

A guide to hosting DIY events, written by the founder of DoDIY.org and edited by several people from all around the so-called USA. Includes comments on the DIY ethos, dealing with police, creating safer spaces, tips on booking and promotion, and much more.

"BUILDING: A DIY Guide to Creating Spaces, Hosting Events and Fostering Radical Communities"
by Neil Campau

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BUILDING:

A DIY Guide to Creating Spaces, Hosting Events and Fostering Radical Communities



OTHER READING

All of these are available for free download on the "Resources" page of DoDIY.org.

"A How To Guide On Starting A DIY Events Calendar"

"Know Your Rights: When Encountering Law Enforcement"
by ACLU

"Your Rights and The Police" by Rose City Copwatch

"Sound Reinforcement Application Guide" by Yamaha

INTRODUCTION

"We have to invent a form of war such that the defeat of Empire will no longer be a task which kills us, but which lets us know how to live, to be more and more ALIVE." - Anonymous

I run a website logging DIY venues and promoters all over the world at DoDIY.org. Users of the website have frequently asked me for advice on hosting DIY events and for years I have hoped that someone would create a clear, concise, and easily available guide. To the best of my knowledge that has not happened and so I decided to create it myself. I don't consider myself to be an expert on "doing it yourself" and in my opinion that would be contradictory to the entire idea, so I asked as many people as I could to give me their input and advice. All of the people who have helped with edits and advice are credited in the last section of this book.

In an attempt to keep this guide interesting to read, I don't walk you through every single step of the process. I instead try to focus on "bullet points" and ideas to spark thoughts and conversation. Don't depend on this guide. Do it yourself.

I'd very much enjoy receiving feedback about these writings. You can email me at neil@dodiy.org.

DIY



groups, particularly ones that might be involved in direct action. The main focus of a security culture is keeping infiltrators and other potentially damaging parties out.

SEXISM: Prejudice or discrimination based on sex; or conditions or attitudes that foster stereotypes of social roles based on sex.

SOCIAL CHANGE: Alteration in the social order of a society.

TRANSPHOBIA: A range of negative attitudes and feelings towards transsexualism and transsexual or transgender people, based on the expression of their internal gender identity

WHEATPASTE: A liquid adhesive made from vegetable starch and water. Make wheat paste by whisking a few tablespoons of flour and a cup of water, while heating it on the stove. Stop when it thickens. Add a pinch of sugar or corn starch to make it extra sticky.

HOMOPHOBIA: A range of negative attitudes and feelings toward homosexuality or people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

INFOSHOP: A storefront or social center that serves as a node for the distribution of political, subcultural and arts information, typically in the form of books, zines, stickers and posters.

MONOGAMY: The practice of maintaining a relationship with one romantic partner.

POLYAMOROUS: The practice of maintaining multiple romantic relationships.

QUEER: A label setting queer-identifying people apart from discourse, ideologies, and lifestyles that typify mainstream LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual) communities as being oppressive or assimilationist.

RACISM: Behavior or beliefs motivated by racial stereotypes, it generally includes practices of racial discrimination, and ideologies of racial supremacy and hierarchy.

SAFE SPACE: A place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person's self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others

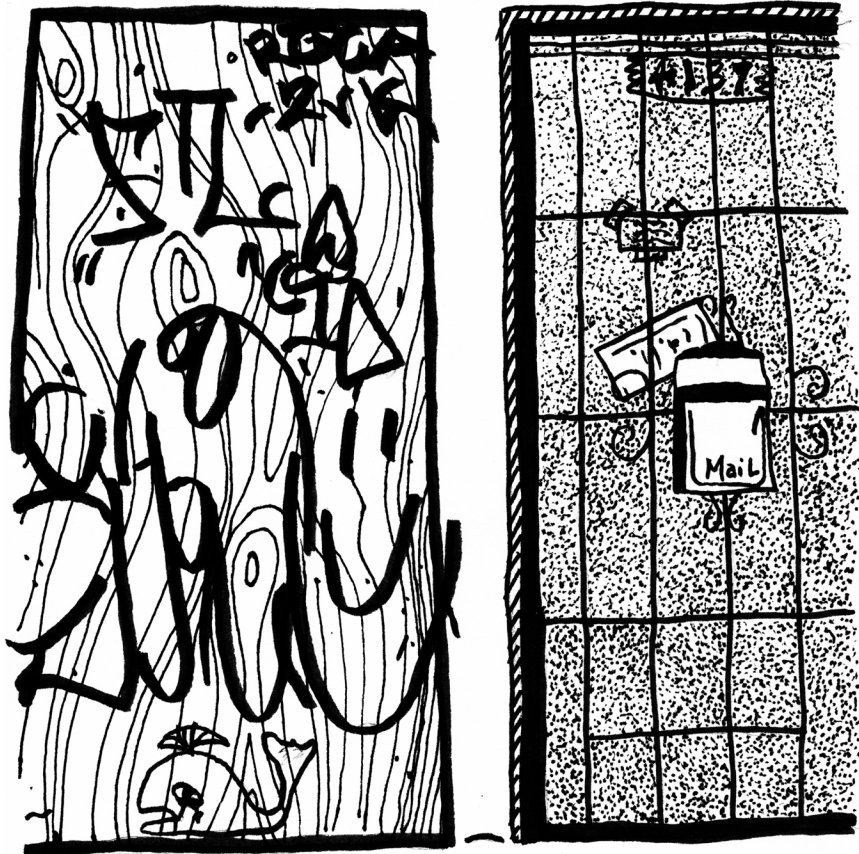
SECURITY CULTURE: A set of customs shared by a community whose members may engage in illegal or sensitive activities, the practice of which minimizes the risks of such activities being subverted, or targeted for sabotage. The term is most often used in the context of activist and anarchist

