


HOUSE CONCERT



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO HOSTING YOUR VERY OWN LIVE MUSIC CONCERT IN YOUR HOME

Imagine enjoying a special live music performance in your own home with your closest friends and neighbors. What could be more fun than that? If your answer is “absolutely nothing”, then this kit is especially for you. This house concert kit will equip you with everything you will need to book, plan, promote, and execute a very special live music concert right in your very own home.

A house concert is such a grand idea, but it is made up of many smaller elements that come together to make it a very unique event. So, let’s start by answering the basic questions.

So, what is a house concert?

House concerts are unique and intimate live music experiences that take place in people’s homes, and they are rapidly becoming a popular way to for people to connect with and support their favorite touring artists.

Upon booking a house concert, you (as the host) agree to transform a room in your home into a make-shift concert venue/listening room for one evening. You invite music-loving friends to support an independent touring musician by attending a special night of live, original music and gifting a suggested donation. Typically, you will provide overnight

accommodations and a meal or two for the artist, while the artist provides all the equipment that they need to put on a very special acoustic show.

Ok, this sounds awesome. How can I host a house concert?

Do you live in a house? Great! Do you love music? Fantastic! You’re off to a pretty strong start. Your first real step in successfully hosting a house concert is to do a little research by reading through this house concert kit. Congratulations, you’re well on your way! Let’s take a look at *6 Steps to Hosting a House Concert*.

6 STEPS TO HOSTING A HOUSE CONCERT!

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HOSTING THE EVENT

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6 STEPS TO HOSTING A HOUSE CONCERT!

PART 1: BEFORE THE EVENT

STEP 1


BOOKING THE ARTIST



Chances are, you are reading this kit because you have already been contacted by an artist to appear and perform in your home. Or, you may want to contact a favorite musician of yours to schedule a performance. Either way, it is important to choose a date at least 8-12 weeks away to give you and the artist plenty of time to prepare and promote the event.

TIPS

Keep in mind, house concerts usually happen on what are called "off nights" or midweek nights to help touring artists fill in dates between weekend venue shows.



PROMOTING THE EVENT

STEP 2

Promoting is just a fancy way of saying "telling people about the show." This can be done in a number of ways (in person, hard copy invitation, e-mail, video invitation, phone call, social media, etc.). Usually a combination of all of these is the best approach. Whatever the method, be sure to include all the important details: date, time, address, and suggested donation**.

Contact the artist for digital pictures or graphics that best represent them to use in your invitations. You know your friends best, so come up with a fun and personal invitation that will appeal to the crowd you would like to fill your home.

A detailed House Concert Timeline document is included in the Promotional/Event Materials folder to guide you through exactly when you need to create invitations, send them out, and remind your guests of your event. Also included in this folder is a generic house concert banner to use on a Facebook® event page, as well as an editable invitation postcard.


TIPS

The time listed on the invitation should be 30 minutes prior to your desired start time. That way, people have time to get inside, get drinks and snacks, and get settled in for the show.

Talk to your guests often about your upcoming house concert! Follow the communication rule of three: 1) tell people, 2) then tell them again, 3) and then tell them what you've already told them.

STEP 3

PREPPING YOUR VENUE



You are hosting a concert, so your home will temporarily be transformed into a music venue. Begin the process by selecting a room in your home that, when the furniture is cleared out, could hold at least 30-50 people and has an open enough space at one end for a small stage area. Most people are very surprised at the number of people that can comfortably fit in their home with a little creativity! Usually, this involves moving out bulky and unnecessary furniture (couches, TVs, coffee tables, entertainment centers) and replacing them with more functional pieces, like folding chairs with small end tables for drinks or snacks. See the [Room Setup](#) document for ideas.

Once you have selected the room for the concert, you can begin planning snacks and/or drinks for your guests. See the [Snack Ideas](#) document for some fun and tasty recipes. In most cases, you will also be hosting the artist overnight, so be sure to plan a meal or two for the artist in addition to sleeping arrangements.

The performer will probably travel with his/her own sound system, microphone and perhaps some lighting, so communicate your layout plans ahead of time with the artist to see how their setup will fit in your space.

Explore and print off desired event signage in the Promotional/Event Materials folder.


TIPS

Decorate and set the concert room in an appropriate way to set the right vibe. Create low or dim lighting options (like cool lamps or strings of lights) for the audience area, and brighter, directional lighting for the stage area to make your room resemble a small theater.

PART 2: THE DAY OF THE EVENT

STEP 4

HOSTING THE ARTIST



The day of your house concert is finally here, and your concert space is prepped and ready! The artist will arrive a few hours before show time to get set up and sound checked (if needed) before the guests arrive. Talk with the artist about a good space for him/her to set up a table to sell merchandise (CDs, t-shirts, etc.). About an hour or two before guests arrive, prepare and share a meal with the artist. Show the artist where they will be sleeping so that they can stash their personal belongings there, and offer them a "greenroom" space to change clothes and get ready for the show.

