

Outdoor Music Guide

City of Madison



For general questions about this guide, please contact City of Madison Planning Division,
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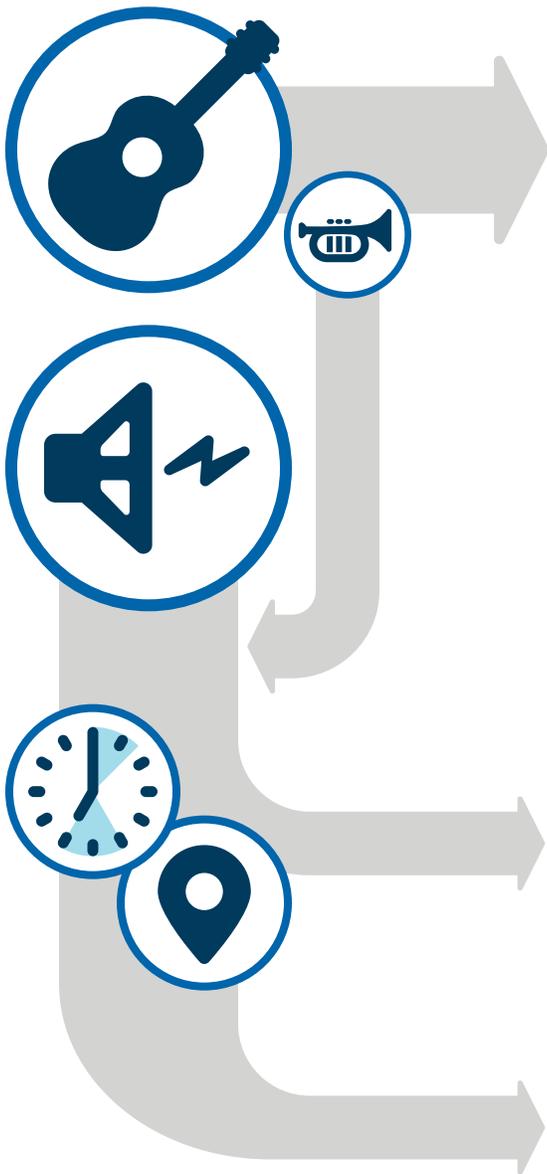
Outdoor Music Guide

City of Madison



This guide aims to help you understand what you CAN successfully do outdoors to deliver music-related activities within the City of Madison.

A Sidewalk Cafe license or a Roadway Cafe Expansion License do NOT allow you to provide outdoor music in those spaces. Sidewalk Cafes and Roadway Cafes are for food and beverage service only. They are not for performance or entertainment unless you qualify for one of the permits listed in this guide.



Unamplified

The City allows **unamplified** music in most right-of-ways. Sidewalk performances may require a permit if musicians take up space, draw a crowd, or place equipment down.

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Amplified

Amplified sound includes battery-operated amps. It includes other equipment that amplifies voice, instruments or recorded sound, whether or not plugged into a power source. It also includes other loud acoustic instruments such as brass instruments and percussion.

The City allows amplified sound (voice, instruments, and recordings) from a street or sidewalk during certain hours in most parts of the City without a permit. The hours are 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. every day. However, that does not apply to areas along State Street or Rotary Plaza in front of the Children's Museum. These areas require a Public Right-of-Way, Downtown Performance Space Permit.

If you are planning to have amplified sound outdoors during other hours, you **MUST** get City approval.

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NOTE: This guide answers some of the most frequent questions about outdoor music. Every activity is unique and other City ordinances may apply.



Amplified sound In any location, or outside specified hours



This guide is organized by location:



On Private Property

1. I have an approved outdoor eating area on my business's private property. Can I have outdoor amplified music?
2. I do not have an approved outdoor eating area on my business's private property. Can I have outdoor amplified music on my business's private property for a special, temporary event?
3. I currently have a conditional use permit for live amplified music and would like to expand it outdoors. How can I do that?

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Within a Public Right-of-Way

4. How can I host an organized event with outdoor amplified music on a City street or sidewalk?
5. I am a solo performer and want to do an impromptu performance outdoors on a City street or sidewalk. How could I do that?

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At a City Park

6. How can I apply for a temporary outdoor amplified music permit for a Madison City park?

See pages 8 and 9



At a big public venue

like Breese Stevens or Mallards Stadium at Warner Park

7. The City of Madison does not have the capacity to coordinate and fully maintain such sites. So, the City of Madison signed an agreement with Big Top Events LLC. They manage concessions, alcohol, events and facility operations.