DIY stands for "Do It Yourself." As a general ethos, it's about taking direct action to live independently from capitalist¹ society. Some of us are creating safer spaces for people of all ages, genders, skin colors, sexual orientations, and abilities. Some of us are creating spaces that foster community and don't operate solely on selling alcohol or acquiring assets for already quite comfortable, rich men. Some of us are creating art that doesn't conform to whatever is popular. Some of us are sharing skills and knowledge. Some of us are trying to live freely and honestly. Some of us are trying to change the way we act and live to be more proactive and thoughtful. Some of us are actively working to dismantle and destroy this society. Some of us believe that only nonviolent actions can bring about positive social change and some of us don't. Some of us deal with sexism, queerphobia, and/or racism on a daily basis and are fed up. Some of us aren't allowed in bars.

We are vast and varied. Some of us drink alcohol or do drugs and some of us don't. Some of us live in cities. Some of us live in suburbs. Some of us live in small towns. Some of us live in the woods. Some of us are proud to be outcasts and criminals. Some of us are monogamous and some are polyamorous. Some of us have been labeled as fat, ugly, pimply, loud, crazy, stupid, faggy, smelly, too thin, hairy, or sick. Some of us are brown and some of us are white. The one thing we all have in common is that we want control over our own lives and we're doing something about it. We don't want to depend on experts or authorities. We are a constantly growing community of artists, activists, musicians, anarchists, punks, crafters, queers, writers, lovers, fighters, haters, and builders.

¹ A few of the editors have argued that consumerism, not capitalism, is really the biggest problem to contend with, but I do not agree and feel as if I should explain myself. Consumerism is simply a result of capitalism. Because capital is what drives our society in such a large part, businesses and governments spend considerable energy and time to maintain a consumerist culture, through advertising and other forms of social/behavioral manipulation. I'd rather look at the root of the problem, not symptoms.

SPACE



GLOSSARY

Most of these are from wikipedia.org, but I may have altered them.

ABLEISM: A form of discrimination or social prejudice against people with disabilities.

AGEISM: Stereotyping and discriminating against individuals or groups because of their age.

ANARCHISM: The political philosophy which holds the state to be undesirable, unnecessary, and harmful, or alternatively as opposing authority and hierarchical organization in the conduct of human relations.

CAPITALISM: An economic system that is based on private ownership of the means of production and the creation of goods or services for profit.

CISGENDER: A gender classification used when someone identifies with behaviors and roles considered normal and/or appropriate for their body/sex.

CONSUMERISM: A social and economic order that encourages the purchase of goods and services in ever-greater amounts.

COPWATCH: To observe and document police activity while looking for signs of police misconduct (such as brutality).

GIFT ECONOMY: a society where valuable goods and services are regularly given without any explicit agreement for immediate or future rewards. Ideally, simultaneous or recurring giving serves to circulate and redistribute valuables within the community. Informal custom governs exchanges, rather than an explicit exchange of goods or services for money or some other commodity.

poor, yet dedicated, forever' - Jacob Bannon

MIKE SKIPPER - West Oakland CA
music@WOWDUDERECORDS.com

NATE ALLEN - Portland OR

PAT BELKEN - Yarmouthport MA
I run a record label called Cellar Hits, play music with The Zookeepers, work with the Big Collage collective and deliver pizzas.

RINNA V. REM - Madison/Seattle/PDXOXO
Radical librarian, 2nd generation Khmeramerican.

