Source List

Historical fees

- American Heritage, “Bravo Caruso!” (1984) — The Met paid Caruso $2,500 per performance; 607 Met performances averaging 40 a season.
- Encyclopedia.com, Enrico Caruso — Peak performance fees over $500,000 a year, $115,000 annually from records, $15,000 for one night in Mexico City.
- Wikipedia, “Jenny Lind’s tour of America” — Barnum’s $1,000-a-night contract, the $187,500 advance, and Lind’s $350,000-plus total.
- Wikipedia, “Jenny Lind” — $350,000 earned, equivalent to about $13.5 million in 2025.
- Il Regno, Adelina Patti biography (Part 3) — Up to $5,000 per performance in her 1880s American opera seasons.
- Tamino Autographs, “Maria Callas Debut at the Met” (Charles Affron) — The Met’s $1,000-per-performance cap in 1956.
- Rudolf Bing, 5000 Nights at the Opera (1972) — Primary source for 1950s–60s Met pay; Bing discusses singer, musician and conductor fees throughout.

Contemporary fees

- Gramilano, “How much are singers, conductors and directors paid?” — Italian house fee tables: €17,000 top for an opera night, €20,000 for concerts.
- Quora, “How much does a top-tier opera singer earn?” (David Leigh, Met bass, and others) — Met top fee of $17,000, sponsorships to $30,000, Pavarotti’s concert fee, and a 1985–95 tenor’s Met-versus-Europe fees.
- Quora, “Are singers in an opera chorus paid as much as the players in the orchestra?” — A working non-star Met singer on $5,000–$10,000 a night.
- Opera Magazine (UK), “The cost of singing” (2022) — British principal fees of £2,000–£3,000, small roles £350–£1,500, YAP stipends to £20,000, teaching rates, recording buy-outs.
- OPERA America, “The Vocal Economy: Hidden costs of an operatic career” (2023) — Working principals on netting roughly 50 percent; which companies pay during rehearsals.
- Seattle Opera AGMA minimum compensation clause (LawInsider) — Schedule C floors effective October 2022 by role category, plus gala and recital flat fees.
- AGMA–Washington National Opera CBA 2022–2025 (PDF) — Full collective bargaining agreement: principal minimums, per diems, rehearsal pay, cover rules.
- AGMA, Los Angeles Opera four-year agreement (2026) — Current-cycle increases to all minimum rates and per-performance retirement contributions.
- AGMA, Florida Grand Opera four-year agreement (2024) — Studio-artist pay reforms and advance-payment terms for principals.

Chorus and young artists

- Metropolitan Opera, Chorus auditions and pay — Starting base $1,716.82/week rising to $2,146.04; estimated $150,000–$175,000 with overtime; benefits.
- HuffPost, "What Do Opera Singers Actually Get Paid?" (2014) — The 2014 Met labor fight and the NYT's $100,000–$200,000 chorus figures — a decade-ago baseline.
- Santa Fe Opera, Apprentice Singer Program — Apprentice rates of $896.04 and $928.82 per week, $145 housing stipend, $1,000 AGMA initiation fee.
- Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Gerdine Young Artist Program — $706.65–$794.95 per week with housing, travel and a sustenance stipend.
- Central City Opera artist rates (StageTime) — Developing artists $1,101.25/week, apprentices $621, studio artists a $400 honorarium, plus per-performance add-ons.
- Classical Singer, "Getting Into a Young Artist Program" — What legitimate programs provide, AGMA's two-year limit, and the program that tried to charge singers $525.
- Classical Singer, "The Music Major Minute" — Programs paying $100 a week or similar.

Training costs

- Slippedisc, "Why have Juilliard fees leaped 50%?" (2022) — Alumni recollection of sub-$3,000 tuition in the mid-1970s and $150 side lessons.
- CollegeTuitionCompare, Juilliard cost of attendance 2015–2025 — Tuition and fees from $39,720 to $57,950; total cost of attendance $86,582.
- EducationData.org, Average cost of college by year — Decade-by-decade national tuition baseline for context.

The Juilliard School, Pre-College tuition — The $740 voice-program surcharge for diction, movement, acting and coachings.

