

BEHIND THE NOISE

THE MUSIC AND BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

www.behindthenoise.co.uk

PREPARING FOR YOUR GIG

VENUE [5]

You're in a band and have a gig coming up in 1 month's time...what needs to be done?

- 1 band member to liaise with the venue promoter.
- Show date, load in time, soundcheck time, stage time, set length.
- What backline will the venue provide?
- Will you be sharing with other bands? Never assume this, always check!
- Write a list of all the equipment you will need.

PREPARING YOUR GEAR [10]

Ensure your gear is 'gig ready', this means 'in good working order'.

- Drums: Tuned, decent skins, no loose hardware.
- Guitar and Bass: Check for loose parts, good strings, does it stay in tune?
- FX Pedals: Replace batteries, mark your settings. [pedal boards].
- Keys and Tech: Save settings, always have a back-up.
- Amplifiers: Check your amps are in good working order.
- Cables: Check all are working properly, no crackles or buzzing.

THE ABOVE APPLIES TO ALL EQUIPMENT – CHECK THEY WORK PROPERLY!

COMMONLY FORGOTTEN PIECES OF KIT

Drumsticks, guitar straps, cables, keyboard stands, power supplies and plectrums.

WRITE A CHECKLIST

REHEARSING [20]

It is really important to be well rehearsed before going on stage. Generally speaking, the better rehearsed you are, the better the gig. The way in which you rehearse and understanding what rehearsals are for can be very important.

Attitude

- Know your parts before going into the rehearsal with the band.
- Listen to what each other are playing, not just yourself!
- Communicate, if something doesn't sound right...it probably isn't!
- Work as a team, don't point fingers, be constructive!

Playing

- Balance your levels. Don't drown each other out!-
- Target sections of songs that aren't working well and repeat them until they are. Don't just play the song from start to finish.
- From time to time rehearse at half volume, it's amazing the things you pick up on.

Set List

- Plan your set list, all good stories have a start, middle and end.
- Don't leave too much time between songs as you will lose momentum.
- Time your set, adhere to the set length you've been allocated.
- Record some set run throughs and discuss potential improvements.
- Once you think you're ready, invite some friends in to hear a set run through. Playing on your own can be very different to playing to an audience. Get comfortable with it.

Visual Presentation

Think about how to represent your music visually. Do you look like a band? Does your look convey the music you are playing? Think about lighting, get creative. There are no real rules here and we're not suggesting that you all look the same. Different bands approach this in different ways. You're going to have to find what works for you. You could also video one of your rehearsals to give you an understanding of what the audience are going to see. Can you improve it?

Lighting

Even in a small venue the lighting can make a huge difference to your gig. Think about the mood you want to achieve. If the venue has a lighting engineer give him a short brief of what you're looking for. No need to over elaborate, just give a few basics for each song. This could look something like this –

Your Band Name	Your Stage Time	
Song	Notes	Length approx
1. The Journey	Slow intro – Please keep fairly dark Drums come in heavy after chorus 1 – Strobe Ends with vocal only – return to darkness.	4.15
2. Bitter Beats	Song starts heavy, up tempo – Fast lighting Syncopation after chorus 2 – White flashes if possible.	3.30
Repeat this for the rest of your set.		

SPEC SHEET [10]

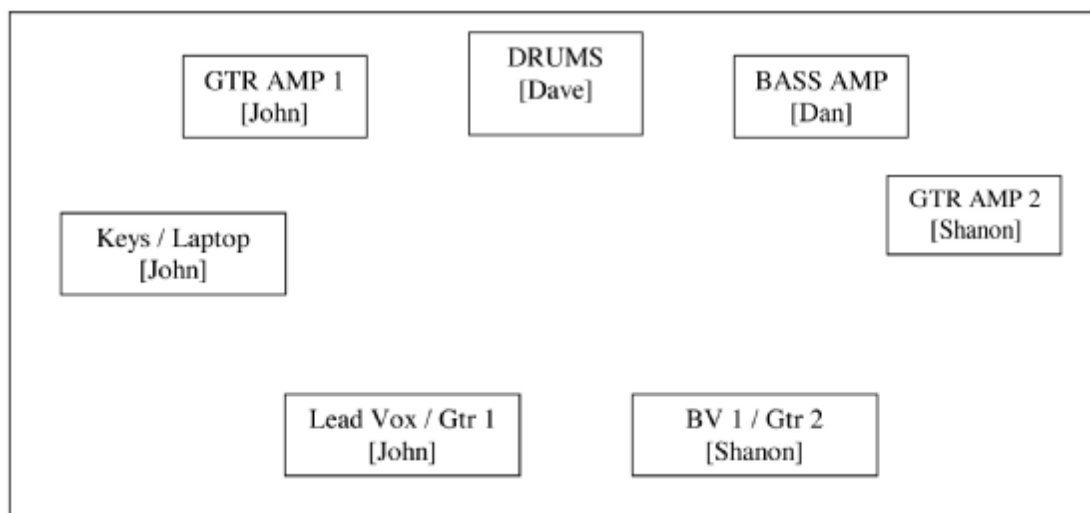
Create a spec sheet for your band. This will be a welcome sight to any good sound engineer. It eliminates any confusion and lets the engineer know exactly what to expect from your band and what equipment they will need to allocate for your performance.