SHANNON CONNOR - Milwaukee WI
I live at a house show space in Milwaukee called The Laundry Chute and set up shows there as well as other spaces including Cream City Collectives, the neighborhood social center.

STEPHAN DOBOSH - Auburn PA

ZOE BOEKBINDER - New Orleans LA
Available for weddings, birthdays, bachelor parties, and DIY events (only not the first three).

'DEAR SPECTACULAR CAPITALISM
i AM BORED WITH MY
iMAgiNAtion
I WANT MY
LIFE BACK'

- Zach Houston

The most obvious place to host DIY events would be where you live. A living room, a basement, a garage, a backyard, a roof. I used to have shows in my 400-square-foot studio apartment. We would push all of our furniture up against the walls and fit fifty or more cozy, cuddly people in that place. Be creative with your space and there's a very good chance that you can make it work.

If for some reason you can't use your living space (or prefer not to), there are endless possibilities. You could ask a friend if you can use their house. You could ask around at local businesses and try to convince someone to let you use a space in their restaurant, gallery, coffee shop, bar, ice cream shop, bowling alley, roller rink, or clothing store. You could rent a space. You could host events in a park, on a beach, deep in the forest, in a barn, under a bridge, in a parking lot, next to a pool, or at the top of a mountain. The event could be on wheels: in an RV, on the back of a truck, in a van. You could build a secret tree house. You could borrow a boat. You could find an abandoned or empty building and re-purpose it. If there's no electricity and you need it for a PA, find a generator. If you don't need electricity, use candles for lighting. If you would like to lessen the chance of police interference, acquire several buildings and move people from building to building during breaks. You could even take over a street.

Once you have found a space to host your event, it's time to get it ready. First of all, you might do a bit of cleaning. Then I would think about things like lighting (e.g. placement, colored bulbs, etc.), the best place to put the "stage," chairs, a table

for the bands' merchandise, a sign and receptacle for collecting donations, signs instructing people where to find the bathroom or how to use your greywater system, extra toilet paper, and putting together a basic first aid kit. You could consider providing instruments and gear (borrowed if necessary) so not all of the performers have to bring their own and to minimize their setup time. If you're going to host loud events, then you might consider soundproofing your space: mattresses and foam placed over your windows and walls can really help to absorb sound. For outdoor shows, you might need to post signage to direct people to your location and also bring garbage receptacles.

DUSTIN KRCATOVICH - Ypsilanti MI
Nobody will be remembered (no matter how many friends they have online), and this is fine.

ERIN CASE - Midland MI
Hosts shows, runs DIY MI, and makes rad collages; you should look her up.

FRED THOMAS - Ypsilanti MI
Everything that happens wants to happen again.

JAMIE MENZEL - Eugene OR
"And if our ideas are dangerous, it is because we are those who love to live dangerously; and if our dreams are mad, it is because we are mad."

JANE APPLESAUCE - Seattle WA

JEF LOGSDON - Panama City FL
I BOOK SHOWS, paint paintings, Love Sake, and run a cassette label called Whirlingcloud.

KEVIN CAIN - Buffalo NY

LOGAN W GREENE - Tucson AZ
Logan doesn't think you should be worried.

MATT HALL - Plattsburgh NY
Hey all, if you're ever coming through Northern NY please visit me at the ROTA Gallery here in Plattsburgh, we have art shows, music shows and more all the time, and if you're looking for some songs about industrial civilization and its effects on individuals and the environment, check out Marco Polio at marcopolio.bandcamp.com!

MIGUEL @ PARADISE LOST - New Brunswick NJ
If you're reading this zine, you're doing it right. "learn to be

EDITORS

185668232 - Philadelphia PA

Understanding is a choice: everyone is everything by some degree.

ADAM BALBO - Oakland CA

AMY BROWN - San Jose CA

Designs and builds a variety of fabric sculptures including hats, costumes, puppets and plushies. Jumbojibbles.com

BEN TURK - Columbus OH

Insurgent Theatre creator and Prison Abolitionist.

BRYAN FUNCK - New Orleans LA

I have been involved in booking shows, playing in bands, doing zines, etc. 1997 until eternity.

CJ BOYD - Infinitour Earth

"Maturity consists in rediscovering the seriousness we had as children at play." -Friedrich Nietzsche

DANAH OLIVETREE - Oakland CA

danaholivetree.com

DREW DANBURRY - Provo UT

I used to record songs and tour pretty much all the time...I haven't stopped recording, but now I cut hair and do straight razor shaves at the Danburry Barber Shop.

DUSTIN GOLDKLANG - Guelph ON

Dustin sings short pop songs and enjoys running and loving.

