

How to Be a Good Entertainer

Entertainers have one of the best and hardest jobs in the world. Night after night, they put themselves on the line in the hopes of connecting with an audience and evoking an emotional response. Some performers are born with amazing stage...

Method 1 of 3:

Making Your Performance Memorable

1.



Start with a bang. Audiences tend to be both impatient and judgmental, so you want to capture their attention as soon as possible and hold it for as long as you can. Structure your performance so it begins with something memorable or impressive to break the ice and engage the crowd.^[1]

1. If you're a stand up, start with a joke about your appearance or something else your audience might notice when they first look at you.
2. If you're a musician, lead off with a high energy number, as opposed to a ballad.
3. Start off confident, but make sure to save your best trick for the end of the performance.

2.



Have fun onstage. The reason people go see performers is to be entertained. It's not entertaining to see a performer going through the motions – audiences want to see performers living out their dreams and leaving it all on the stage.^[2]

1. If you come offstage and you're not exhausted, then you still had more to give.
2. Smile! Try putting Vaseline on your teeth to keep your teeth from sticking to your lips.
3. The more comfortable you get with your performance or routine, the easier it will be for you to have fun.
4. Improvise something new every time you perform - this will keep your performance from feeling stale.
5. Don't bottle your enjoyment up inside – let it out and share it with your audience. They want to live vicariously through you.

3.



Don't call attention to your mistakes. Mistakes happen in life and in art. How entertainers deal with mistakes can separate the artists from the amateurs. If you mess up, don't worry about it and don't telegraph your mistake to the audience.^[3]

1. If you make a mistake, move on. The audience probably won't even notice if you don't call it out.
2. Know that the audience is rooting for you to succeed. If you fall or mess up, they want to see you overcome and move forward.

EXPERT TIP

Picture 4 of How to Be a Good Entertainer

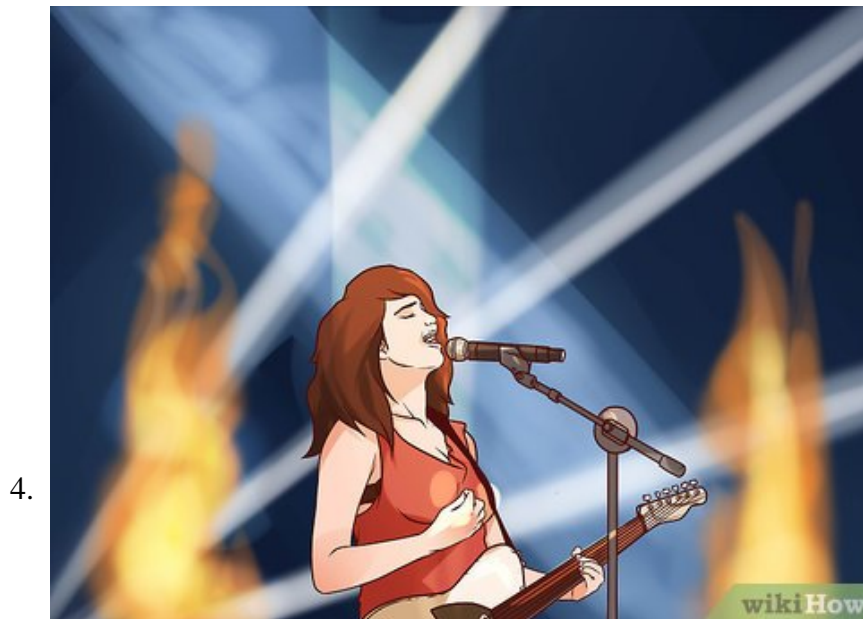
Dan Klein
Improvisation Coach

Dan Klein is an improvisation expert and coach who teaches at the Stanford University Department of Theater and Performance Studies as well as at Stanford's Graduate School of Business. Dan has been teaching improvisation, creativity, and storytelling to students and organizations around the world for over 20 years. Dan received his BA from Stanford University in 1991.

