

Our Definitive Guide to House Concerts

What is a house concert?

A house concert is an invitation-only, private, not-for-profit concert for your guests in your home or other small, private venue. It is typically held indoors for 20-50 guests who contribute a donation to attend the show. The intimate setting allows you and your guests to truly experience the music and meet and mingle with the performer. A house concert usually includes snacks/drinks provided by the host or a potluck dinner where all of the guests pitch in.

Why do we love doing house concerts?

House concerts are a wonderful way to connect directly with fans and for the host's family, friends and friends-of-friends to come together and to create a unique evening of entertainment that you just can't find in any other kind of venue. Both the audience and the artists get to experience an intimate concert in a 'listening room' setting that is comfortable. This isn't a party with background music, it's a sit-down concert right in your living room!

How does it work?

All you need to host a house concert is a space in your home (or other private neighborhood venue) that can seat 20 people or more. If you have a living room that's about 12' by 15' or larger, you're golden! One of the charms of house concerts is that they tend to be cozy, so if you just move some furniture around you'd be amazed how you can set things up comfortably.

Still think your house is too small? Again, there are many other venues that might offer a suitable environment: A community hall, church basement, barn, public library room, art gallery and the like. House concerts tend to be informal, so that means they adapt to almost anywhere!

No matter what space you choose, you'll need to set up the room so that there is space up front for Gordon and Nancy and their instruments — in front of the fireplace, perhaps, or in an open corner. There also need to be rows of chairs arranged facing the performer. Don't have enough chairs? See if neighbors or friends can bring some along, or if you can borrow some from the local library, school or church. Then, set up some snacks, drinks, or space for potluck dishes in the kitchen and dining room and you're ready for your guests!

Next, you'll need to spread the word. If the show is in your living room, you probably won't want to throw the doors open to the public — so your guests will most likely be your friends or friends of friends. You can get the word out privately through email, a Facebook invite, or Evite. At an alternative community venue, you could also reach out to local forums and organizations.

Do I need an expensive sound system for the performers?

No! Another charming thing about house concerts is that they are usually done acoustically with minimal no amplification. In any case, Gordon and Nancy will bring any equipment that is needed for your show.

How much does it cost?

We will work with you to determine a minimum donation — this is a guaranteed amount that Cover Bridge receives after the performance, no matter how you structure the donations. The house concert includes two 40-minute sets.

To raise the minimum donation, you can structure the evening any way you wish -- with a lower suggested donation and more guests, a higher suggested donation and fewer guests, or you can decide to donate the difference yourself.

How do I handle donations?

If you do ask for a suggested donation from your guest,s you can make things run smoother by encouraging as many folks as possible to send in their donation before the show. The host can keep a list of reservations and check off when they arrive.

If you don't have all the donations received in advance, you can plant a volunteer close to the entrance to make sure donations are taken as guests walk through the door.

I want Cover Bridge to come to my house! How do I book them?

Wonderful! Email us at <mailto:info@coverbridgemusic.com> with your preferred date(s) and some info on the space and event. Once we agree on the details, the date is yours!

What if I have a million other questions?

No problem! Cover Bridge will help you with advice at every step of the way. Just get in touch and let's take it from there!