

How to host a house concert

What is a house concert? How do I put on a house concert?



Introduction

A house concert is exactly what the name says, a concert in someone's house. It doesn't have to specifically be in a house, it could be a backyard or even a community center or art gallery space. It is a concert outside of a traditional music venue.

- There is no charge for tickets, **donations only**. (Alternately, a set fee can be agreed on.)
- It is not a party with a background musician but a true **listening event meant to support the artists** – both with attention and income.
- **It does not require a large fancy home or complex event planning**; just a willingness to support live music by providing both a location and inviting people to attend.
- It does not **cost much (or anything)** to put on. Some hosts provide snacks. Some invite guests to a potluck. Some ask guests to bring a folding chair. If alcohol is desired, it is typically BYOB.
- It is a unique, amazing, fun, and simple event.

How it works when hosting Crimson Canary

You open your home to Crimson Canary as a performance venue and possibly a place to spend the night if we are traveling. **You and your friends promote the show** by inviting family, friends, and others who are passionate about music. You should be able to guarantee at least 20 guest for the concert to be a great experience for *everyone*.

We can bring a mini PA if the size of the location warrants it. Our music will not be loud, just loud enough for folks to hear us. We will perform for at least an hour, sometimes two shorter sets with a small break for mingling and refreshment. We are always happy to talk with attendees about our music and our experience as musicians.

You will ask attendees for a donation for the musicians if donations have not been collected in advance.

*Hint: As the artist, I might ask for donations but **I would rather focus on my performance** and let the host give a very brief donation announcement. It makes for a better evening ;-)*

Why donations?

It is simpler. Donations ensure the "house show" is not viewed as a business. This protects the host because charging a ticket price could **run you afoul of commerce laws**. The likelihood is low, but still, we prefer to play it safe with this commonly accepted approach.

For the artists, getting their music in front of an audience of listeners might be more important than any ticket revenue. Typically, the donation system works well. The host can collect donations by reservation prior to the event or directly after the performance is finished. Some hosts prefer to station a helper at the door to collect the donation as people walk in.

You include wording on the invitation such as "suggested donation \$10-20" and after the show say something like:

*"Thanks for coming tonight! I hope you enjoyed this as much as I did. I want to remind you this is a donation-based concert. Your donations will directly benefit our artists and will show them our appreciation for this amazing experience they brought us. I encourage you to give generously. " **See how simple that is?***

Logistics

Typically, I work with my hosts closely to help them with things like invitations and RSVP (I recommend using a web based invitation service such as Evite or Eventbrite.) If you'd like, I can give you a written sample invite to customize to your liking. Other than that, electricity (for light amplification if needed) and space for people to sit in one main area is all you need. A small living room can pretty easily house 20 people. Couches, cushions, floors or folding chairs are all perfectly fine.



If you want to support live music and the arts, house concerts are an excellent way to do it. They provide both established and new performers a way to be heard and can help support an artist's career in music.