Venue	Stereo
Date	01/07/2015
Band name	Signals
Band Contact [name and tel]	John 05751 555000

CHANNEL LIST

	Instrument	Notes
1	Kick Drum	On – Dave
2	Snare Top	On
3	Snare Bottom	On
4	Hi-Hats	On
5	Rack tom	On
6	Floor Tom	On
7	Overhead L	On
8	Overhead R	On
9	Bass DI	On - Dan
10	Bass Mic	On
11	Gtr Amp 1	On – John [Lead Vocal]
12	Gtr Amp 2	On
13	Keyboard L	On - Lucy
14	Keyboard R	On
15	Laptop L	On
16	Laptop R	On
17	Lead Vocal Mic [LV]	On – John [GTR 1]
18	Backing Vocal Mic [BV]	On – Shanon [GTR 2]

STAGE PLAN



SOUNDCHECK [20]

Soundchecks should not be considered rehearsal time. The soundcheck is primarily for the sound engineer to set up for your performance and to ensure that the band can hear what they're doing on stage. Often soundcheck time is limited so it's important that you're on time, well organised and have an understanding of what to do.

Preparing

- **Time is short so don't be late!**
- Before your time to soundcheck make sure your instruments are out of their cases and tuned up, cables and any pedals are ready to go.
- Know what song you're going to play for the soundcheck, it's generally a good idea to play the song that you will open your set with.

Setting Up

- First start by setting your amp volumes on stage so that you can hear yourself and each other. Don't be too loud as it doesn't leave the engineer much control over mix.
- Once your levels are good...stop playing,
- Let the engineer do his job. The engineer will ask you what he wants to hear i.e. 'kick drum please', Keep playing till asked to stop. The same process will normally be repeated for each instrument. Again, don't play unless asked.
- Vocalists should always try to sing something when the engineer is testing their channel, don't just say 'one, two'. Let him actually hear your singing voice and make sure you're right on the microphone.

On Stage Sound

- Once the engineer has set-up his channels he will normally move to the on-stage monitors. One by one, tell him what you want to hear on stage [other than your own amplifiers] i.e. vocals, kick drum, snare, electronics etc.
- You will then play through one of your songs to check all is good. Remember time is short so don't soundcheck a song with a 2 minute guitar intro, jump to a part where you're all playing.
- Raise any concerns you have with the engineer in order to achieve a good on stage sound.
- When finished you should always mark your amp settings, volumes etc. You can do this by photographing the controls or writing the settings down so you can set them back up as they should be before your actual performance.

YOUR PERFORMANCE [10]

So you've put all the hard work in, you're well rehearsed and well organised, it's payback time. Take some time before the show to focus and think through your set; don't get distracted 5 minutes before taking the stage. You might be a bit nervous but don't worry, it's perfectly normal. If you're well prepared you're most likely going to have a great experience.

Before You Take The Stage

- Make sure all members are together and ready to go.
- Check the tuning of all instruments.
- Make sure all band members have a set list for the show. This is the running order of your songs.

SHOWTIME

- Stay focussed, get used to the on stage sound and environment.
- Be confident, you know your parts.
- Watch your timing, tune into each other. Don't play too fast!
- Enjoy the experience, it will come across in your performance.

Check out these useful video links at www.behindthenoise.co.uk Go to STUDENT AREA followed by PREPARING FOR YOUR GIG.