launch a search, type some keywords—artist, title, album name, and so on—in the only space where you can type: the data entry box right above the ad. Fiend keeps track of previous searches, which you can get to by clicking the arrow at the right end of the data entry box. You'll get more results from vague searches. "Billy idol" gets more hits than "dancing with myself."

When we enter "billy idol" and press the Enter key—the only way to launch the search—Fiend sends the search terms to Gnutella, Pathfinder, FTPFind, MP3Board, Kermit's MP3 Search, Gnute, Audiofind, Astraweb, 2Look4, MusicSeek, and Lycos MP3 Search. They're all good search engines on their own, and among all of them it's awfully hard not to find anything you look for. Gnutella and Gnute, in particular, are helpful for finding HTTP downloads, which are much easier to use than FTP sites.

As Fiend conducts its metasearch, the Results Form keeps you posted on the progress of the search. (See [Figure 3.5](#)) On a 56K modem or faster, searching all 11 databases will take less than 3–5 minutes, and even less time if you set up Fiend to look for fewer than 50 matches. You can eliminate any of the searches by clicking the X-buttons in the left column, and you stop the search by clicking the Close button. You'll know when the metasearch is over because you'll hear Austin Powers say, "Yeah, baby!"

Good Gnews - The recent addition of Gnutella to MP3 Fiend's mix is interesting because it's one of the first indications that open-source music is the wave of the future. Gnutella and a program called Napster enable anyone with a PC and an Internet connection to become an ad hoc MP3 download server. This is no small cheese. We'll get into it in depth in Chapter 5, "What's This Napster? How Can I Use It to Swap Music with Others?"

Figure 3.5

MP3 Fiend Results Form.

Fiend keeps you posted on the search process, even though the whole deal only takes a few minutes.

1. **X-Buttons** disable any or all the search engines even while a search is in progress. Helpful if you've already got enough hits to satisfy you. Disable an engine permanently by clicking the words Show Engines and then uncheck the boxes to the left of the names of search engines you don't want to use. No, I don't know what En? stands for. Does it matter?
2. **S.I.** also reports on the metasearch's progress, starting out with all circles green. They turn tangerine—yes, tangerine—as the search progresses, and finally either become a red circle if Fiend encounters an error or transform into happy faces as an inquiry completes. They serve no helpful purpose, but they're nice to look at. And no, I don't know what "S.I." stands for either.
3. **The Description/Progress** column tells you whether Fiend is connecting to a site, is waiting for results, has encountered an error, or is disconnected.
4. **MP3s Found** shows the number of songs that match the search terms for each search engine. A running total is at the bottom of the list.

Each song listed in the results identifies an MP3 file somewhere on the Internet that matches your search. Our quest for Billy Idol homed in on 133 files, four of them HTTP downloads. Each of those files is going to require verification, which is time-consuming. You can make the search more efficient if you narrow the search to a particular song. Right-click anywhere in the results list and choose Subsearch Results. You're given a choice of keeping the results you get with a subsearch or discarding the results. We'll choose to keep them. Enter "Dancing with Myself" in the entry box and click OK. Immediately, the list is trimmed by 117, leaving us with only 16 sites. Now, mind you, this is not the same thing as finding 16 copies of "Dancing with Myself" that you can actually download. That would be too easy. Because FTP sites dominate the results, you must do more research by verifying them.

Verifying Fiend Search Results

The 11 databases Fiend searches are filled with bad information. It's inevitable on the Internet, especially when you're looking for sites the record companies are closing as fast as they can. Depending on how infrequently each search engine refreshes its search, the results could be woefully outdated. So, the first thing to do is to see which of these results are any good.

You can verify one site at a time, which is the faster way to go if you see only one or two results that intrigue you. Select any result by left-clicking it. You can choose more than one result to test at a time by holding down the Ctrl key as you click results. Then right-click and select Verify Results/Verify Selected Results. Conversely, you can verify all the results at once by clicking the words Verify Results on Fiend's main screen. The verification process takes longer than the search itself because MP3 Fiend sends several commands to each site and has to wait for results. It took just short of four minutes to check out our original 133 Billy Idol songs over a cable Internet connection. During that time, MP3 Fiend tried to log as a user named Anonymous with an email address of anon@anon. Fiend tests each of the sites to see, essentially, how much it can get away with.