SAFER



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My name is Neil Campau and, among other things, I sometimes identify myself as an artist, musician, anarchist, radical, feminist, non-voter, anti-racist, queer-ally, punk, slacker, and social agitator. I grew up in Alpena MI and, as of July 2012, I've also lived in Adrian MI, Ann Arbor MI, Chicago IL, Seattle WA, and currently live in Oakland CA. I am white, male-bodied, and usually straight. I don't really do drugs because they scare me, but I definitely drink too much coffee and beer and currently smoke enough cigarettes to have a cough. I was married for a couple years, arrested a couple times, and am allergic to penicillin. I don't believe in gods, ghosts, or magic. I tried monogamy for a long time, but am no longer interested in it. I try to surround myself with people who communicate thoughtfully and practice consent in both social and sexual relationships. My hairless pet rat, Alvin, died a few years ago and I still cry about it sometimes. My favorite physical activities are sex and walking. I am an introvert and often crave more time alone. I used to have a music project called "World History," but now play as "Electrician." I was born in June of 1980. Since 1997, I have attended, organized, and/or performed at hundreds of DIY events around the so-called USA, Canada, and Mexico. This book is the first writing venture of any considerable length that I've attempted since assigned papers in school.

"When we talk about accessible or inclusive all-ages spaces, I think it's important to mention that those spaces don't always need to be accessible to everyone. It's totally okay not to let assholes into your show. The specific guidelines are up to you, but part of being a safer, inclusive space is minimizing anxiety and safety concerns for the people that make up your 'community', a community that is hopefully trans-inclusive, radically feminist, anti-racist, non-ableist, body positive, non-heteronormative, and that strives to make shows accessible to people from all different socio-economic backgrounds. No capitalists allowed." - Jamie Menzel

There's a lot of talk about "safe spaces" in the DIY community, but I don't believe they are a possibility with all of the rampant and misguided societal ideas of gender, race, body image, family, and sex. We *can* create *safer* spaces by being aware that we all have different abilities, sensitivities, and experiences and by actively maintaining a space where everyone feels supported. You can't promise to preemptively mute insensitive people or their actions, but you can let people know that sexist, homophobic, transphobic, racist, ableist and/or other selectively offensive language and actions will not be tolerated. You may need to ask someone to leave or even forcefully remove them from your space. You shouldn't be expected to do that alone; make sure you have a couple friends to support you.

I've included some stuff to think about below. If you don't understand or if you want to know more about some of these bullet points, do some research. Go to your local infoshop or library, look it up on the Internet, and talk with friends. Please don't depend on others to educate you or call you out when you're being an asshole. Check yourself.

- Not many people feel comfortable in a dirty, cluttered space.
- Events that only include white, cisgendered male performers are boring and usually don't represent the majority of your audience.
- Some people can't stand for extended lengths of time

or climb stairs.

- Some people are uncomfortable around drunk people.
- Some people are allergic to fragrances, smoke, and certain foods or pets.
- Nobody likes to have your political or religious agenda pushed on them.
- Some people don't identify as their assumed gender.
- Some people have kids.
- Some people are very uncomfortable in small or crowded spaces.
- Some people can't hear or see or speak.
- Good security culture is essential to many people's safety.
- Sexism, racism, queerphobia, ageism, ableism, rape, and the like are rampant and very much perpetuated in everyday life. Many people are fed up.

While you're thinking about this, please don't get discouraged and/or overwhelmed, thinking that you have to directly address all these things in order to be "doing it right." A good first step would be to open up conversations about all of these things with your friends and/or broader community.

If the cops show up and you DON'T want trouble:

1. Ask everyone to be quiet and stay inside.
2. Take one or two sober, experienced friends outside to greet the cops.
3. Close the door behind you.
4. Be polite and avoid confrontation.
5. Your main goal should be to get the cops to leave without hurting anyone.
6. Do not consent to any searches or let them in the house.
7. If they try to enter your space anyway, don't stop them (they could arrest you). Say, in a loud voice, "I do not consent to this search."
8. If they are responding to a noise complaint from a neighbor, say "We will address the problem."
9. Once the cops are gone, decide if and how you want to keep going with the show.

If the cops show up and you DO want trouble:

1. Do whatever feels good; throw insults, bottles, whatever.
2. Be empowered, but also prepared to deal with the consequences and also be conscious of how commonplace it can be for cops to turn to violence. Keep in mind the safety of your friends and guests.

Like I said earlier, be sure that you have a sign that states that the door charge is a "suggested donation." If you're not keeping any of the money for yourself, you probably won't have to worry about difficulties with the IRS or local business zoning officials.⁵ The performers are responsible for reporting their own income, regardless of whether you counted it and gave it to them. If you decide to keep a portion to pay for your expenses and you fear the slim-chance of an audit by the IRS, you could report via the Schedule C form, using business activity code 711410 ("Agents and Managers for Artists, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures"). There will be a section to enter that income, as well as your expenses (e.g. venue or PA rental, flier printing, travel, etc.).