Picture 5 of How to Be a Good Entertainer

Dan Klein
Improvisation Coach

Try to handle mistakes with confidence. Dan Klein, an improv and storytelling teacher, says: "Early on, when I work with students, I teach them to **celebrate failure** by physically opening their body and expressing a triumphant sound. Our instinct is to shrink and withdraw, because you want to cover up the mistake. By practicing the exact opposite reaction, it will become **easier to overcome mistakes** when you're performing."



End your show in a memorable way. The end of your show is the last thing your audience will remember, so it's important to end your performance with a bang. If you plan on having an encore, make

sure you prepare for it ahead of time.^[4]

1. Leave your audience wanting more. Look at your set list and edit one to two things out.
2. Know when it's time to wrap up – sometimes it's better to end the show early than to prolong something that people clearly aren't enjoying.
3. If your venue has a curfew, be respectful of that. Be cognizant of time and don't run over.

Method 2 of 3:

Taking Care of Your Audience

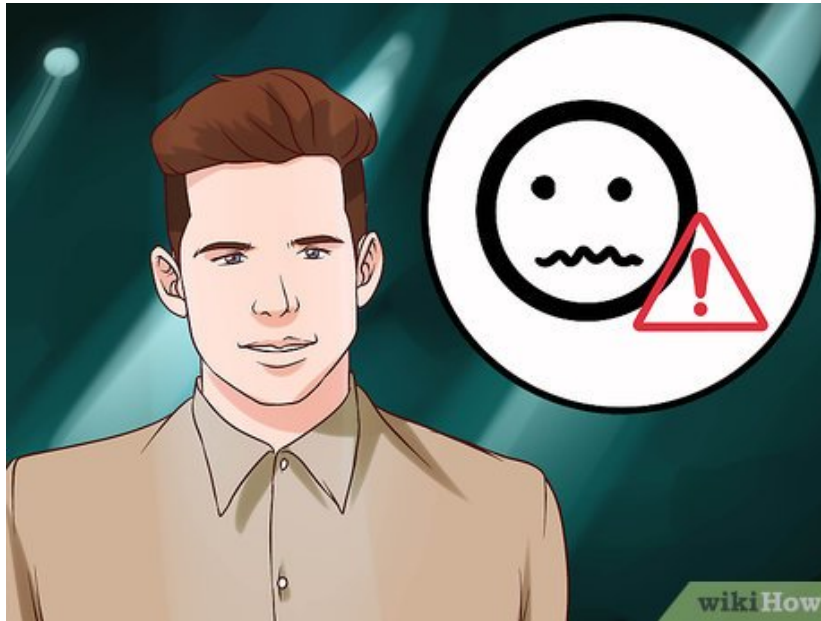
1.



Connect with your audience. A big part of performing is sharing a piece of who you are with your audience. It's not enough to just perform for them – you also need to engage them emotionally.^[5]

1. The more personal you can make your performance, the more your audience will respond to it.
2. If you're a musician, tell stories about your life between songs.
3. If you're a stand up, do some crowd work and interact with the audience between jokes.
4. If you're a dancer, don't forget to look out and make eye contact with your audience as you perform.

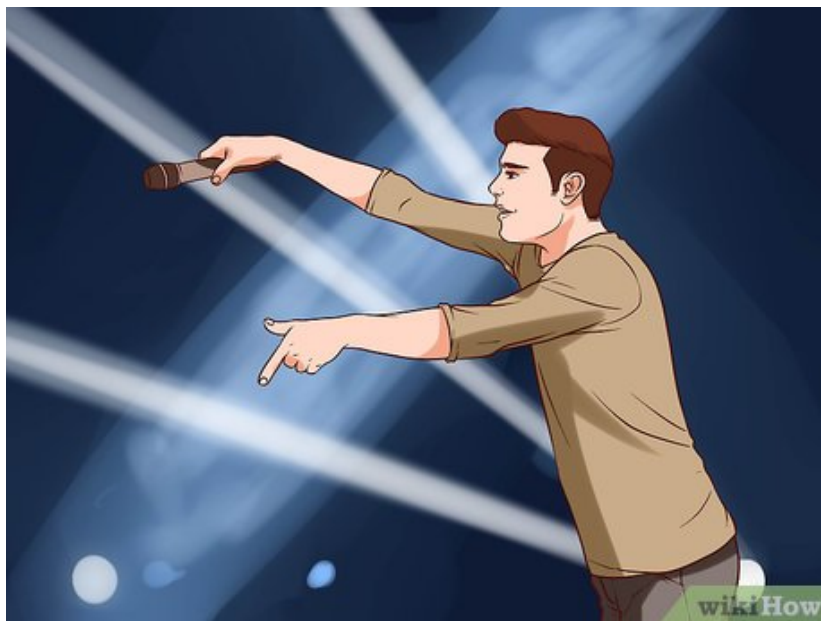
2.



