

Do You Like Vocaloid Music?

A virtual singing synthesizer.

Genre: Entertainment, Popular Culture, Science and Technology



Create your own music using computer-synthesised voice software.

daniwellP, a Japanese musician, produced the world famous pop song "Nyanyanyanyanyanyanya!"* that had an animated cartoon cat with a Pop-tart for a body flying through space and leaving a rainbow trail behind. You may know of it? The song ranked as number five in 2011 but has become one of the most popular internet memes of all time.



Can you recognise this meme from the vocaloid song Nyanyanyanyanyanyanya! written by daniwellP?



If you recognise Nyanyanyanyanyanyanya sung by the virtual singer Hatsune Miku, you are at least familiar with one of the latest trend in music known as vocaloid.

Vocaloid is a computer synthesised sound developed in the early 2000's. It imitates a human singing voice, which can sound extraordinarily realistic but is not human. Users of vocaloid synthesising software can create their own music by putting in background tunes and putting in lyrics like:

“What’s this in my belly button?

What’s this in my ear?

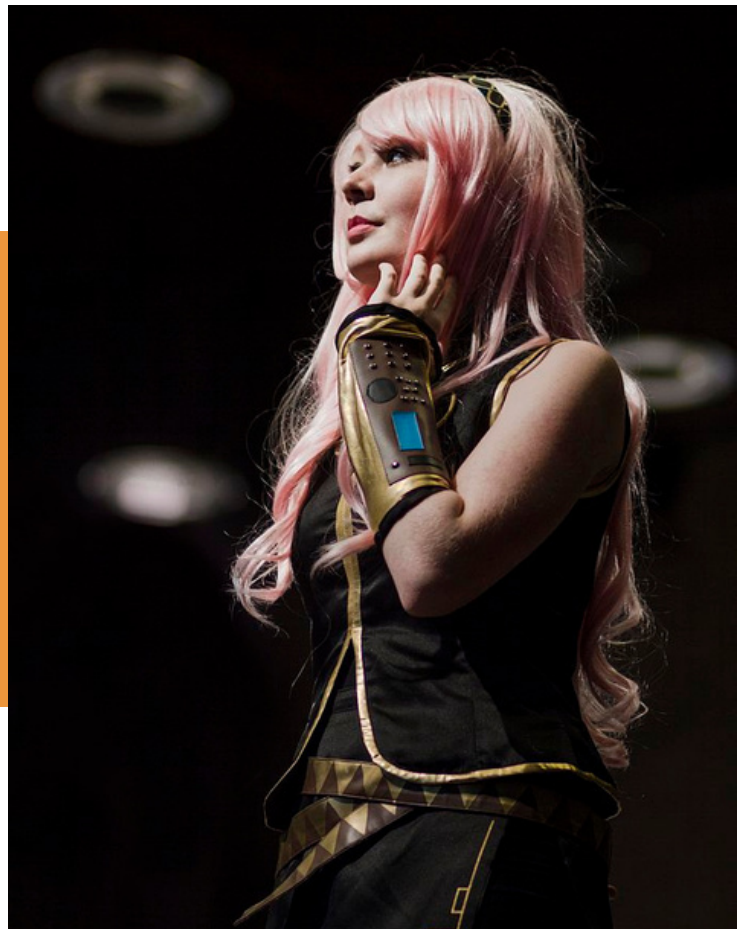
What’s this way up inside my nose?

What is going on here?”

The Vocaloid songs are produced by software, which mimics human voice actors (with varying degrees of authenticity). All of the voices you hear are made by a computer, not human made. In some cases, however, living, breathing musicians have also sung user-created Vocaloid music, where their voice is synthesised.



Vocaloid artists synthesis their voice with computer software to sound like it is digitally synthesised.



Vocaloid avatars are anime-styled, but no anime include them as a main role.

These avatars also come in plushies, figurines, bags, and robot best friends (maybe), just like typical anime merchandise.

