

13 Dos and Don'ts Of Performing At Open Mikes

by **Robin Yukiko**

01 - DON'T play and leave.

02 - DO talk to EVERYONE and remember their names. You can even write their name and description and review it at the end of the night. They will be so impressed the next week.

03 - DON'T expect to be discovered. This is a networking opportunity with other musicians. Open mikes only lead to gigs if you work your contacts and follow up.

04 - DON'T just say "Good job". Be specific and sincere like "I really liked your hook" or "Your low range sounds great!" so they know you were paying attention.

05 - DO introduce others. Even if you aren't interested in collaborating with someone, maybe you can give someone a good lead.

06 - DON'T heckle. No one wants you to request Free Bird.

07 - DO be gracious. If only one person is listening, play just for that person, and yourself.

08 - DON'T talk loudly over a ballad. Everyone chats, just be respectful about it.

09 - DO play contrasting songs. (One slow, one fast, one in major, one in minor, etc.)

10 - DON'T play two songs in the same key back-to-back. Even if an audience doesn't know, their ears will start to get bored.

11 - DON'T apologize before you play a song. People want you to be excited about your song, not hear excuses for why it's going to suck.

12 - DO make friends with the host, bartenders, and all staff. People like to work with their friends, so be a friend to everyone you meet.

13 - DO have fun! If it's not fun, what's the point?

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Editors's Note: OUCH!!! Guilty as charged on several points!!!

PS... there's room for a No. 14: DON'T ramble on between songs!