The results of the testing are shown in [Figure 3.6](#). If you click the heading of the Server Address column, the results are sorted by site address, and you'll see that the same sites are duplicated several times for different songs. Our original 133 Billy Idol hits come from only 34 individual sites. The verification process rarely comes up with results that say, "Come on in! Download all you want!"

Instead you get responses that at first seem to suggest you're shooting all blanks. With a guide to the responses, though, you'll find things aren't as hopeless as they seem. With [Figure 3.6](#) are some of the verification returns MP3 Fiend produces and what they mean:

VERIFIED!

You won't see this often, and when you do, it doesn't necessarily mean someone left the back door unlocked. It sometimes hides a banner or ratio site, but it's still a keeper.

Figure 3.6

MP3 Fiend verification screen.

After MP3 Fiend tests all the potential connections uncovered by a search, the results of the test are displayed in a list that needs interpretation to become helpful.

Banner Site

MP3 Fiend believes this is a banner site. This means that the site requires you to travel to a Web site to get a password, and may require you to click on banner advertisements to find it. First, of course, you must have a password to get a password. These sites are so annoying that you may want to skip them altogether. But, if you're determined, you'll see in a few moments how to fish out the information you need to assault the site. Also, MP3 Fiend doesn't claim to be perfectly accurate in detecting banner sites. Some sites it labels as banner sites are not, and many without the label are, in fact, banner sites.

Busy

The site is busy. To keep the site speed running smoothly, FTP owners often put a limit on the number of users allowed on at the same time. FTPs sites with slow connections, such as 56K and ISDN lines—yes, those are slow connections in these days of DSL and cable—usually allow five or fewer simultaneous connections. Sites with DSL, cable, T1, or T3 hookups allow more people on at one time. To get into them, you must use an FTP client such as CuteFTP, which you'll meet in Chapter 4.

Connection Refused

The site is down or, for some unknown reason, simply refused your connection. Remember, the search results MP3 Fiend comes up with are based on information in the databases of various search engines. Fiend merely reports what the databases say. It doesn't try to actually connect until you run the verification process. For this run, delete any `Connection Refused` results by highlighting the line on which the site is listed and pressing the Delete key, or by right-clicking and choosing Delete.

Could Not Connect

The site is down; delete it from the list.

Not Found

This result could mean one of two things. The first is that the song is missing. The site's owner might have moved that file to another directory. It doesn't mean you can't download it, but that you'll have to connect to the site and do some manual searching first. Or, `Not Found` could mean you have a ratio

site that Fiend misinterpreted.

Permission Denied

It's not as bad as it sounds. This almost always indicates a ratio site where you have to upload an MP3 before you can download any. You have to do some manual probing of the site, but you will get the song eventually.

Syntax Error

This error will occur on FTP servers that don't follow the usual rules for communicating with remote clients. All you can do is connect to them manually to see what's going on.

Timed Out

The site did not respond in a reasonable time. Either the site is down or so slow that you might as well delete it.

Non-FTP Result

You've struck an HTTP site, which makes for easier downloading.

Nothing in Verified Column

This result is an MP3 Fiend anomaly. Often, though, sites that are blank in this column are ratio sites.

All files that show file sizes are valid downloads, although they might be banner or ratio sites that require further effort on your part.

That further effort, with any of these results, involves looking at the details of the results MP3 Fiend obtained during the verification. There you'll find the clues to making a successful connection using CuteFTP.

Interpreting MP3 Fiend Verification Logs

To find out exactly what happened when MP3 Fiend probed any of the sites, look at the Verification Log screen for any verified site that suggests it's open to making a connection somehow (see [Figure 3.7](#)). The logs help you figure out exactly how.

Figure 3.7

MP3 Fiend verification log.

A verification log shows you the exact commands MP3 Fiend hurled at a site and the responses it elicited. Enough information is usually in the log to tell you how to complete a successful connection.