There are a whole bunch of other tactics that you could employ to lessen and/or deal with police interference. You could not allow alcohol or drugs at your events. You could only host quiet events. You could only host events on weekends. You could limit yourself to one or two events per month. You could create a phone tree of friends/supporters who will come out and support you if you are bothered by the police; they might be able to help intimidate the police and, at the very least, they can copwatch. You could avoid posting your street address publicly; tell people to email or call for the address. You could do whatever you want and tell the cops to fuck off (although you'll probably be arrested).

If cops do show up at your door, be prepared and know your rights! I would recommend that you read ACLU's booklet, "Know Your Rights: When Encountering Law Enforcement." It's a really great resource, but here's some basics:

BOOK

"I was born into civilized society, and the priest, the judge, the moralist and the cop have tried to weigh me down with chains and transform my organism, exuberant with vitality and energy, into an unconscious and automatic machine for which only one word was supposed to exist: Obey." - Enzo Martucci



When I talk about police, I use it as a synonym for uniformed cops, security officers, city/state/federal agents, grumpy neighbors, and anyone else that might attempt to restrict your activities. They might try to shut down your event, cite you for being too loud or for violating a zoning or licensing law, enter your space and harass attendees, or simply make things difficult. It's not my intention to scare you, but it does happen, and it's a good idea to be prepared.

The very best thing you can do to avoid police is to establish a good relationship with your neighbors. Tell them why you plan to host events and tell them all the positive things it can do for the community. Respond to all of their questions and concerns. Give them advanced notice as to when you will be having an event and tell them what to expect. Invite them to attend. Give them your phone number and tell them to call you immediately if they have any issues. You might say something like "Hello, my name's Neil and I live next door. I want to let you know that we're going to have some people over next week; there will be music, a puppet show, and we're cooking a big meal. We want to invite the whole neighborhood to come over and check it out, as we're hoping to really encourage more community engagement. Here's my phone number, in case you have any questions or concerns." When the date draws near, leave them a friendly note with a reminder about the event. I knew of one group of housemates that would even buy their neighbors movie tickets and encourage them to have a night out when there was a particularly loud show happening.

It's also very important to maintain that you are not a business.

POLICE

"It is by doing things that need to be learned in order to be done, that you learn them." - Aristotle

There are quite a few reasons why you might want to put together an event. Maybe there's a touring band, punk circus, puppeteer, poet, theatre or dance troupe, comedian, or author coming through your town. Maybe you play music and can't find a place to play. Maybe you've been to a DIY show and have seen that they can be really great. Maybe you or someone else would like to do a presentation to raise awareness about a political or anti-political topic. Maybe you would like to raise money for something. Maybe you enjoy hosting people in your home. Maybe you want an excuse to cook a big dinner. Maybe you want to have an art show. Maybe you're too young to get into a bar or just would rather not.

If this is your first show and you're not sure that you'll be able to draw a decent crowd, you might consider starting with only local performers. It would be disappointing to have someone travel a long distance and end up with an empty donation jar.

If you are going to host some traveling performers, it's a good idea to just stick to one. It's not likely that you'll make enough cash to pay two traveling acts very well. If you have more than one traveling act, then you'll have to have fewer local acts (whom, often times, will draw more people to the show). After you've done this a few times, the word will get around that you're hosting shows and you'll probably start hearing from bands on tour that want to play the same night. Don't feel like you have to help everyone and don't be afraid to say no. Focus on hosting events that you're really excited about and that you have the time and energy to promote well. More people will consistently come to your events because they will expect a good show, and you'll earn a reputation amongst the tight-knit community of DIY travelers.



I think it's wise to stick to four or fewer acts per show. Some people book events under the logic of "the more the merrier," as they think that will mean more people will come. I understand that logic, but don't agree. From my experience, a long list of bands playing on one particular day makes people think, "I want to go see [insert favorite band], but I really don't want to sit through seven fucking bands". Concerning the order of the performers or presenters, it usually works best to put a touring act somewhere in the middle and the act who is most likely to draw the most people at the end of the night. It's a good idea to dictate approximate set lengths to performers to keep the event interesting and moving forward.

