

## CATCHING A CONCERT

### Various venues provide music lovers with a range of choices

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Toledo is a city that loves music and not just because it's mentioned in songs like "Saturday Night in Toledo, Ohio" sung by John Denver, or Kenny Rogers' "Lucille."

While the city has become a popular stop for cover bands and old-school rockers, there's a lively scene for other genres as well. Toledo has its own symphony and has been a significant stopover for jazz and blues heavyweights over the years.

So where are the best places to listen to some tunes? Glad you asked. Even though the storied Toledo Sports Arena is gone — after hosting everyone from Elvis to AC/DC — there are still plenty of great venues for catching a concert.



An outdoor concert at the Toledo Zoo Amphitheater. (THE BLADE)

- **The Toledo Zoo Amphitheater, 2700 Broadway:** This Depression-era venue is a fun mix of old and new — and animals. Opened in 1936 and located next to the zoo's Cheetah Valley, it regularly hosts the Toledo Concert Band's family-friendly "Music Under the Stars" performances as well as a summer concert series. This year, Stevie Nicks and funk band Earth, Wind & Fire are among those scheduled to rock out at this unique outdoor site. Information: 419-385-5721; [toledozoo.org](http://toledozoo.org)
- **The Toledo Museum of Art Peristyle theater, 2445 Monroe St.:** The home of the Toledo Symphony is essentially the city's shrine to fine music. Attached to the art museum and reminiscent of a Greek temple, its grand columns make a spectacular setting for listening to everything from Bach to Beethoven. The Peristyle opened in 1933 with a concert by the Philadelphia Orchestra and remains a perfect place today for enjoying classical music. Information: 419-246-800; [toledosymphony.com](http://toledosymphony.com)
- **Toledo Botanical Garden, 5403 Elmer Drive:** Bring a lawn chair or, better yet, a big blanket and a picnic basket and plop yourself down here for a healthy dose of jazz. The lush lawn is the best seat in the house for its "Jazz in the Garden" concerts during the summer, held in conjunction with the Toledo Jazz Society. The beautiful flowers and sculptures sprinkled across the Toledo Botanical Garden landscape only enhance the experience. Information: 419-936-2986; [toledogarden.org](http://toledogarden.org)
- **Stranahan Theater, 4645 Heatherdowns Blvd.:** One of Toledo's largest indoor concert halls — it can seat more than 2,400 people — the Stranahan is a traditional theater setting that has a little bit of everything to offer music lovers. In the last year, it has hosted big-time acts such as '70s rockers Styx as well as musicals such as *The Lion King* and *Movin' Out*, featuring the music of Billy Joel. The theater is also home to numerous Toledo Symphony concerts. Information: 419-381-8851; [stranahantheater.com](http://stranahantheater.com)
- **Centennial Terrace, 5773 Centennial Rd., Sylvania Township:** This outdoor ballroom has hosted swing and big bands for decades, and its 10,000-square-foot terrazzo dance floor is among the largest outdoor ones in the country. Big bands still rule the roost here, but there's enough diversity to provide something for everyone. Last year's events included a summer disco party, a blues bash, and "Rockout 2007." Information: 419-882-1500; [www.sylvaniarecreation.org/Facilities/CTERRACE/](http://www.sylvaniarecreation.org/Facilities/CTERRACE/)
- **Valentine Theatre, 400 North Superior St.:** The grand dame of Toledo concert venues, the Valentine is elegance personified. The historic theater is more than 100 years old and, thanks to a \$28 million renovation in the 1990s, a glamorous place to see a concert. The home of Toledo Opera, it hosts numerous musical events throughout the year, from smooth jazz to the music of Great Lakes troubadour Pat Dailey. Information: 419-242-3490; [valentinetheatre.com](http://valentinetheatre.com)

- Promenade Park, downtown riverfront: There is nothing better than a sunny, lazy day in the park — unless the sounds of the birds and the Maumee River are supplemented with some old-time rock 'n' roll. Promenade Park has been a popular venue for festivals and concerts of all sorts over the years. Rally by the River will be gone this summer, but other musical events here are in the works.
- Murphy's Place, 151 Water St.: An essential stop for anyone who loves jazz. The namesake of this cool waterfront club is Clifford Murphy, a bass player and local legend who opened a downtown mainstay with longtime partner Joan Russell in 1991. There's live music here six nights a week, when Murphy regularly teams up with pianist Claude Black and drummer Renell Gonsalves. Information: 419-241-7732; [murphysplacejazz.com](http://murphysplacejazz.com)
- Griffin's Hines Farm Blues Club, 3950 South Berkey-Southern Rd., Swanton: This venue has welcomed some of the biggest names in the genre over the years, including legendary artists such as B.B. King, John Lee Hooker, and Duke Ellington. Formed in 1930, it was a blues magnet for many blacks who settled in the area in western Lucas County. The club still hosts lively blues shows featuring talent from Toledo and beyond. Information: 419-826-0230; [hinesfarm.com](http://hinesfarm.com)
- Headliners, 4500 Detroit Ave./Frankies, 308 Main St./Mickey Finn's Pub, 602 Lagrange St.: Toledo has oodles of clubs just oozing with music, and these are just a few. Headliners is a large venue that brings in heavy metal and hard rock acts. Frankies, on the east side, is more intimate and tends to focus on up-and-coming alt-rock and punk groups. Mickey Finn's often hosts local musicians playing anything from the blues to Irish music to acoustic tunes. Information for Headliners and Frankies: 419-693-5300; [headlinerstoledo.com](http://headlinerstoledo.com); [frankiesinnercity.com](http://frankiesinnercity.com). Information for Mickey Finn's: 419-246-3466; [mickeyfinnspub.com](http://mickeyfinnspub.com)

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