Many FTP sites, particularly ratio and banner sites, are deliberately designed to limit your first attempt to connect with them, but in the process, they provide instructions you can incorporate for a second, usually successful, hookup. You find these instructions in the site's Verification Log. To look at the log for any particular site, first left-click the result in the Verification Screen and then right-click and select View Verification Log. If you want to check another site, be sure to left-click it before right-clicking; otherwise, you'll still get the previous log results. The most likely verification

results to have useful information in their logs are Verified, Banner Site, Not Found, and Permission Denied.

Mass Deletions - After testing connections with Verify, you don't have to delete unreachable sites individually. Click anywhere in the list and choose Remove Results/Remove Invalid Files. This quickly cuts the list to fewer than a dozen sites. The only problem with this is that it can delete a few sites it shouldn't. If you want to ensure that you look at the verification logs of every site uncovered in the search, do the following: Left-click any site to select it and then right-click and choose View Verification Log. If the log for that one song doesn't have anything useful, none of the results from that same site will be useful either. With the site still selected, right-click and choose Remove Results/Remove All From This Server. Fiend instantly deletes all the results from that same site. Because the results tend to be from only a few sites, you'll quickly check out all the sites this way. Other filters are available for removing sites, but these two are the most helpful.

When you select View Verification Log, a new window pops up with the results of the FTP exchange between MP3 Fiend and the FTP site. Let's take a look at one of the logs to dredge up some useful information. All the lines preceded with numbers are the site's responses to the Fiend. I'll butt in every so often, in the boldfaced type, to point out what we've learned.

220 WEBWORX Microsoft FTP Service (Version 5.0).

USER anonymous

331 Anonymous access allowed, send identity (e-mail name) as password.

Fiend logs on as "anonymous" and the site asks anonymous to enter an email address for a password.

PASS anon@anon.com

230 Anonymous user logged in.

Fiend gives "anon@anon.com" as a password. The site accepts that password and logs in the anonymous user. You now have the two most vital bits of information you can have: a working user ID and password.

CWD /Music

250 CWD command successful.

The site obeyed MP3 Fiend's command to change the working directory (CWD). A good sign. Some sites lock you into one directory until you've uploaded or gone to a banner site to get the "real" user ID and password.

TYPE A

Fiend tells the computer to display only ASCII (text) characters.

200 Type set to A.

PASV

227 Entering Passive Mode (209,226,84,194,5,232).

Fiend sets up the site to receive more commands.

LIST Billy Idol - Dancing With Myself.mp3

Send125 Data connection already open; transfer starting.

550 Billy: The system cannot find the file specified.

Bad news. The site could not find the song that was spotted during the search. The song might be at the site but has moved to a different directory.

RETR Billy Idol - Dancing With Myself.mp3

Send125 Data connection already open; transfer starting.

MP3 Fiend tries a different location on the site and hits pay dirt.

ABOR

426 Connection closed; transfer aborted.

226 ABOR command successful.

QUIT

Fiend aborts the transfer and quits the site.

This is not bad. We've found Billy Idol's "Dancing with Myself," and it's at a site without banners or ratios. At this point we would use MP3 Fiend's automation features to send all the log information to CuteFTP so you can finally suck down the song.

Some of you might have noticed that MP3 Fiend has a main selection, Download w/Assoc, and there's some mention in the configuration screen of feeding Fiend's results directly to either of two programs that specialize in downloads. These two programs are GetRight and Go!Zilla, the latter of which is on the book's CD-ROM. Doesn't that mean we can do our downloading directly from MP3 Fiend? Would that it were so easy. Although Go!Zilla is a terrific program for downloading from HTTP sites, it sucks when it comes to FTP. The same feature that lets Fiend—and Audiogalaxy—trigger Go!Zilla also lets both work with CuteFTP, which is a much better program for reeling in FTP

downloads.

But that's in the next chapter. First, just so you'll understand better the twists and turns that accompany FTP sites, let's look quickly at parts of a few other logs:

220- There is a Byte Ratio on this site!

220- 1:3 here on this site _

220- Please upload 70's crap to me

220- and any ACOUSTIC MUSIC you have!!

You'll have to upload 1MB of music, preferably from the '70s, for every 3MB you want to download.

220- Email: ro6wil55@hotmail.com

220- or ICQ me at 56813472 for leech access

Many sites require a person to contact the site's operator through email or the real-time chat program ICQ to receive leech access, which allows visitors to download anything and everything the site has.

