

What is folk music, exactly?

Simply put, it's music made by common folk about common folk things. It's made rather than consumed, and doesn't require money or equipment to make.

Why does folk music matter?

Although making folk music won't save the world or even your soul, it will sure make your life, as well as your friends' and your children's lives, richer and better.

So I get that it's important. How can I have a folk music culture?

1) Don't be self-conscious, and don't try too hard.

This isn't a lifestyle choice you need to Instagram about. Don't try to convince people of anything.

2) Sing.

Sing whenever you think of a song, and sing out. Listen to some good folk music.¹ Pick a song and listen to it, singing along as best you can and faking the rest, until it's memorized.

Sing in the car, the shower, the garden, while you're doing the dishes, vacuuming, or hammering shingles. If you have children, sing to them, even if they object. (They probably will.) Sing part of your daily prayers.

Real folk music adapts itself into your life, so as your repertoire grows, so will your ability to have a song that suits the occasion!

3) Don't listen to music too frequently.

If you are already providing a soundtrack to your life of canned, ready-to-eat music, you'll never have living music in your life. If you're listening to canned music every day, you listen to music too much. Try some silence for a change. Out of silence, music grows.

4) Include people in your music.

This is easier with children than with adults. If you have kids, just act like it's normal to sing along with you, and they'll be less uncomfortable. Pick up an instrument to learn. Youtube instructional videos are really helpful.

¹ Like our CD. See the resource lists on the website!

Invite people over to play with you. Listen to other people's music with appreciation. Remember that folk music is a process, not a product.

The only music I know is pop music. Or worse. And I don't know how to sing.

If your memory is already filled with commercial jingles or pop music, don't worry about it--just don't sing it. If you want a song to die, leave it locked inside of you. Find music that suits your life better anyway.

No one really cares if you can't sing (unless you try to join the choir). Folk music is for daily life, not performing. No matter how bad you are, you can improve with practice, so just sing (see above). Nothing attempted, nothing gained!