

Entertainer interview questions

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What to expect

Entertainer interviews tend to focus on your act, your reliability and how you handle a live crowd. You will likely meet a venue programmer, a promoter or a creative director, and the conversation will move between your material and the practical side of touring.

- **Process:** Questions about how you create, rehearse and refine an act, from first idea to stage.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for real examples of handling crowds, difficult gigs or career setbacks.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations such as tech failure, a quiet room or a last-minute change to the running order.
- **Technical:** For musicians, questions about software, gear and live setup; for comedians and magicians, questions about writing and method.
- **Commercial:** Questions about booking, promotion, insurance, travel and the business side of freelance performance.

Typically a first meeting or video call with a programmer or promoter, followed by a live audition or showcase if they have not seen you perform. Some roles involve a second conversation about fees, travel and availability. For comedy and music, you may be asked to perform a short set as part of the process.

1. Walk me through how you build a new set, from first idea to opening night.

Why they ask

This tests your creative process and whether you can finish a piece of work without relying on inspiration alone.

How to structure your answer

A walk-through: start with the seed of an idea, then development, then testing, then refinement. Be specific about your own process and how you know when a piece is working.

Example answer

"I start with a notebook of premises or song ideas, then pick the ones that feel strongest. I write a rough script or chord chart, rehearse it alone, then take it to a small open mic or a supportive room. I record the set and listen back for laughs or energy dips. After a few tries I cut what does not land and tighten the transitions. By opening night I have a set that has already survived a real audience, not just my living room."

2. Tell me about a time you had to handle a difficult or heckling crowd.

Why they ask

This shows how you manage pressure and whether you can keep a show on track without losing the room.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task you faced, the action you took and the result. Keep it to one clear story.

Example answer

"At a club gig, a group in the front row kept talking over the act. I stayed in character, made a light joke that acknowledged them without inviting a fight, and then moved the show to a different part of the room. I kept the energy up and finished the set. Afterwards the venue manager said the room

stayed with me, and I got booked again. I learned to read a crowd early and have a few lines ready for disruption.”

3. You arrive at a venue and the sound system is not working. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests your judgement under pressure and your ability to protect the show when things go wrong.

How to structure your answer

A judgement-under-pressure structure: assess, communicate, adapt. Show you can stay calm, work with the venue, and protect the show.

Example answer

“First I check the basics with the venue tech: power, cables, desk. If it cannot be fixed, I ask what we have instead, like a smaller PA or an acoustic option. I tell the promoter what is happening and suggest a short delay or a stripped-back set. I have done gigs with a single microphone and a guitar, so I know how to keep an audience engaged. The priority is a show, not perfection.”

4. How do you use Ableton Live or Logic Pro in your act?

Why they ask

This checks your technical setup and whether your software use supports the live performance rather than getting in the way.

How to structure your answer

A technical walk-through: explain your setup, how you use the software, and why it suits your performance.

Example answer

“I use Ableton Live to run backing tracks, loops and sound effects for my set. I build the session at home, warping samples and setting up cue points so I can trigger sections live. I keep a backup on a USB and a second laptop if possible. Logic Pro is where I record demos and edit audio for social media clips. The goal is to make the tech invisible so the audience focuses on the performance.”

5. How do you work with venue staff and promoters before and during a show?

Why they ask

This reveals whether you are easy to work with and whether you respect the people who run the room.

How to structure your answer

A relationship-building structure: explain how you communicate, respect their space, and make their job easier.

Example answer

“I send a tech rider and stage plot ahead of time, then confirm arrival and sound check times. On the day I introduce myself to the sound engineer and venue manager, and I ask about any constraints like noise curfews or a hard out. I keep my area tidy and say thank you to staff. If something changes, I tell them early. That makes them more likely to book me again.”

6. How do you manage the business side of being a freelancer?

Why they ask

This tests your organisation and whether you can sustain a career without someone else handling the admin.

How to structure your answer

A practical structure: cover bookings, promotion, travel, insurance, and record keeping. Show you are organised.

Example answer

"I keep a spreadsheet of bookings, fees and travel, and I use Eventbrite for my own shows. I have public liability insurance and a working with children check, and I invoice with an ABN and GST where needed. I block out time for admin each week, and I use Instagram and TikTok to promote dates. It is not glamorous, but it keeps the performing side running."