220- Remember all MP3's must be deleted after 24 hours.

This is a lame attempt to pretend laws aren't being broken.

And another

230-this is a lookie account only... so take a look

230-and if you like what you see, get in touch with me

230-and we can talk trades/leeches.

230-this is NOT a ratio site... so don't waste your time...

A look account gives visitors unfettered access to see what songs are at the site, but visitors must contact the site's owner to get download access.

Just about any FTP site that's running and doesn't block you out entirely will at least give you look access to see what it has to offer. And as these examples show, the sites usually display some text message to explain what type of site it is and how to get download access. This most often involves either going to a related HTTP site and clicking on advertising banners so the FTP owner makes a few cents or contacting the site's owner by email or ICQ to get the real passwords.

Finding Songs with MP3 Fiend's Music Charts

If you're looking for a song that's on any of today's music charts and you're either too lazy or too dim to figure out some search terms for it, MP3 Fiend provides live updates of seven of Billboard's top 20 music charts. Use them to see what's hot or to fashion a quick-and-dirty search for any of the songs on the chart.

Begin by clicking Charts on Fiend's main screen. A few seconds of delay occur as MP3 Fiend checks for the latest versions of Billboard's charts. You'll get another screen, similar to the one in [Figure 3.8](#). Click the arrow on the drop-down list that reads The Billboard Hot 20. The list that drops down lets you change the selection to one of six other Billboard lists. Choose one, and the screen displays that chart's list.

Figure 3.8

Billboard Charts on DemandBillboardz.

If you want to do a search for any of the songs on any of the charts, double-click any of the titles to generate an effective set of search terms to zero in on MP3s of that song. Press Enter to launch the search and then use the verification process and logs to track down the chart buster.

Newsgroups—MP3s the Hard Way

There is another way in which the wily hunter might track down the elusive MP3 song. This is using the newsreader built into your Internet browser. In a nutshell, this is a primitive way to get MP3s or any other type of file. Newsgroups, which communicate over a worldwide network called Usenet, are a leftover from the earlier days of the Internet when it was entirely text-based and its primary use was the exchange of notes, messages, and other information that could be expressed by the alphabet, numerals, and ordinary punctuation.

MP3 Fiend provides Billboard magazine's latest charts for rock, rhythm and blues, rap, country, dance, and adult contemporary songs.

The "news" part of the name is a misnomer. They are really message groups—electronic bulletin boards where everyone reads and replies to everyone else's messages. Each new message can start a thread, which is a linked string of answers and replies. Each newsgroup has a specialized area of common interest. For example, `alt.binaries.sounds.mp3` is a newsgroup devoted to MP3s. The topics can get endlessly specific, such as `alt.sounds.mp3.80s.billyidol.albumonly`. The "alt" means alternative, but not alternative music. Instead, it describes a type of newsgroup that doesn't have all the rules and moderation that other newsgroups have. Binaries tells you to expect to find binary files—non-text files that include computer-readable-only data, such as MP3 files, graphics, or software. You can find newsgroups on practically any subject. It's not unusual for a news server, where the messages physically reside, to have 50,000 topics going at the same time.

Although news servers are designed to handle text only, someone figured out how to use newsgroups to distribute binary files, which use codes other than those that represent the alphabet. The trick to distributing MP3s via newsgroups is to translate binary codes into combinations of alphanumeric characters. The result, when you open such a message, looks like nonsense to us, but a computer on the receiving end easily converts the gibberish into usable code or data.

Versatility - I don't want to give the impression that newsgroups are used only for distributing bootleg Britney Spears songs. They're also used to distribute nude Britney Spears photos—or at least pix that make that claim—along with other, more genuinely raunchy stuff.

If this seems a roundabout way of doing things, you're right. The advantage of newsgroups is that you can leave a message asking for some obscure song, and someone else with your weird tastes in music, just to be nice, might post the song there. This would probably all be very touching if fundamentally we weren't talking about violating federal law. With the exception of some MP3s from bands, such as the Grateful Dead, which encourage taping of their concerts and so fall into a legal limbo, you can be certain that any popular song you find posted on a newsgroup is illegal.

