

SOUND OFF!



GETTING READY FOR SOUND OFF!

GETTING TO KNOW SOUND OFF!

The first question you might be asking yourself is whether or not your music would be a good fit for Sound Off! The short answer is YES! The long answer is still yes, but we invite you to check out videos of past participants and read more about the program on the [Sound Off! page](#).

Here's why it's important for you to watch the videos of other artists in action:

- Sound Off! has seen tons of different genres represented, from folk and hip-hop to instrumental metal and funk.
- There have been a wide variety of band sizes, from solo acts to sprawling 10-piece bands.
- The one quality that carries acts through the competition is that they know exactly what they do and they focus on doing it well.
- Think about your music and what makes it compelling. Do your best to plan out what you intend to present not only to the people reviewing your application but the judges and the audiences that come to the Sound Off! performances if you are accepted. Focus on your strengths, not on what you think will make you more competitive.

GETTING YOUR SOUND OFF! APPLICATION READY

The three elements of your application that are the most important for the panelists who select the semifinalist acts to perform are:

1. Your songs
2. Your bio
3. Your digital presence

Even though our panelists do not judge on production quality for any of these elements, there are things you can do to get yourself ready to apply and make the most out of your Sound Off! experience if you are selected to play. Here are some tips, tricks, and resources to help you prepare.

RECORDING YOUR SONGS

Many Sound Off! applicants do not have access to professional recording studios, software, or equipment, but there are plenty of options for recording your music for free. Here are a few articles about how to use free software to record a demo:

[A Beginner's Guide to Multi-Track Recording with Audacity](#)

[How to Use Garageband](#)

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If you need recording equipment to capture your sound, even if it's an iPad or a phone, check your local library to see if they offer those resources.

WRITING ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR MUSIC

Your music is what we'll hear, but you have the power to help it stand out by crafting a compelling story about yourself and what inspires the art that you create.

There are a ton of good resources that will help you think about how to write about yourself and your art. There are a lot of differing opinions on what to include, and here are a few good pieces to read before you start writing:

[Do's and Don't's for Writing a Band Bio](#)

[How to Write a Band Biography: Sell Yourself Like a Book](#)

CREATING A PLATFORM FOR SHARING YOUR MUSIC

Dedicating an online space to your music so that people can not only find you, but stay up to date with any new music you are putting out or shows you are playing is critical to building your fan base. There are many different platforms, and we encourage you to take some time to figure out what works best for you. If you need a couple free resources for sharing your music, Soundcloud and Bandcamp are two of the biggest in the game:

[Setting Up a Bandcamp Account](#)

[Setting Up a Soundcloud Account](#)

Beyond having a place for people to listen to and potentially purchase your music, there are so many online avenues to promote your art. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr...the list goes on and on. These platforms can serve as powerful tools for showcasing you as a person or band who creates art, and can shine a light on how the life you live informs your art.

Check out this session of [Mastering The Hustle on Promoting Your Music and Shows](#). It features Seattle musicians talking about how best to use new platforms to get you and your music into the eyes and ears of potential fans!

GETTING READY FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT – MASTERING YOUR HUSTLE!

After you've submitted your application to Sound Off!, don't sit on your hands! There is a lot of work you can do to get yourself ready to hit the ground running if you are selected, or to keep your momentum strong to reapply next year.

1. Keep practicing!
2. If you can, play some shows.
3. Sign up for the [Mastering the Hustle](#) series, produced by MoPOP, KEXP, Upstream, and the Recording Academy. There are three professional development sessions for emerging

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artists in the fall, and you should take the opportunity to hear from and speak with industry pros.

4. Build your community. See some shows. Step outside your lane and dig into other genres.
5. Find the all ages venues where you live and support what they do.
6. If you need help, or want to find other resources for honing your craft, check out workshops hosted by other folks who serve young artists like [The Vera Project](#), [Totem Star](#), [Fremont Abbey Arts](#), [Artist Home](#), and [Gigs4U](#)
7. Last but not least - take care of yourself. Staying healthy physically, emotionally, and mentally should always be your number one priority and will ensure that you continue to flourish and grow as an artist.