TIPS

Be in communication ahead of time with the artist about special dietary needs/wants that they may have. You never know if an artist has an allergy or has had to eat fast food five nights in a row before coming to your place.



HOSTING THE EVENT

STEP 5

As the host of a house concert, you get the privilege of welcoming your guests and setting the tone for this special night. Greet guests at the door, collect each guest's donation, and guide them to the refreshments as well as the concert room. Once all have arrived and had time to mingle, usher everyone into the performance room when the musician lets you know they are ready.

Once everyone is seated, officially welcome your guests from the stage, and then read a prepared introduction of the artist. The artist will come on stage and take it from there, so sit back, relax and enjoy the show with your guests.

TIPS

At the door, it is solely your job to make sure the donations are collected as the artist will not be requesting them from your guests.

STEP 6

WRAPPING UP YOUR EVENT



Once the artist is done performing, assume the emcee role once again, and, from the stage, thank the artist and the guests for a great evening. Invite your guests to stay and meet the performer pointing them to the artist's merchandise table.

Once this meet and greet time with the artist is naturally coming to an end, casually escort guests to the door and thank them once again for coming. Once everyone has left, give the total donations collected to the performer and then feel free to spend some additional time to visit and relax with the artist. By this point of the night, please be mindful of the time and allow the artist to get some rest. Chances are they will have to wake up early the next day to get back on the road to play a show the following night.

TIPS

Sharing a breakfast the following morning is the perfect way to connect one last time and say good-bye to your artist.



BEFORE



Above is an example of a typical living room setup. You will want to move large furniture out of the room to create maximum space for guests and artist. If you can, store large items such as couches, recliners, entertainment centers, etc. in another room.

AFTER 1

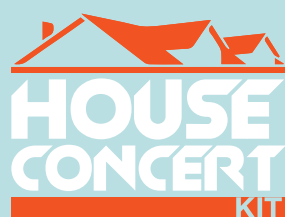


Above is an example of what the room could look like once larger furniture is removed. Space was made in the corner of the room for the artist, and folding chairs were placed neatly throughout to allow maximum seating. Lighting is placed near the stage so guests will be able to see the performance. Table surfaces are used for drinks and snacks. See the Snack Ideas guide for delicious recipes.

AFTER 2



If you are not able or do not have room to move larger items into different rooms, utilize the space you have to allow for more seating.



FAQs

TOP

Is my house big enough to host a house concert?

Unless you are a hipster living in a tiny house (less than 300 square feet), you can host an awesome house concert right where you live. Start by selecting the biggest room in your house, and visualize that room completely cleared out. Once you move larger furniture items like couches and coffee tables to another room or the garage, even a small living room or den can hold a group of people. Imagine that room in your home resembling a small theater with seats, such as folding chairs all facing the same direction. The artist does not need a large space for the stage area; just a corner or the space in front of a blank wall will do. If you are a little nervous about space, talk with your artist. Between the two of you, you can figure out the [perfect setting](#) in your home for your house concert.

Is a house concert the same thing as a party or barbecue at my house with live music?

No, house concerts and house parties are two very different events. A house party or backyard barbecue is when people come over to mingle, talk over loud background music, drink too much, and break your lamp. Although there is mingling, talking and possibly drinking at a house concert, the majority of the time is focused on the concert and the performer. The artist is there to entertain and engage a listening audience with live, original music. They are not there to play as background music to an existing event. Much like that barbecue, though, you could also host a house concert in your backyard if the weather is nice and you can create the right setting.

Is it possible that people I don't know, like local fans of the artist, will show up to my house for the concert?

Traditionally, house concerts are known to be “closed events”. That is to say, they are by invitation only. The artist will not post your home address on their website as if your house is a public venue. The only people who will show up to your home are people who you have invited or friends they bring along with them. If it's a concern, always check with the artist to make sure they don't publish your event as a public tour date.

Will it be expensive for me to be a host?

It usually costs a little money to have some friends over to your house for any reason. A house concert is no different. You could go full tilt renting chairs, making super fancy hors d'oeuvres, and building a professional [corner stage](#) in your living room, but none of that is necessary. Just count on spending a little bit to make your event a great experience for your guests, and then allow your guests to support your touring musician with their donations.

Can I host a house concert if I don't have a spare bed for the artist to sleep in overnight?