Not that I care. I'm just going to show you how to find MP3s in newsgroups. In the next chapter, you'll see how to download and decode them. Then you're on your own.

Finding News Servers - If you haven't set up any newsgroups before, that's your first job. When you signed up for Internet service, whoever's providing that service should have told you the name of its network news transfer protocol (NNTP) server and whether you need to log on and use a password to get to it. There are three types of news servers:

Free News Servers aren't necessarily free by intention. These are often servers that have been configured incorrectly so that they don't require usernames and passwords. Other servers are free intentionally, but might allow you to only read messages, not post them.

Commercial News Servers charge a subscription fee monthly, quarterly, or yearly. In return, they provide faster service, more reliability, and a wider range of newsgroups than do public servers.

Web-Based News Servers have integrated the drab text of traditional news servers with the graphic look of a Web page. Messages are easier to navigate using the ol' point-and-click. Deja, at deja.com, has done the best job of civilizing newsgroups.

Even if you already have a news server, you can tap into others. Not all news servers have the same contents. This means that if you can't find the song you want in one server's newsgroups, maybe you can find it in another's. To find some news servers that will let you hitch a ride, go to <http://www.newsservers.net/> and click on the Servers tab. Then scroll on down past the text and click on Complete List of Free News Servers. Or, just go directly to http://www.newsservers.net/news_servers/complete.html. (Another good site is <http://usenet.startshere.net/>.) You'll see a list similar to the one shown in Figure 3.9. The list of free connections at Free Usenet Servers includes the numerical name of the site in the xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx. format, followed by the site's text name. For example, the first listing in this screen—128.230.129.221 (dp-news.maxwell.syr.edu)—identifies an open server at Syracuse University. The list also gives you information about the site so you can determine if the site is fast enough, big enough, and stable enough for you to link to.

Figure 3.9

News servers.

Whether you use a news server associated with your Internet provider or one of the publicly, if unintentionally, free servers, you must add the server to your newsreader. Many newsreaders are available as shareware. We're going to stick with one that comes with Windows in the form of Outlook Express, which also handles email.

Outlook Express—not Outlook, which is a more powerful program that comes with Microsoft Office—provides a Wizard that steps you through the process. Launch Outlook, click the Tools menu, and choose Accounts. In the Internet Accounts dialog box that pops up, click the News tab. You'll be presented with a list of any news servers to which you've already created links. To add a new news server, click the Add button and then News.

This starts up the Internet Connection Wizard. Most likely, the wizard will already have the first two items it presents for you to fill in: your display name and email address. Change them if you want to be more mysterious. The third wizard screen asks you to type the name of your Internet News (NNTP) server. Fill in the name you received from your Internet provider or one that you've found in a list of free news servers. The name you type will look something like that in [Figure 3.10](#). Don't check the box about requiring a password unless you've been told to by your Internet service provider.

Figure 3.10

News wizard.

You're not limited to only your Internet provider's news servers. There are others, and they're free for the picking.

Click Next and then Finish. The wizard sends you back to the Internet Accounts dialog, where the news server will have freshly appeared on the list of accounts. The name of the newly added server also appears in the menu on the left side of Outlook Explorer's main screen.

Close the Internet Accounts dialog box. Because you haven't used that news server before, you're asked if you'd like to download newsgroups. Yes, you would. In a few moments, Outlook Express displays a Newsgroup Subscription list that starts off much like the list in [Figure 3.11](#), where newsgroups named with numbers have been sorted to the top of the list. Page down through the list a couple of screens just to get an idea of what it's like. Each one of the items in the list is a separate newsgroup, filled with messages and replies on whatever topic is suggested by the newsgroup's name. Newsgroups are organized into subject hierarchies, with the first few letters of the newsgroup name indicating the major subject category. Major subject categories are news, rec (recreation), soc (society), sci (science), and comp (computers). The names of sub-categories are separated by dots.

Figure 3.11

Newsgroup subscriptions.

When Outlook Express's Internet Connection Wizard prompts you, enter the name of a news server to which you want access.