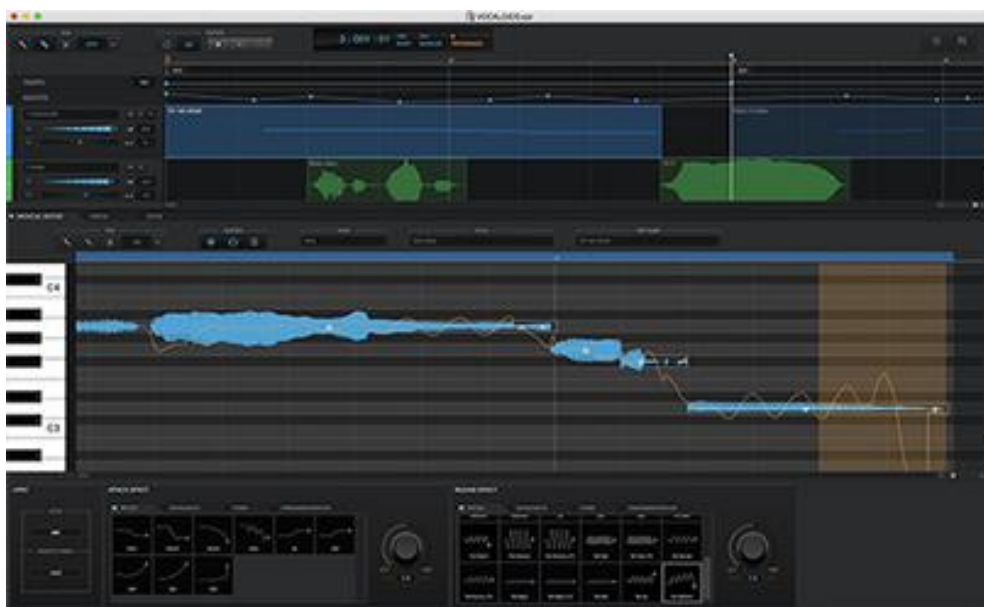


Vocaloid music has become very popular with many forms of merchandise sold around the world.



Vocaloid software has been a breakthrough in music technology. If you don't happen to have a zillion dollars, and cannot pay professional musicians and singers to make the music they want to hear, you can now make our own tunes.

Also, humans can only sing a certain way, so normal music is often tailored to a singer's voice. With vocaloid, users can make the voice fit the music and not the other way around.



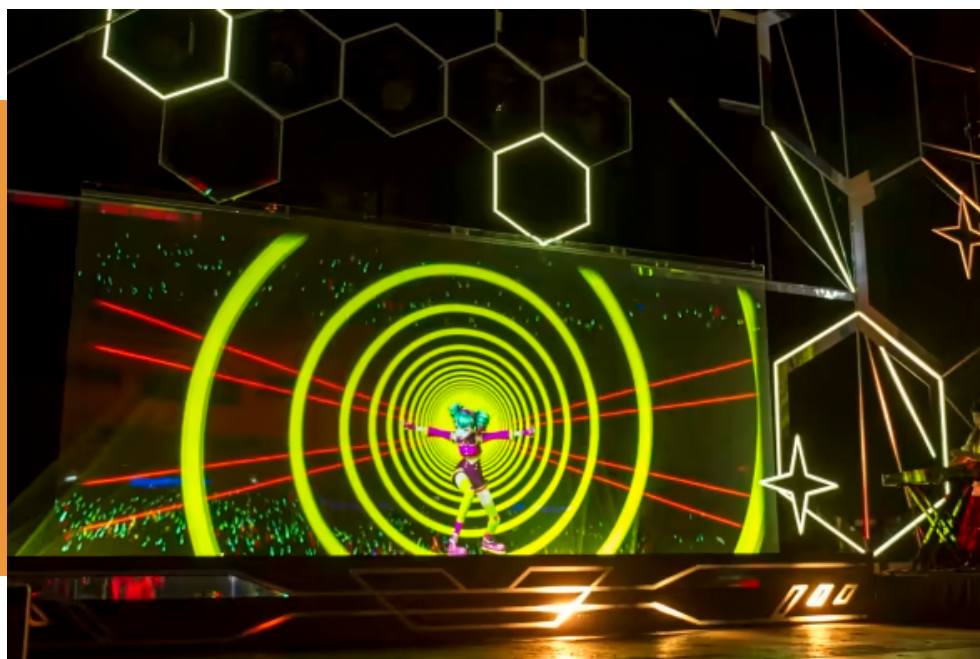
Vocaloid 5 is a computer software program that enables you to create your own music with a synthesised voice.

If you are too young for a music studio and can't make your own records yet the way real musicians do, or if your singing sounds like cats coughing up hairballs, vocaloid can be a godsend. You can make your own music at home, with voices that do not hurt other people's ears.

The software (like Vocaloid 5) was developed by the Japanese company Yamaha, and it is most popular in Japan. The most well-known Voicebank is Hatsune Miku, whose popularity not only led to "live" concerts in Japan, but elsewhere in the Far East as well.



Some music artists combine anime and vocaloid to create a virtual concert in front of a live audience.



For many people, vocaloid is a great way to be creative and become the musician they have always wanted to be. But it does have a downside. Think of "fruit" drinks. Many of these drinks, especially the ones kids love, are filled with so many artificial colorings and flavourings, so much sugar and things our bodies do not need, that the people who drink them forget not only what the real fruit tastes like, but why we should eat or drink from them at all.

If we only drink fake fruit, what do we need the real thing for? And if we listen to computer music, with synthesised voices, what do we need people for? But no doubt, there will always be a market for both. What do you think of vocaloid?

*Nyanyanyanyanyanyanya!" is a Japanese onomatopoeia for meow (にゃ).

 **Good to Think About**



1. What is vocaloid?


2. How is vocaloid music used?

3. Why do some people prefer using vocaloid software to create music?

4. What are positive and negative uses of vocaloid?

Key Vocabulary

- animated
- internet
- memes
- synthesise
- imitate
- software
- realistic
- authenticity
- anime
- technology



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