Yes! Most artists will be willing to take any accommodations you can provide, like a couch, an air mattress, or a floor with pillows and blankets. Some artists travel with their own bedding. Just as long as they have a roof and a shower, touring musicians are usually content and don't need much. Although your floor is not an ideal bed, that option is better for your artist than sleeping in his/her car that night or spending tour expenses on a hotel. If you aren't comfortable with your artist sleeping at your home due to lack of bedding or you find it an uncomfortable idea, you can ask one of your guests to host the artist overnight. Or, if it is in your budget, you can really treat your artist with an overnight stay in a nearby hotel.

Who can I book for my house concert?

Musicians who play house concerts are usually independent recording/touring artists who have engaging and intimate live acoustic versions of their show. Pick a musician who you like, and inquire about them coming to play a house concert. Most artists can be contacted through their website, Facebook® page or Twitter® account. More than likely, you are reading this because a musician first contacted you, which is a huge compliment to you and how much your support means to the artist. It is most likely that your audience will be coming to hear music they have never heard before from an artist whose name they don't recognize. This is your chance to do all of your guests a favor and introduce them to one of your favorite original artists. Chances are, your friends will experience a surprising, special and sometimes spiritual and life-renewing night.

How does the whole donation process work?

House concerts are a great way for music lovers to support professional artists on tour, and with everyone pitching in, the collective donation of your guests can be a wonderful gift. Remember, the donation is not a ticket price, but rather a pay-what-you-like situation for your guests. Feel free to come up with discounts for couples or students if you like. It is very important for you as the host, or a trusted friend or family member, to be located at the front door to collect donations as guests arrive. It has been found that even people with the best intentions fail to give a donation to an artist if they are left to simply drop it in a nearby bucket or “passing a hat” during the show. To be able to give your artist the best donation gift, you must ask guests directly to donate into the hands of a live person standing at the door. When all the money has been collected, don't stress too much if you come up short of the recommended \$500 amount. Touring artists are usually grateful for whatever they can receive.

Isn't \$25 dollars a lot to ask just to have my friends over to my house?

Remember, your friends aren't coming to “your house” that evening. By exclusive invitation only, your guests are attending a unique and intimate, live concert experience at a super secret listening room venue that also happens to be your house on other nights of the week. This kind of event doesn't come around too often. Chances are, no one has ever been to something like this and if they have, this will probably be the only event like this that they attend this year. Remind your guests that the ticket price of the show is only a suggested donation to support the artist on tour. If they are skeptical, allow them entry for whatever they wish to pay. They are also welcome to support the artist with a much bigger gift, if they are so inspired.

Who should I invite to my house concert?

House concerts are for music lovers. Consider inviting more than just your closest friends. Think of friends, neighbors, family members, acquaintances, gym buddies, church folks, social club chums, and co-workers you know who really enjoy music, or specifically, live music. These are the people who will most likely enjoy your house concert. Maybe this will be a good way to get better acquainted with your friendly coffee house barista always asking about your cool band t-shirts.

I'm not very crafty or artistic. How do I create an invitation?

With house concerts, vibe is important. The first thing people usually see that communicates the vibe of your event is your invitation. Although you are welcome to, it's not realistic to hire a professional artist to create an event poster. But, no need to worry. Check in with your performer before starting to create the invitations. Sometimes performers will have a standard poster or invitation template that you can use by adding your event's date, time, and location to the blank spaces. Most performers have professional pictures or images that you can also use to create something nice looking. If the performer doesn't have this professional material, you can always use the invitation template found in the attached Promotional/Event Materials folder created for and included with this House Concert Kit. Just fill in the blanks, and they are ready to go!

If I'm hosting a house concert, what am I expected to provide?

As the host of a house concert, you have the privilege of hosting a one-of-a-kind event right in your home. In addition to you providing a room inside your house as the location of the concert, there are a few more items that fall under your role as host.

The Host provides:

- Concert location
- Show promotions (telling others about the event)
- A curated audience of friends
- Dinner for the artist upon arrival
- An overnight guest room for the artist
- Drinks/snacks for guests at the show
- Seating
- Lighting and room decor
- Door person in charge of collecting donations (this could be you or a friend/family member)
- Parking
- A small table for the artist to set up merchandise (sometimes artist travels with a table for this)

What is the artist providing?

The artist is mostly in charge of providing your guests with an unforgettable night through an intimate and inspiring acoustic concert. In addition to performing, the artist will take care of a few more details that you as the host will not have to worry about.

The Artist provides:

- House Concert Kit (to help you through every step of a successful house concert)
- An acoustic performance (generally 45-90 minutes in length; check the length of your artist's show before the night of the concert)
- Sound system if one is even necessary (microphone, speakers, etc.; the artist should need no more than one open, clean outlet on a 15/20 amp circuit)
- Stage lighting (again, check with the artist about this ahead of time)
- Merchandise (t-shirts, CDs)