With tens of thousands of newsgroups, you need to narrow down the list by typing "mp3" in the box beneath the instruction "Display newsgroups which contain:". Checking the box to the right, "Also search descriptions" will be more thorough in dredging up groups associated with MP3, but it greatly increases the time the search takes. Most of the time, you can safely leave it unchecked. That way, it

takes Outlook no time at all to display a shorter list in which every entry has "mp3" somewhere in its name, like these examples:

alt.binaries.mp3

alt.binaries.mp3.bootlegs

alt.binaries.mp3.macast.skins_plugins

alt.binaries.mp3.throttle.news.and.piss.off.sabrina

alt.binaries.mp3.zappa

alt.binaries.mpeg.mp3

alt.binaries.music.mp3

alt.binaries.remixes.mp3

alt.binaries.smash_pumpkins.MP3

alt.binaries.sounds.1940s.mp3

alt.binaries.sounds.1950s.mp3

If a newsgroup sounds interesting, double-click it to subscribe.

On my computer, as I'm writing this, the complete MP3 list contains 286 newsgroups, with a variety that runs from Beatles to bluegrass, jazz to ninja, acid rock to gospel.

Using a Newsgroup

Scroll through your own list. When you find a newsgroup you like, you can subscribe to it so that it is displayed in your Outlook Express Folders list. Subscribing provides easy access to your favorite newsgroups, eliminating the need to scroll through the long list on the server each time you want to visit a favorite newsgroup.

Select the newsgroups to which you want to subscribe by double-clicking them. When you do, an icon of a couple of folders appears to the left of the group's name. When you've selected all you want, click the OK button. Notice that the names of the newsgroups you selected are added to the Folders window of Outlook Express. The Newsgroup Subscription dialog box is replaced by the Subscription window shown in [Figure 3.12](#).

Figure 3.12

In Sync.

By subscribing to and syncing with different newsgroups, you can get Outlook to update them with new messages automatically.

The window lists the newsgroups to which you are now subscribed along with columns that show the

number of messages you've read and the total messages in each group. The layout is similar to the Windows folder, or directory, structure when seen with Windows Explorer.

Finding Hidden Messages - Outlook Express doesn't always show all the messages that belong to a newsgroup when you double-click the group's name. Your Outlook Express might be set to show only 300 messages at a time. To change this, click Tools, Options, Read and uncheck the box labeled "Get (some number) headers at a time." Also, click View on the program's main menu followed by Current View, Show All Messages.

To see the messages contained in a newsgroup, either left-click the group's name in your Folders column or right-click it and choose Open. Outlook Express displays a list of the messages for that newsgroup. The messages' titles give you a good idea if a message contains anything you'd be interested in. Many of the messages are requests ("REQ:") for specific songs, enticements to MP3 Web and FTP sites, pleas for help, or simply everyday gripes. What you're looking for in particular are messages that contain encoded songs. You'll recognize these because they invariably include the name of the song and usually the artist who performs it, such as the following messages containing a Cyndi Lauper song among other assorted messages. (There were, alas, no Billy Idol songs.)

The Fixx

REQ.: "Time Will Reveal" by DeBarge - - - -PLEASE?

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (0/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (2/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (3/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (4/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (5/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (6/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (7/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (8/9)

(Cyndi Lauper) She Bop.mp3 (9/9)

FREE GAS SAVING TIPS!!! not topic, but important none the less!

Problems with napster

Attn: Folderol - Please Repost Roxanne - Track 3 - TIA :)

GnUtEiLa, 10,000 CrAcKs and 10,000 SeRiALs, MP3's, NaKeD WoMeN, and MoRe!!!!

REQ: "Coming Up Close" by Til Tuesday

In addition to the artist's name and song title, another sure clue that messages contain songs is the (0/9)–(9/9) following the message titles. These tell you that "She Bop" has been spread across nine messages. The first number is the order in which the separate parts must be rejoined to re-create the song. You can open up any single one of the song messages. But it takes several seconds even on a hot Internet connection, and all you'll see is gibberish:

```
M$CY2+O[_B(K>^9%ZL?Z"\A$XLB$"-:5"N6CX>0>E_D[ , $Z&'`''`"B*863##*
```

To get Cyndi's song on your hard drive, you must download and decode all the messages that it comprises. It's not difficult, although there is one tricky element. But that's for the next chapter.

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