If you are hoping to host more touring acts but are having trouble connecting with travelers coming through your area, I would suggest submitting a listing to one of the few highly trafficked websites, such as DoDIY.org. Once you list yourself on one of these sites, expect to frequently receive a whole bunch of emails. This can sometimes feel a little overwhelming, but keep in mind that it's not too hard to write back and say "Sorry, I can't help out". People will most likely really, really appreciate *any* kind of response.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT NOT TO (ONLY) BOOK SHOWS FOR STRAIGHT, WHITE, MALE-BODIED DUDES by Jamie Menzel

It's boring. And, it feels gross when everyone outside of that description (straight, white, male-bodied) gets allocated exclusively into the role of audience member. It can take extra encouragement to get people who haven't performed a lot to want to get up on stage, but I think it's important this shouldn't be done as some half-assed lip service to social "justice". Instead, make an event deliberately inclusive and accessible because it will make for a more interesting show, draw a larger crowd, and help inspire other people to start creating. It's vital to the creativity of our various communities to have people that look like us up on stage. There are TONS of amazing (queer, trans, differently-abled, non-white, female-bodied) artists and musicians all over who just aren't asked to play as much, but whose talent and creativity would add so much to the house show & DIY communities if given the opportunity. If you want less bros at your shows, stop asking them to headline.

"But from the gloomy crackle of its livid fires, it does not sparkle with even a single spark of vigorous, innovative spirituality, whereas the blood that it sheds transforms itself into wine that the forerunners of the time silently gather in the red chalices of hatred, addressing it as the heroic beverage in order to commune with all the offspring of social sorrow called to the twilight celebration of the dusk." - Renzo Novatore

There aren't many better ways to start off an event than a shared meal. Your guests will feel more welcome and the touring performers will appreciate it even more. Some cheap and popular meals that are easy to make in large quantities include chili or rice and beans; both are also very easy to make vegetarian, vegan, or gluten-free.

If you can't afford to buy food (or would rather not), you can work that out. You could find food in dumpsters (grocery stores throw away so much food). You could "hook-up" the travelers at a restaurant where you or one of your friends work. You could get EBT (food stamps) or borrow a friend's card. You could shoplift. You could stop by a food bank. You could maintain a garden.

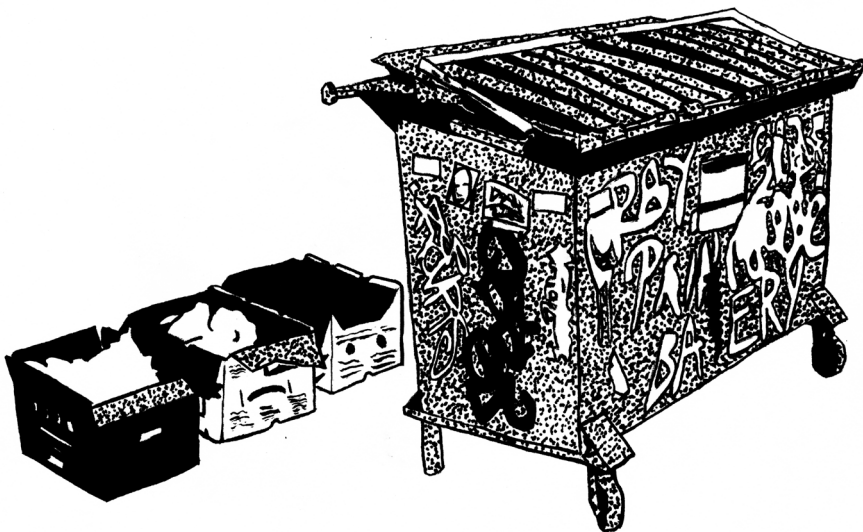
If you want to be a good host, here is a list of some other things that traveling folks really appreciate. Don't look at this list as mandatory at all; they are just ideas.

- A place to sleep
- Use of your kitchen, shower, and washing machine
- A towel
- A free or cheap oil change or tune-up for their vehicle
- A map of free/cheap/cool things to do in your town
- Beer
- Bikes
- Haircuts
- A secure place to park a vehicle and/or store gear
- A private room to sleep, have some alone/quiet time, or have sex with a sweetie (privacy is very seldom on tour)

HOST

When communicating with the acts, be sure to ask what they need and if there's anything else you should know (e.g. PA, number of mics, food preference, allergies, do they need a place to sleep, etc.) and also let them know what to honestly expect from the show, as well as any personal rules that you have about your space (e.g. no drinking, no assholes, etc.) and other important info (e.g. where to park, etc.).

Finally, tell the local performers that it would be really great if they'd not schedule any other local shows around the time of your event. Tell them that you asked them to perform because you really like them, but also because you're hoping that they can draw some people to see the touring act. Be very clear with the performers about your expectations, and I promise everything will work out much better.



