

# Musician Guidelines and Etiquette

Our goal is to make this jam a safe environment to explore jazz improvisation and collaboration while giving our audience the highest quality listening and dancing experience. To make this happen our leaders will provide structure and leadership and jammers are asked to follow a set of guidelines founded on respect for the audience, music, and each other.

## Structure and Leadership

- There is a core section of musicians that have volunteered or have been hired to provide the smoothest experience. These players are established before the jam session starts.
- The first few songs of a set will only be played by the core group to establish a baseline.
- We will make sure that everyone who has signed up to play is given a chance to play. This means that we will be rotating musicians every few tunes.
- We will limit the number of players on the bandstand at one time. This makes for better sounding music, easier for musicians to listen to each other, and better for communication all around. Songs under 4 minutes long are also more fun to dance to.
- We will encourage guest players to solo. However, not everyone may solo every song.

## Guidelines for Jammers

### Sign-up

- You must sign up in order to play.
- When filling out the requested information on the sign up sheet, please write down a few tunes you would be interested in playing. If you do not specify a tune we will pick one for you.
- Musicians that haven't played yet will be given priority over those that have.

### Songs

- It is most important that we keep our audience happy and dancing.
- If we do not have the music for the tune, the tune is in the wrong style, the tune is not danceable, etc., we will not be able to play the tune.

### Be Prepared

- To make things run smoothly, have a few songs ready to call. If you do not have a song available, we will pick one for you.
- If the song you wanted to play has already been played, you must pick another tune.
- Melody Players: you will be asked if you wish to play the head (meaning play the real melody of the song), play a solo, or just play whenever the entire ensemble plays.
- Rhythm Players: you will be asked if you wish to solo or not.
- Singers: know what key you wish to sing in (depending on the level of players, we may not be able to transpose the tune if you are picking something out of key)

# Musician Guidelines and Etiquette

## When Performing

- Listen to each other and always watch the leader. The leader may give visual or audio signals.
- Play in tune.
- Always listen and play with someone else, never try to state the tune on your own - you will be playing by yourself.
- If you cannot hear someone, you are being too loud and should play softer.
- Make as much visual contact as possible, it is easier to communicate while playing if you are aware someone is trying to signal to you.
- Have respect for the music and musicians of all abilities - this is not a competition or time to show off. The point is to experience the joy of playing for dancers and with your fellow musicians.
- Melody: If there are more than one melody players, do not play the same exact thing.
- Rhythm: If there are more than one rhythm players, do not play different rhythms.
- Do not be a solo hog. It is often considered rude to play multiple choruses in a row.
- If background riffs are played, make sure the soloist or vocalist can still be heard.
- Not everyone will get a solo on every song.

## When Not to Play

- If you do not know the tune and do not have music, don't play.
- Be honest with yourself and know when the music is too advanced for your level.
- Do not play by yourself on top of a soloist.
- Do not cut off another soloist by jumping in. Make sure they are done before coming in by making eye contact if possible.
- Do not play if you have not been invited up. Once you play a few tunes, sit down unless you are asked to stay.
- Do not practice the song in between sets or when changing a song.

## Basic Respect

- Do not talk on stage or noodle quietly when other soloists are playing.
- Do not play your instrument while waiting for the tune to start.
- Never be critical of another person on the bandstand. If you want to respectfully give feedback, wait until the break and they are off the stage.
- Respect the jam session leaders.

## Compensation

- In general, players are not compensated for their time playing - this is volunteer.
- Some core players may receive compensation for their time; this has been established before playing has begun. Do not assume that you are a core player.
- There is a tip jar and money will be split at the end of the night. If you are not around, you will not get a share. The money will be split based on how many tunes you performed. If you only played a couple tunes, you will not get part of the tips.