For these two public venues you must contact the following representatives:

Breese Stevens event requests

Tristan Straub

tristan@breesestevensfield.com

Mallards Stadium at Warner Park

event requests

Vern Stenman

vern@bigtopbaseball.com



On Private Property



If you want to have live music and your business has a Liquor/Beer License, then you must have an Entertainment License.

You may need Zoning approvals to have music in an outdoor eating area. See page 5.

What type of Entertainment License do I need?

viii. I want to have temporary live outdoor music or a DJ*.

- a. You must apply for a Temporary Entertainment License for \$50 each. Maximum of 5 times per year.

ix. I want to have outdoor live music or a DJ year-round.

- a. You must apply for a permanent [Entertainment License](#) for \$300 annually.
- b. Note that you can have an Entertainment License ONLY if you already have an Liquor/Beer License. Submit a Liquor/Beer License Application if you do not have one.
- c. A Class B Beer License is \$100 annually, a Class C Wine license would be an additional \$100 per year, or a Class B Combination Liquor & Beer License is \$600 annually. The [License Fee Schedule](#) has more information.

* An Entertainment License must be acquired if an establishment has a Liquor/Beer License and any of the following activities are offered, permitted or allowed:

- live music performances
- disc jockeys;
- a designated dance floor area.

Live entertainment does **not** include:

- non-amplified or acoustic music performed by a single artist,
- performances where an unpaid patron sings along with a machine that plays pre-recorded music. Commonly known as “karaoke.”

Outdoor Eating Areas

1. I have an approved outdoor eating area on my business’s private property. Can I have outdoor live music?

- If it is non-amplified acoustic music performed by a single artist then the answer is Yes.
- If it is amplified music then it will depend on your property’s zoning district. You may need Conditional Use Approval from the Plan Commission. Contact Zoning at zoning@cityofmadison.com or 608-266-4551 to determine if you need Conditional Use Approval.

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On Private Property



- 2. I do not have an approved outdoor eating area on my business's private property. Can I have outdoor music on my business's private property for a special, temporary event?**
 - A Temporary Use Permit is required. For more information, contact Zoning at zoning@cityofmadison.com or 608-266-4551.
- 3. I currently have a conditional use permit for live music and would like to expand it outdoors, how can I do that?**
 - a. Contact Zoning at zoning@cityofmadison.com or 608-266-4551 and the Clerk's Office at jverbick@cityofmadison.com or 608-266-4601

For all general inquiries, contact madisonevents@cityofmadison.com

4. How can I host an organized event with outdoor amplified music on a City street or sidewalk?

a. I would like to host an event on a public street or sidewalk.

This requires a [Street Use Permit](#). The permit can be used to close or reserve any portion of a Madison street, sidewalk, terrace, parking lane or space with people or equipment

Organizations, community groups or individuals can apply for a Street Use Permit. You can request a series of Street Use events. The maximum number of dates is 15 per location and not more than one per week. There is an additional fee for sound amplification with a Street Use Permit. Notification of residents nearby is needed for sound amplification before 8 a.m. or after 11 p.m. These notifications are typically sent via postcards.

The Street Use Staff Commission reviews Street Use Permits at biweekly meetings. You must apply in advance. <https://www.cityofmadison.com/specialevents/streetEvents/>

Cost? Fees vary depending on location, setup, and activities.
One day permits are typically \$100 for the application fee.
Sound amplification permits are typically \$100.
Please see [Street Use fee schedule](#).

b. A group of neighbors want to host an informal event along a neighborhood block and at least 75% of residents will be willing to sign in favor of closing the street.

You could apply for a [Block Party](#) permit as long as the event is under 100 people, there is no disruption of a Metro bus route, and there will be minimal impact to traffic.

Cost? Typically \$50 per event

NOTE: If you are planning to sell or give away beer or wine, you must get a [Temporary B Picnic Beer or Wine License](#). Read the [FAQ](#) to see if you qualify. Temporary Picnic beer/wine applications for Street Use events on public right-of-way must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the event.

