I'm starting to learn how to make music, in what is possibly the least conventional way possible. I've always had a fascination with music, but I've never felt motivated to put in the effort to learn all of the intricacies of playing an instrument. I'm a big fan of singing, I enjoy a wide variety of different music spanning across several genres, so I always thought learning an instrument would be easy enough.

When I was in elementary school, I wanted to play the flute, which ended up being one of the most intricate and confusing things I've ever held in my two hands, it took me a week just to figure out how to get sound to come out of it properly, and after that came playing notes which was a total nightmare. Whenever a concert came up and there was a chance to sing instead of practicing my instrument, I would sing my heart out in order to get myself away from that thing, I had zero passion towards the flute.

I've had access to a fairly compact electric keyboard that belongs to my Dad for as long as I can remember (I enjoy it much more than the flute too, so I'm not really sure how I even ended up in that situation) and it's definitely fun to mess around with, but it's a very intricate instrument to learn, and is overall very difficult to get the hang of, I'm sure if I *were* to put any effort into learning an instrument, the keyboard would be the one, but as of right now, I really just don't have the time to do so.

Fast forward to my 10<sup>th</sup> grade computers class, one of the options given to us in that class was the option to use a program called *Bandlab* to make music, which was very enticing. Bandlab gives you access to a large library of MIDI instruments that you can play using your computer's typing keyboard, and as fun as it was, it was also incredibly unintuitive, clunky, and overwhelming, leading me to partake in more traditional computer-based projects. I hadn't ever committed myself to pursuing music since, until today.

More and more time passes, and the idea of composing music seems more and more like something I'd enjoy doing, but I have zero clue where to start, and a whole slew of other hobbies and responsibilities that are eating away at my time, if I'm going to start doing this, I need something that's simple, not at all overwhelming, and has an element of fun to it so I don't get too frustrated.

I've had a video game called *WarioWare D.I.Y.* for quite a while now, since I was around 8 years old. A video game that advertised itself as software that allows you to make your own "Micro-games". Being an 8-year-old, the idea of making my own video games made the purchase a no-brainer, and I certainly had my fun with it, and making games was definitely where I spent the bulk of my playtime, but there were also modes that allowed you to make your own comics and music too. I'm sure you can see where this is going.

The semi-final weekend of February 2025, my brother's been playing this game a lot lately, and shows me a song he made via the game's music editor titled "Puddle Bot". It was incredible, my 11-year-old brother was able to make a song with an incredibly catchy beat and flow to it, that absolutely fit its title, it was a little robotic, but it was also fun, like jumping into a puddle!

Now, he's got quite the attachment to the game, the cartridge is almost permanently lodged into his own DS. Luckily, I was able to back up the game onto my computer and play it on there instead. I spent all of this morning (as of writing this) setting up everything I'd need to get started, but unfortunately, I ended up not having enough time to really sink my teeth into making a song, or even decide on what song to make, but my entire day at school I've been thinking of what to do, and I think I've finally figured it out!

Instead of going in immediately trying to make my own thing, I want to really take the time to learn the tool and familiarize myself with its capabilities and limitations, so far all I know is that the list of instruments that I have access too isn't much, and some of them feel as though they were added purely as jokes (There's an entire section dedicated to various recreations of animal sounds) and that there can be 5 instruments playing simultaneously, but one of those 5 "sound channels" is dedicated to the rhythm of the song. To my knowledge there's no way to change the BPM throughout the duration of the song, so tempo changes are going to be tough (but should be manageable), I believe there's also an option to hum and have the system's microphone attempt to place notes while you do so (I have my doubts about it being at all competent, but I suppose it might be interesting to work with).

My first project is going to be not an original composition, but a remix/cover of a song that I'm already familiar with. I've been considering one of David Wise's songs, because I'm a big fan of his, but there's a chance that changes because they are rather complex, and unfortunately the songs can only be a certain length (dependent on the BPM).

I really hope that taking the time to learn how to make music with this tool, and to see what kinds of songs I'll make will be a satisfying journey, possibly even one that'll lay out the groundwork for using more professional software to compose music in the future. It's probably the weirdest starting place I could possibly have chosen, using a music creation tool included as a side-mode in a game released all the way back in 2009, but it sure beats learning the flute, and it'll definitely have me hooked longer than learning any other instrument too.