

# Wolfe: The Beatles and iTunes



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## Gavel to Gavel: For a song

It wasn't just A Day In The Life when, in 2010, the Beatles came to iTunes. I didn't think it would happen In My Life or even When I'm Sixty Four. To Help you understand why, we must

Get Back to the beginning.

In the late 1960s, the Beatles formed Apple Corps Ltd. and trademarked the name and logo – a green apple. Coincidentally, in the early 1970s, Steve Jobs worked in an apple orchard; on the side, he formed a company that he later named Apple Computer. Jobs also chose an apple for the logo, minus a bite.

In 1978, Apple Corps sued Apple Computer for trademark infringement. The lawsuit was ultimately settled, with Apple Computer agreeing to stay out of the music business and Apple Corps agreeing to stay out of the computer business.

That should have been Something that made everyone Glad All Over. But, a few years later, The Long and Winding Road led to another lawsuit. In 1989 Apple Computer introduced music software to its personal computers. The companies said We Can Work It Out, and reached a new trademark deal in 1991 that required Apple Computer to hand over big Money – \$26.5 million – to Apple Corps. I suspect this prompted a visit from the Taxman.

The days of Misery seemed behind them, but All Things Must Pass. Apple Computer tried to Act Naturally when iTunes – sporting the Apple Computer logo – hit stores in 2003. But Apple Corps said, I'll Get You, and filed a new lawsuit. With neither side willing to risk being The Fool On The Hill, another settlement was reached in 2007, after A Hard Day's Night. Trademark rights to "Apple" went to Apple Computer, and Apple Corps received a license to use the name for its recording label. Apple Computer – now Apple Inc. – got a Ticket To Ride in the music business.

Many hoped the Beatles' music would go – Helter Skelter – straight to iTunes. Fans wanted it done Yesterday, but three years passed before the Beatles said Let It Be available on iTunes. It took a while for the Apples to Come Together, but the Beatles can now be heard Here, There and Everywhere,

Across the Universe, Any Time At All. Revolution? No. But it is Rock and Roll Music.

The End.