Make your audience feel comfortable. There's nothing more unnerving than watching a performer flounder on stage. When you're performing, you're responsible for your audience's happiness, so make sure to show up well-prepared and ready to work.^[6]

1. Don't allow nerves to affect your performance – turn that nervous energy into a more productive performance energy.
2. Block out and rehearse every portion of your performance so there are no surprises for you or your audience.

3.



Engage your audience. Get your audience involved in your performance. Giving them something to do will help them feel like an integral part of the experience. Get them in on the action by asking questions or including them in your jokes or tricks.^[7]

1. If you're a magician, have at least one trick that requires an audience volunteer.

2. Make sure to choose a volunteer that actually wants to participate – they won't have fun if they just want to get off the stage.
3. If you're a musician, perform a popular song and let the audience sing along for a verse.



Read your audience. As you begin to perform more, you'll learn that not every audience reacts to your performance the same way. A small, intimate performance in a café is very different from a large concert venue and as a performer, you need to be able to read your audience and give them the kind of performance they want.^[8]

1. If your audience isn't enjoying the jokes or music you're performing, be able to adapt on the fly and switch to something that might be more their speed.
2. Know that you'll have to be bigger, louder and more energetic the larger the venue and the more people you have watching.

Method 3 of 3:

Becoming a More Confident Performer



Master your self-talk. Self-talk is the internal dialogue that all humans have inside their heads. The more negative your self-talk is, the more it will negatively affect your confidence levels.^[9]

1. Keep a self-talk log where you write down all the negative thoughts that come to mind when you're practicing.
2. Rewrite your negative thoughts to be more positive. So 'there's no use in practicing, I'll never become successful' turns into 'successful people have to work hard and if I work hard, some day I'll be successful too.'



Highlight your strengths and work on your weaknesses. All performers have something they're good at – that's why people want to watch them. But all performers also have weak spots, and those are the muscles you really need to stretch.^[10]

1. Take a class and work with your instructor to improve on your weaknesses.
2. Find a fellow performer who is really good at what you're bad at and ask them for advice.

3. When rehearsing, don't practice what you already do well – focus your session on the areas that need improvement and run those parts ad nauseam.



Practice in front of a mirror. Regardless of what kind of performer you are, it's imperative that you see the way you are presenting yourself to an audience. Look at the way you carry yourself, the way you move your body. Practice what you'll say to introduce a new song or joke.^[11]

1. Set up a camera during your practice session and record yourself performing.
2. Be critical when watching it back and look for ways you can elevate your performance.
3. Practice each performance fifty times all the way through before stepping out on stage.^[12]



Only compete with yourself. Art and performance are completely subjective, so placing yourself in direct competition with someone else is reductive. Instead of focusing on who else might be performing, focus on how you can make your performance the best you've ever done.^[13]

1. Think of the best performance you've ever had, then try to top that.

2. Instead of thinking about what you don't want to mess up, think of what you want to accomplish.



Be grateful. Getting to perform for a living or to perform at all is a luxury. Regardless of how you feel about your craft on any given day, remind yourself that you love performing. This love and passion will shine through your performance and automatically make you a more engaging performer.

1. Remind yourself why you love performing every time you step out on stage.
2. If you're having trouble tapping into gratitude, take a break from performing. You'll be surprised at how much you miss it.

You finished reading the article "**How to Be a Good Entertainer**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.