

In 0) *the* early 1980s, a glib advertising campaign began to appear before every winter holidays. It featured a beautifully wrapped album and the slogan "Give the Gift of Music". The implication was that buying your friends or relations a record was the obvious answer 1) the annual present-choosing dilemma. But as anybody 2) has spent the weeks up to holidays desperately trying to 3) out the musical preferences of a cousin or sister-in-law will tell you, that is simply not true. Buy someone the 4) album, and you could enrich their life. Buy someone the wrong album and it's difficult not to notice the look 5) disappointment as they lift the wrapping paper.

There are two rules about buying albums as a present. First, steer 6) of the novelty purchase and second, avoid anything too difficult. 7) albums will get played twice, laughed at once, then never touched again. Holiday time is about easy-access entertainment, not challenging art. Other 8) that, it's a minefield. The truth is people's tastes are personal and hard to guess.