Closings re: article geographies mentioned:

- Kaufmann: Interview with The Times (London), Dec. 2025 (broadcast Jan. 2, 2026, BBC); OperaWire, Dec. 22, 2025: https://operawire.com/jonas-kaufmann-will-not-return-to-the-metropolitan-opera-or-royal-opera-house/
- Met credit rating: Moody's Ratings action, March 17, 2026 (Caa1 from B3, negative outlook; ~$120M endowment draws since FY2023), via Bloomberg; OperaWire: https://operawire.com/moody-further-downgrades-metropolitan-operas-bond-credit-rating/
- Saudi deal: Up to $200M over eight years, withdrawn April 2026, $30M shortfall (NYT original); OperaWire:

https://operawire.com/peter-gelbs-saudi-deal-falls-apart-amidst-metropolitan-opera-financial-turmoil/

- Industry decline: OPERA America — mainstage performances down 21% over two decades, concentrated at the largest companies (Des Moines Register/AP, Sept. 2025)
- Singer economics: "The Vocal Economy: Hidden Costs of an Operatic Career," OPERA America Magazine, Summer 2023: https://www.operaamerica.org/magazine/summer-2023/the-vocal-economy-hidden-costs-of-an-operatic-career/
- New York — New York City Opera (2013). On October 1, 2013, following an unsuccessful emergency fund-raising campaign, the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The petition blamed a troubled economy, decreased donations, and increasing pension obligations. Note the caveat: a nonprofit group, NYCO Renaissance, revived the company under new management in January 2016, so "folded" is accurate for 2013 but the name is back in use.
    - CNN: https://www.cnn.com/2013/10/03/us/new-york-city-opera-bankruptcy/index.html
    - Bloomberg: https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-10-03/new-york-city-opera-files-for-bankruptcy

- Boston — Opera Boston (2011–12). Boston's second-largest opera company said on Dec. 23, 2011 that it would close on Jan. 1; board members cited lackluster fundraising and the tough economy, calling the deficit insurmountable.
    - WBUR: https://www.wbur.org/news/2011/12/23/opera-boston-2
    - Boston Globe editorial: https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2011/12/29/city-arts-leaders-should-fight-keep-opera-boston-alive/qcmO6drAFq8fr0Yd179StK/story.html
- Baltimore — Baltimore Opera Company (2009). Three months after seeking Chapter 11 protection and canceling the rest of its 2008–09 season, the board voted in March 2009 to pursue Chapter 7 liquidation and dissolve the 58-year-old company. The original December 2008 filing came amid dwindling ticket sales and contributions.
    - Baltimore Sun (liquidation): https://www.baltimoresun.com/2009/03/13/city-opera-to-shut-down/
    - Baltimore Sun (Chapter 11 filing): https://www.baltimoresun.com/entertainment/bal-te.to.opera09dec09-story.html
- San Antonio — San Antonio Opera (2012). Founded as the Pocket Opera of San Antonio in 1997 by Mark Richter, it produced 16 seasons before filing for bankruptcy and

dissolving in 2012. The Alamo City Opera board decided to dissolve that company after the April 2019 death of its founder, Mark Richter.

  - Wikipedia (San Antonio Opera): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Antonio_Opera
  - Classical Voice North America (history of the city's opera failures): https://classicalvoiceamerica.org/2014/01/16/time-of-opera-in-san-antonio-texas-from-grand-opera-house-to-tobin-center/
  - San Antonio Report (Alamo City Opera, 2019): https://sanantonioreport.org/alamo-city-opera-company-shuts-down-after-death-of-its-founder-mark-richter/

- Cleveland — Opera Cleveland (2010). Opera Cleveland helped establish the art form in Northeast Ohio before financial struggles forced the company to close in 2010. Background: Cleveland Opera and Lyric Opera Cleveland merged in 2006 to form Opera Cleveland in an attempt to stabilize finances; the merged company lasted roughly three seasons.
  - Cleveland Magazine (July 2026): https://clevelandmagazine.com/articles/the-independent-artists-sustaining-clevelands-opera-community/
  - Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opera_Cleveland