

Venue Pre-Event Walkthrough Checklist

If you manage or rent a venue, this template has the basics to make sure your venue, no matter the type, size or age, is ready to safely welcome in artists and audiences. Tailor it for your particular space and situation. If you're a renter, DON'T ASSUME that this is all taken care of for you! Meet with your venue contact ahead of time. Ask if they have this type of checklist. If so, who's responsible for doing the walkthrough before EACH AND EVERY event? If the management is, you should get an 'all clear' report from them when you arrive on site. If you are, you should have an agreement about how you report any problems and who corrects them before the event opens to the public.

Tailor this to your particular situation, adding or eliminating as needed. Keep in mind your unique situation: if you have an outdoor space; if you have multiple programming spaces; if you work with children and parents; if your events are open versus ticketed; etc. This is just to get you started.

Front of House

- ☐ Multiple accessible (firm, slip-resistant, no abrupt changes in level) evacuation routes are clear, unobstructed, and have appropriate signage.
- ☐ All walkways, staircases and aisles are clear.
- ☐ Emergency exits are labeled, clear and free from obstruction (from the inside and the outside).
- ☐ Safety equipment – fire pulls, extinguishers, speakers, audible and visual alarm signals – is visible and in working order.
- ☐ Emergency signage (emergency procedures, storm shelter directions, evacuation route/map, first aid station, etc.) is visible and undamaged.
- ☐ Safety monitors/security staff are trained/oriented and in place. Public sign in/sign out log is in place.
- ☐ Lights are operating: Emergency exits, overhead, step, aisle, stairwells, safety/emergency
- ☐ Handrails are clear and undamaged
- ☐ Safety/emergency supplies are in place and tested
 - First aid kit(s)
 - Incident report forms
 - Flashlight(s)
- ☐ Seating/risers are inspected
- ☐ Any other temporary items (instruments, stands, etc.) are properly and safely in place

Back of House

- ☐ Safety monitors/security staff are trained/oriented and in place.
- ☐ Access is restricted and sign in/sign out protocols are followed.
- ☐ Multiple accessible (firm, slip-resistant, no abrupt changes in level) evacuation routes are clear and unobstructed.
- ☐ All walkways are clear.
- ☐ Emergency exits are clear and free from obstruction (from the inside and the outside).
- ☐ Safety equipment – fire curtain, fire pulls, extinguishers, AEDs, speakers, visual alarm signals – is visible and in working order.

- ☐ Lights are operating: overhead, stairwells, safety/emergency
- ☐ Stage lighting/rigging and any special equipment has been inspected.
- ☐ Safety/emergency supplies are in place
 - First aid kit(s)
 - Incident report forms
 - Flashlight(s)
- ☐ Green room, dressing rooms, storage areas and crew areas are free of hazards
(supplies/equipment are stored appropriately, floors/walkways are clear, water sources are not near valuable material, etc.)

Building Exterior

- ☐ Walkways/steps/ramps are clear and unobstructed
- ☐ Exterior lighting is operational
- ☐ Fire lanes are clear and fire hydrants are not obstructed
- ☐ Signage is in place
- ☐ Public entries are unlocked/open
- ☐ Non-public entries are locked/closed
- ☐ Suspicious packages, individuals or vehicles are reported

© 2026 by National Coalition for Arts Preparedness & Emergency Response.

© NCAPER/South Arts 2026

This template is for advisory purposes only, and NCAPER is not responsible for any losses or damage based on these recommendations.