

Tips on hiring a performer for your library

Contact the performer by phone or e-mail well ahead of the intended performance. For the summer, many performers are booked up by March or April. Don't despair if you haven't done your booking by then—sometimes a performer is happy to fill in an available date.

Here are some specific questions to ask the performer. These may depend on your situation:

- Are you available on X date, at X time?
- What is your fee? Does this include mileage and expenses?
- Are you comfortable working with preschoolers?
- Do you have references?
- Do you have or need a microphone?
- Can you work outdoors if need be?
- Do you need any particular set up? Do you need a table? How much space do you need?
- What is the name we need to put on the check?
- Do you have a standard contract, or would you prefer that we send a letter of confirmation?
- Please send a short description of your performance and a black and white photo (or .jpeg, as the case may be) for publicity.
- Do you have a short introduction you'd like us to use?

Tell the performer the library policy on payment (on the date of performances, within a month after performances, in advance, etc.). If you need the performer's social security number or tax id number, ask for it at the time of the contract.

If your library has a policy against sales in the library, be sure the performer knows. Many have recordings or books and welcome the chance to sell them.

Double check all contracts/letters of confirmation to be sure the salient details are correct. Be sure the address of the venue is included (especially important if the venue is not the library).

A week before the performance, contact the performer again to double check and ask if there are any questions.

Ask the performer to arrive 30 minutes early. This saves you thinking you'll have to come up with a program on the spur of the moment.

When the performer arrives, introduce yourself by name. Remember, you know who the performer is, but he or she may not know you.

Introduce the performer briefly. By doing this, you build enthusiasm for the performance and you also have the opportunity to make any library and housekeeping announcements.

At the end of the performance, lead the audience in thanking the performer. This lets everyone know the session is over.

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