EXAMPLE OF CONFIRMATION EMAIL FOR PERFORMERS:

DATE: December 25, 2012

VENUE: The Speakeasy

ADDRESS: 555 55th St

LOAD IN: Anytime after 5pm

SHOWTIME: 8pm

SET LENGTH: 25min

COVER: \$3-5 Suggested Donation

COMPENSATION: All the cash goes to the touring band

AGES: All

CONTACT: NEIL at 666-666-XXXX

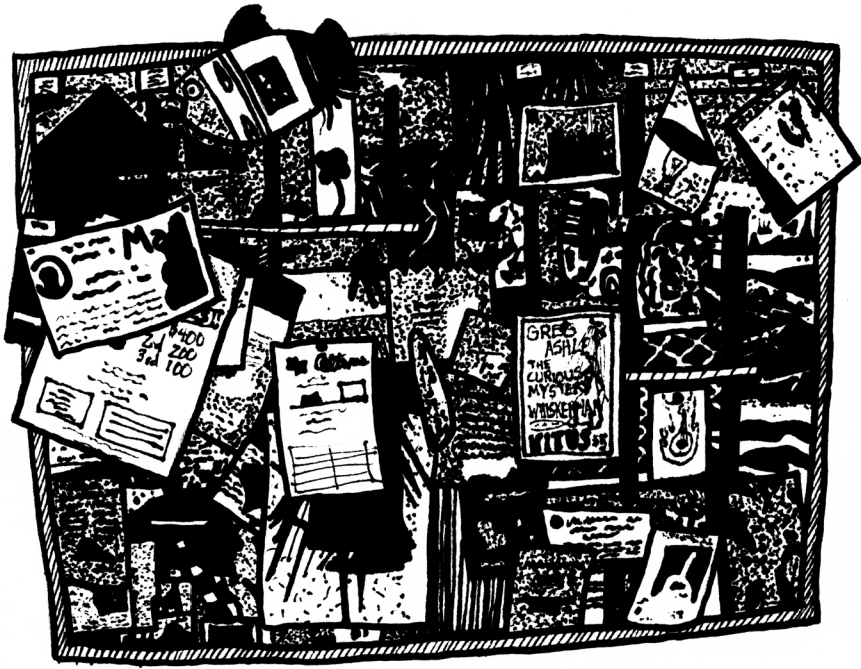
BILL (last to 1st): Remambran, Upside Drown, Real Live Tigers

FLIERS: Do you have a flier? If not, I'll make one.

SLEEP: We have 2 couches and lots of floorspace

FOOD: I'll have dinner ready by 6pm. Any food restrictions?

ALLERGIES: Anything I should be aware of? We do have 2 cats.



PROMO

money to the touring act. This is done for obvious reasons (they have more expenses) and also because many of us like to operate within a gift economy. The idea is that the people from out of town need the money much more, so we give it to them. And when we're on the road, we hope that others will do the same for us.

Some people keep a small portion of the money to help pay for fliers, equipment, and other expenses. If you're hosting shows regularly, you might even try to set some money aside as an emergency fund, in the event of a legal citation, your antique crystal lamp gets broken, a future show is less successful and you need to give the touring folks some gas money, or something else bad happens.

You'll obviously have to decide for yourself how to handle money. If you're fair and very clear with both the performers and audience from the very beginning, you're less likely to have any issues.

"We are too young, we cannot wait any longer." - A wall in Paris

If you want people to show up to your event, you'll need to tell your friends about it and then remind them a couple times. It's a good idea to start promoting a month in advance, promote it harder once it's a week or two away, and then send out a reminder the day before or morning of the event. When promoting, be sure to include the time you'll begin to open your doors to the public, who's performing, the address, date, and any other specifics (e.g. BYOB, no alcohol, bring a dish for the potluck, no assholes, walk around to the back door, bring your swimsuit, etc.). Instructions on where to park cars or lock up bikes are often a very appreciated "specific" to mention, especially if your neighborhood has strict parking restrictions or it's hard to find a pole to lock a bike. I usually like to also mention whether there will be pets (for people with allergies) and whether the space is accessible to people with certain disabilities.

If you don't have time to promote the show, you probably shouldn't be hosting it. Don't throw together an ill-planned/promoted event just because you think you're doing the touring band a favor. Keep in mind that most touring performers are on a very tight budget and traveling is expensive. When I think back on all of the ill-promoted DIY shows that I've played (which are too many to count), I definitely would have rather had a night off or have had a chance to find a better show if I had known that the hosts didn't have time or interest in promoting.² Just be real and don't make promises that you can't keep.