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Within the Public Right-of-Way (Street or Sidewalk)



- c. **I want to perform or host a performance on State Street or downtown in one of the designated performance spaces.**

You could apply for a specific [Downtown Performance Space Permit](#). It is often used for music, speakers, rallies or performances. Locations include Confluence at Library Mall, Peace Park, The Forum, Rotary Plaza and Concrete Park/Frances Plaza. Locations cannot be reserved more than 3 weeks in advance. There is access to electrical outlets. Amplification is allowed during specific times that change by location. Any setup or teardown time may not interfere with other approved permits.

Online - Apply for a [Permit](#).

Call - Madison Parks Administration office. Monday - Friday, 8:00 am to 4:15 pm at (608) 264-9289 to check on time availability and make a reservation.

Cost? Typically \$15 per event

- 5. I am a solo performer and want to do a performance outdoors on a City street or sidewalk.**

You are able to perform an acoustic solo show in most places in the City. The City allows **amplified** sound (voice, instruments, recordings) from a City street or sidewalk during the following hours in most parts of the City without a permit: 12 pm to 1:30 pm and 5 pm to 7 pm, daily. However, that does not apply for areas along State Street or Rotary Plaza in front of the Children's Museum (see 4.c., Public Right-of-Way, Downtown Performance Space Permit).

Note: taking up too much space, so that pedestrians or vehicles are blocked from using the street or sidewalk in the usual way, or placing equipment on the street or sidewalk could violate [MGO 9.54](#), or require a Street Use Permit (see 4.a.)

For all general inquiries, contact madisonevents@cityofmadison.com

6. How can I apply for a temporary outdoor amplified music permit for a Madison City park?

a. I am planning an organized public event or gathering in a City Park.

i. I qualify as an established community group or Neighborhood Association who wants to host a small event (less than 250 participants)

The event may qualify for a [Community Group/Neighborhood Park Event Permit](#) if:

- The event is a neighborhood or community focused event
- And has less than 250 people in attendance

An artist could also collaborate with a Neighborhood Association, Community Group, or Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) to be able to apply. This permit has waived and reduced fees.

First event of the year

- No application fee
- No shelter reservation fee
- ½ price [permit fees](#) (amplification, temporary structure, etc.)

Subsequent events in the calendar year

- \$50 application fee
- ½ price [Shelter reservation fees](#)
- ½ price [permit fees](#)

No limit for # of events

Cost? Cost is dependent on location, setup and activities. Check the [Park Event fee schedule](#)

ii. I qualify as an established community group or Neighborhood Association but I want to host a large event (250+ participants)

A [park event permit](#) can be used to reserve park space for a special event. Depending on the details of your event, additional permits may be required (i.e. amplification, alcohol, temporary structures, etc.). Organizers must obtain permits for events if any of the following are planned:

- Large number of participants (250+ participants)
- Promoted to the general public,
- Admission is charged,
- Vending will occur,
- Event is a fundraiser and will use extensive space in the park.

Cost? Cost is dependent on location, setup and activities. Check the [Park Event fee schedule](#)

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At a City Park

iii. I do not qualify as a Community Group or Neighborhood Association and I want to host a small event

- Same as ii, regardless of size of the event

b. I want to host a private event with amplified music in a City Park, I will host 200 or fewer people, and I will not sell anything or charge admission.

i. If requesting the use of a Madison Park for a private concert (not advertised to the public) here are the ways to request park space and an amplification permit:

- [Open Space Permit](#) – if requesting the use of a specific open space in a park, without reserving a shelter.
Cost? Typically \$85 - \$300 – fees dependent on activities, setup, other Madison Park's [permits](#) that may be needed.
- [Picnic Shelter](#) – if requesting to reserve a picnic shelter (smaller, open-air shelters / some have electrical outlets / some have restrooms)
Cost? Typically \$25 - \$260 – fees are dependent on location, full-day/half-day, and other Madison Park's [permits](#) that may be needed.
- [Large Shelter](#) – if requesting to reserve a “large” shelter in a Madison Park (all have electrical outlets and restrooms.)
Cost? \$70-\$1000 - fees are dependent on location, full-day/half-day, and other Madison Park's [permits](#) that may be needed.
- If your reservation will have amplified sound you will need to purchase a P.A. Permit at least 10-business days in advance or at the time of making your online reservation. PA Permits have a 6-hour limit and must end by 9:00 pm. Sound Limit: 75 dB, 150 ft. from the source. Compliance may be monitored by rangers. Cost: \$60 per reservation