

Live Performances

Objective

Run efficient soundchecks and improve live professionalism.

Why It Matters

Good preparation creates smoother concerts and better performances.

Good practices

Set up gear quickly and stay organized.

Use one calm song and one loud song during soundcheck.

Respect the sound engineer's instructions.

Avoid changing amp settings during the show.

Assign responsibilities for merch, timing and equipment.

Common mistakes

Arriving late

Playing random songs during soundcheck

Poor stage organization

Forgetting equipment after the show



- ☐ Gear tested before departure
- ☐ Setlist printed
- ☐ Merch organized

- ☐ Soundcheck songs prepared
- ☐ Backup cables packed

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LES
4ÉCLUSES



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1. Band role distribution

Goal: to use 10% of the band time you don't use for music as good and efficient as possible

Make check lists

BEFORE THE SHOW			
WHEN	WHAT	WHO	LEVEL
D-15	Tech team communication	—	★
D-15	Production communication (road book, accommodation questions)	—	★
D-15	Timekeeper: plan itinerary (Michelin), breaks & drive times / share departure times with team	—	★★★★
D-15	Book accommodation (Airbnb)	—	★★★★
D-5	Guest list	—	★
D-1	Print the setlist	—	★
D-1	Van maintenance & management	—	★★★★★
D-1	Prepare spare flight case (keep updated: buy / repair defective gear)	everyone	★★
D-1	Prepare merch case: departure inventory, cash float, sales log, newsletter template, price list, sign-up sheet, QR codes	—	★★★★★

DURING THE DAY OF THE SHOW			
WHEN	WHAT	WHO	LEVEL
show	Backline guardian: deinstall, lost items at departure & arrival / make sure nothing is forgotten	—	★★★★
show	Timekeeper: keep to schedule, call latecomers	—	★★
show	Artist hospitality: drink & food tickets, catering timing, check dressing rooms	—	★★
show	Artist hospitality: communicate arrival times & runs	—	★★
show	Artist hospitality: accommodation logistics, sleeping bags if needed	—	★★
show	Drive	—	★★★★★
show	Key guardian	—	★★
show	Advance cash for fuel, tolls & parking	—	★★★★
show	Keep & photocopy all receipts	—	★★
show	Take photos / videos	everyone	★
show	Instagram stories	everyone	★
show	Hotel & dressing room cleanup	everyone	MANDATORY
show	Share driving / light driving communication	—	★
show	Merch lead	—	★★★★
show	Merch pairs	—	★★
show	Cash float check: beginning & end of merch inventory	—	★★★★
show	Set up & pack down merch stand	—	★★★★

AFTER THE SHOW			
WHEN	WHAT	WHO	LEVEL
D+1	Clean the van — do not leave it dirty	everyone	MANDATORY
D+1	Sign your contract upon receipt	everyone	MANDATORY

AT ALL TIMES			
always	Tour poster	—	★★★★★
always	Update tour poster	—	★★★
always	Relay & share on social media	everyone	MANDATORY
always	Facebook event invitations	everyone	MANDATORY
always	Update unavailabilities on calendar (systematically)	everyone	MANDATORY
always	Reply 'yes' to options & confirmations on calendar	everyone	MANDATORY
always	Reply quickly on the WhatsApp group	everyone	MANDATORY

2. Soundcheck

1. Set up your gear, make sure everything is working fine and find a good on-stage sound balance.
2. Make room for the sound engineer to set up the stage (microphones, cables, etc.) and keep quiet.
3. The sound engineer now does a line check of every instrument and sets up the sound for each musician. Musicians take turns during this step, so await your turn. Wait for the engineer to mix your instrument/sound for the room; when gain and equalizer settings are done, the engineer will return the sound to your monitor.
4. Vocalists should use “s”- sounds and need to keep on singing! Sing with correct and representative dynamics so the engineer can adjust the EQ and compression.
5. All musicians can now play together. Play max. 2 different songs (or parts of songs) during the soundcheck: one calm, the other loud (if applicable). The songs should be representative of your set. During playing, the sound engineer will mix the sound balance for the room. After each song, they can adjust the sound balance in your monitor.
6. Be aware that empty rooms reflect some sound from the venue back to the stage and that audiences absorb sound: sound dynamics will change a little when the audience is present, allow the sound engineer to adjust the sound balance accordingly.
7. Important: don't change your amp settings during the gig.

3. In-ear monitoring (IEM): pros and cons

Pros

- The sound is really clear, loud and directly in your ears.
- IEM is especially helpful for singers in a loud band setting.
- If you play shows with your own IEM system, mixing desk and microphones, many technical variables are under your control and the monitor sound will be consistent for each concert.
- Each song can have different settings in tone, reverb, balance.
- It is a highly professional way of working.
- You don't depend on the quality of the venue's monitors.

Cons

- It takes a while to get used to playing with IEM. Some musicians feel a bit alienated from the audience the first times. Adding ambient microphones to capture the sound of the audience and send to your IEM is a way to fix this problem.
- IEM is expensive, wireless systems even more so. Do not buy cheap systems because they don't work very good and usually you cannot adjust frequencies, making them unusable in professional venues or festivals that have strict frequency policies. The minimum you need are the in-ear buds and a IEM preamp. For every concert you can then just ask the sound engineer to send a mix to your in-ear system. However, the best option is to have your own mixing desk, microphones and sound engineer. This way, you will have a consistent sound for each song, each concert. Of course, this requires investing in gear and personnel. The midpoint is to have your own in-ear buds, pre-amps and a IEM rack that works with a tablet. You can use the standard microphones of the venue, control your IEM through the rack/tablet and have a passive XLR split to the venue's mixing desk (handled by the venue's sound engineer).