

Getting Started as a Musician

So, you want to be a musician? That's great! Starting out can be hard, but our guide is here to give you a few tips on how to begin.

Make Music, See Music, Play Music

Whether you're playing covers or writing your own masterpieces, get yourself immersed in music. Go out and see what other musicians are doing, listen to and discover new music and most importantly, **play music**. Explore, create, invent and invest your time into music.

How do I find a band?

Finding a band can be a difficult because you need to find the right people that you'll gel with personally and musically. Try speaking to your friends who play instruments or get them to introduce you to friends who play instruments. Go to local gigs and network with other musicians and discuss your musical interests and your ideas. Adelaide is a small place, you'll find band members in no time! Other places you might be able to find members would be on online music forums, Gumtree and notice boards that you can find in music stores like Allan's Music in the CBD, or Holden Hill Music in Modbury.

Practice Makes Perfect

When you're first starting out, it's important to keep on practicing. Whether you're in a band, a duo or solo musician, you should be aiming to rehearse at a minimum of once a week. Finding a place to rehearse can be tricky too, so you may opt to use a local rehearsal room. Search the **Music SA Business Directory** to find information on the locations of rehearsal rooms and equipment hire in South Australia.

How to I get a gig?

To get gigs, you need to approach some of the many wonderful venues we have in SA. One of the first things you need to consider when choosing a venue is your compatibility. Does your music fit the venues preferred music genre? For example: a heavy metal band should opt to play at venues that cater to their requirements, like The Cavern, Fowlers Live or Enigma Bar and not a small cafe or venue like The Jade or The Havelock Hotel.

To find out more about the venues in Adelaide and their information, please see our **Music SA Venues Directory**. Some venue listings even have a very handy **specs document** that you can download, which will tell you all about the types of live music they book, what nights they host bands, where to load in and more.

Once you approach the venue, you may be lucky and they may have a upcoming show that you can jump on! However, this isn't always the case. Another way to get a gig is to organise a show and full line up prior, and then approach the venue. To do this, find and contact bands similar to yours that you'd like to share the stage with. Use this as an opportunity to reach out to bands that you may or may not know! Ideally, you should aim to approach bands that are more experienced than your own and have a fan base, which will enable you to build your fan base.

It's very important that when you contact the venue, either via email, phone or in person, that you are polite, professional and know what you're talking about. Make sure that you know exactly what bands are playing, what genre they are, what equipment you'll need, where you have played before, etc. Some venues may ask for a demo or press kit, so be prepared for this. Soon enough, you'll become familiar with the booking agents and venues across South Australia and you'll be playing regular gigs in no time!

Music Opportunities

Be on the look out for other music opportunities that may arise. This includes band competitions and open mic nights. Keep an eye out on our website which is updated with **music opportunities** regularly – or sign up for our fortnightly eNews.

Busking

Busking is a great way for you to earn some extra cash and get your name out there! You can busk just about anywhere you'd like, but make sure you read up about the laws regarding the location. In most circumstances, you must have a busking licence, but don't fret as they are very cheap and easy to purchase. You can visit the Adelaide City Council [website](#) for more information and on how to obtain a busking license.

Transitioning from Cover sets to original music

The transition from cover music to original music can be a difficult step. If you're predominately a cover band, try chucking in an original song in between your covers and gauge how the audiences responds. As you progress, start adding more in! It's important to play your own original music so don't be nervous to start trying it.

How do I get paid? How much will I get per gig?

Unfortunately, there is no right or wrong answer as to how much you'll get paid per gig. Make sure that before playing a gig, you and all the bands are familiar with the conditions of payment. There are a number of different ways that payment works. Ensure you know how much you're getting paid, or if you're getting paid, prior to the gig. You also need to consider the price you need to pay for using the venue. Payment types include:

- **Free:** Many bands play shows for free. You must ensure that you are aware of this to avoid disappointment after the gig.
- **Door split:** One of the easiest and most common forms of getting paid is through a door split. After the show, the total made on entry at the door pays the venue and then is split amongst the bands. Depending on your arrangement, the split may be evenly across the bands or the headlining bands may be paid more. Some shows are paid via attendance. This means that at the door, punters are asked which band they are there to see, and then the money is split and paid according to who brought most of the attendance to the show.
- **Venue Door:** Much like a door split, some venues may charge ~free~ venue hire, but take money off the door price. For example, you may charge a \$10 door fee but the venue may take \$5 from that ticket price. When in this arrangement, consider the price of your tickets to ensure you break even. e.g. you may want to price your tickets at \$15, so you make a \$10 profit.
- **Tickets:** Another way that musicians make their music is via pre-sale tickets. This can be set up via one of the many ticket companies that can be found on our business directory under ticketing.

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