Before you get started, you should think about what would be an appropriate level of promotion. What is the capacity of your space? How susceptible is your venue to police interference? Are you hosting the event mostly for your friends

² My biggest pet peeve of touring: "Sorry not many people came out, I've been really busy. At least it's better than nothing, right?"

or for the broader community?

Ways you could promote:

THE INTERNET

- Create a website
- Social networking websites
- List your event on local events calendars; some towns even have a DIY-specific calendar
- List the show on websites trafficked by music nerds or DIY-minded people
- Send an email to local bloggers
- Create an email list

GET OFF THE INTERNET

- Make fliers and post them around town³
- Tell local newspapers, zines, and radio stations about your event
- Create a snail mail list
- Call your friends
- Send out a mass text message
- Pass out handbills at other events.
- Make a "monthly events" flier that lists all of your event

3 If you feel scared by the idea of making a flier because you're not the "artist" type, take note that really anyone can do it. One idea for a very simple and engaging poster would be cutting a picture out of a magazine, gluing it to a piece of paper, and writing all the details around the image with a marker. Easy. If you don't want to make one yourself, then you could ask an artist friend to help.

It shouldn't be your sole responsibility to promote the show. Make sure the local performers know that you expect them to do their best to promote as well.

"Money is money, so concentrate when you count it." - Lil Boosie

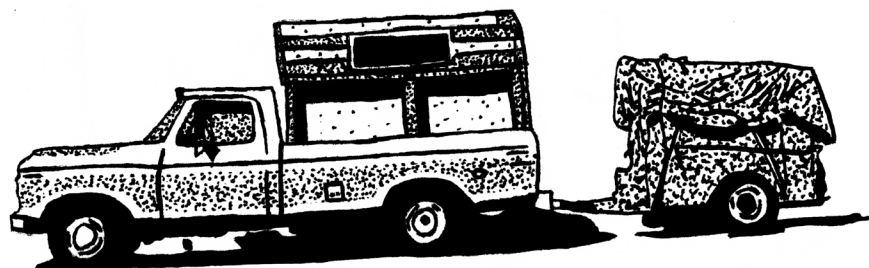
It's not fun, but you're going to have to deal with money. The touring performers need to pay for gas, food, and have plenty of other expenses. After attending hundreds of DIY shows, I can very confidently say that stationing a volunteer at the door and asking each individual for money is the best (and easiest) method. If you are going to do that, you should have a sign that states that the money collected is a "suggested donation," as otherwise you might run into issues with local business ordinances and laws (it is generally illegal to charge a cover without a certain kind of business license). It's good to charge a sliding scale price (i.e. "\$3-10 suggested donation, but no one is turned away⁴"). If you don't have anyone who can sit by the door all night or your space won't allow it, you can "pass the hat." Be sure to make an announcement and pass it around several times throughout the night. This is even more effective if you have a person walk around with the container and ask each individual person for a donation. Make sure to advertise the suggested donation on your fliers, so people are more likely to show up to the event with cash. Please don't make the performers deal with the money themselves. Asking for money may feel awkward, but it feels even more awkward to be performing and asking for money.

I also know of a couple houses that have sold tickets in advance. This can really help out how much money you're able to raise, but I would highly suggest that you keep this sort of thing on the extreme "down-low", as I can easily foresee some future problems with city ordinances.

At the end of the night, you'll need to count and split up the money. You could split it up between the performers, but it's common practice at DIY events to give all or most of the

4 You might also include something like "If you could afford that beer in your hand, you can afford to help the touring folks."

MONEY



SOUND

'I used my mother's radio as a PA system. I'd take the telephone, the speaking part, and take those two leads off and lead them into the radio and the sound would come out of the speaker.' - Les Paul

Be sure to ask the performers if they need a PA and, if so, how many microphones. If you don't own these things, ask around and hopefully you can borrow one. Otherwise, get creative. One example of a very simple DIY PA:

- 1 Microphone taped to a lamp post (acting as a mic stand)
- 1 Mic cable running from the mic to a small mixer
- 1 Bass Amp connected to the mixer (a guitar amp works too, but bass amps usually sound better when used as a PA)

If you've never used a PA before, don't be scared. It's pretty easy to figure out the basics; you just might want to mess around with it in advance, so you have less technical issues on the day of the show.

TIPS:

If you're hearing a loud squealing sound (called "feedback"), look at the following things:

- Your microphones should not be pointing at the speakers.
- Turn down the overall volume and/or gain.
- Adjust the EQ; try turning down either (or both) of the low and high knobs

You should check to see if the outlets are grounded in your house or event space. If they aren't someone could get really hurt when plugging in PAs and amps. You can get a small tester that plugs into the outlet for fairly cheap at any place that sells electrical supplies.

