



Basic Show Order Points

Contrast, in every way is the most important element in creating show order. When you're experimenting with the *feel* and *arc* of a show, create a tentative show order on the left side of the Show Order Template, and add all your *potential* repertoire on the right.

When you rehearse or test, play the show in order. You can substitute a piece on the right if it feels like it HAS TO follow a tune you just played. But don't stop and fuss around. *Play through it.* You need to experience the *arc*.

If you have a story-line, that will always be the first determining factor in what pieces you play, but you still want to be aware of the contrast between each piece.

Don't fuss over 'transitions.' **Don't try to make clever transitions.** Stay out of your head. This is about *the audience experience* not your cleverness. Just start by making each piece as different in every way you can from the one before.

ANCHOR AREAS & POINTS TO REMEMBER

- **The first 2-3 tunes need to bring them into your world and alleviate anxieties about whether you can really 'play'** or not so make these solid and comfortable. Create an intro to the first piece that gives you time & space to reconnect with both your instrument and the physical space (we can work on intros in the retreats)
- **The last tune in the first half should be powerful:** that power can come from being rhythmic, virtuosic, loud, achingly beautiful, etc.
- **The first tune in the 2nd half gives you some leeway.** The audience is rested and ready for more. This piece can be funny, experimental, or unusual. It's a good place to try something out. The 4th piece in the first half is also a good place for experimentation.
- **The final tune should be the most WOW,** and the ending should have a powerful impact. That can be done MANY ways, often thru sheer sound and virtuosity, or utter vulnerability.
- **Always make the 2nd half shorter than the first.**
- **Encores should be short (3-4 min is good).** The more encores, the shorter each subsequent one should be.

SHOW ORDER VS ALBUM ORDER:

Note that show order and album order are different. Contrast is most important in a show. Albums require more *consistency*. They're just different kinds of journeys. Remember that at a show you've brought them into a new environment where they're much more limited physically. With recordings, you enter *their* environment and alter the feel of their ordinary life.



The descriptions on the left show just one possible show order, but it'll give you a sense of the kind of arc you want. Just write over the descriptions when you create your own.

| SHOW ORDER Create a tentative show order | | POTENTIAL REPERTOIRE List all the potential repertoire you might use here: |
|--|---|--|
| # | FIRST HALF (35-50 min) | |
| 1 | Impressive Intro, strong – show them you can play so they feel confident in your ability; in a perfect world, this piece also really 'shows' your instrument. | |
| 2 | Tell a simple How-I-Got-Here Story & Illustrate it with a piece that Changes the Mood – still upbeat | |
| 3 | Add a new element – singing? Looper? | |
| 4 | Pensive, or dark | |
| 5 | Fun, maybe funny | |
| 6 | Your most beautiful slow tune | |
| 7 | Create a powerful ending piece OR use your most-requested piece | |
| | | |
| # | 2nd HALF (30 – 45 min) | |
| 1 | You can start with something unusual & unexpected | |
| 2 | Something familiar is great here | |
| 3 | A short piece with a new technique – this is a fairly safe place to experiment | |
| 4 | This can be a good place to tell a story that ends with an upbeat tune or a blues | |
| 5 | The Finale: End with your most powerful piece | |
| | | |
| | ENCORES (keep them short) | |
| E1 | An upbeat, impressive encore or something very familiar and very different from your finale | |
| E2 | A heartfelt, simple, beautiful, or very familiar encore – even shorter than the first | |
| | | |

If you don't have an intermission, you'll likely pull out 2 or 3 tunes and put the equivalent of your first-half-ender (if you have one) about ¾ of the way through the show.

REMEMBER: This is not a science – it's an imperfect art – and what you want to create is the *feel* & flow of energy - but this will give you a structure to start.