

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

The National Arts Council champions the arts in Singapore. By nurturing creative excellence and supporting broad audience engagement, we want to develop a distinctive global city for the arts. With a nod to tradition and an eye to the future, we cultivate accomplished artists and vibrant companies. Our support for the arts is comprehensive – from grants and partnerships to industry facilitation and arts housing. The Council welcomes greater private and corporate giving to and through the arts so that together we can make the arts an integral part of everyone’s lives. For more information on the Council’s mission and plans, please visit www.nac.gov.sg.

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INTRODUCTION

Busking is a fun and enriching way to share your creative talents and engage with a public audience.

If you are keen to be part of the daily creative pulse of Singapore's streetscape, this guide will be a helpful introduction for you to learn more about the Busking Scheme and provide you with useful tips on getting started.



Busking allows me to share my music with the public and meet different people from different walks of life.



Mohammad Said Bin Rahim, 41
Guitar & Singing



ABOUT THE BUSKING SCHEME

The Busking Scheme was introduced in 1997 to enliven the streets of Singapore. Besides adding colour to our city life, it provides opportunities for individuals and groups to exhibit their artistic talents and express their creativity to a public audience.

“

*I believe if you love what you're doing
and constantly work at improving it,
people will appreciate your efforts.*

”

Cheryl Beh (The Ukulele Assemble), 36
Music Performance (Ukulele)

STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Aspiring buskers in Singapore will be required to go through an audition to ensure consistency in the quality of busking activities. Those who are successful will obtain a Busking Card, which contains the cardholder's information, validity period and designated busking sites allocated.

In the next few pages, we will guide you through the 5 easy steps to get started on the application process.

STEP 1 : WHO CAN BUSK?

- All Singaporeans and Permanent Residents are welcome to apply.
- If you are an international student on a Student Pass, please obtain a letter of recommendation from your school or institution.
- If you are a foreigner residing in Singapore, you may apply if you have a valid Employment Pass and written consent from the Ministry of Manpower.

Note: *There are no age restrictions to busking. However, you are required to provide a consent letter from your parent/guardian if you are aged 17 years or younger.*

STEP 2 : COMPLETE & SEND IN YOUR APPLICATION

- Download the application form from nac.gov.sg/busking
- For individual applicants, complete Form A1. For busking groups with 2 or more members, please complete Form A2.
- Email or post your completed application form to us (refer to Contact Details on page 16 for email and postal addresses).

Note: *After submitting your application, you will be contacted within **6 working days** to confirm your application and follow-up details.*

STEP 3 : COME FOR THE PRE-AUDITION WORKSHOP

- The Pre-Audition Workshop is a briefing to familiarise you with the Busking Scheme guidelines and to give you an idea of what to expect at the Busking Audition.
- If you have applied as a busking group with 2 or more members, please have at least 2 members present at the Pre-Audition Workshop.

Note: *It is mandatory for all to attend the Pre-Audition Workshop if your last attendance was more than 12 months ago.*

STEP 4 : COME PREPARED FOR THE BUSKING AUDITION

The audition is meant to simulate actual busking conditions. During the audition, you will be given an estimated 5 minutes to demonstrate your busking act(s) and audience engagement abilities.

For those who plan to busk as a group, do make sure everyone shows up for the audition as only those present will have their names included in the Busking Card.



Please bring along everything you need to showcase your busking act(s) (e.g. costumes, materials, instruments, props, equipment, etc.)

Any electrical equipment used to support your busking activities will need to be powered by portable batteries. Please ensure they are fully charged and in working order.

Your audition will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Competency and skill in performance
- Expressiveness and confidence in performance
- Engagement with the audience
- Innovation and originality

Below are some general categories of busking acts and the requirements for the audition:

Music / Singing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare at least three songs• Preferably include different genres and/or tempos• Singing acts have to be supported by live music accompaniment (with the exception of a cappella groups)
Mime or other theatrical acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come in full costume and/or make-up
Dance, Acrobatic Acts, Juggling, etc.	
Drawing (including portraits and caricatures), face-painting, craft, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live demonstration of drawing, painting or craft-making skills within the time limit (5 mins)

STEP 5 : TAKING BUSKING TO THE STREETS

You will be notified of the audition results within **4 weeks** after the busking audition. If you are successful, you can arrange to collect your Busking Card and start busking!

Note: Any Busking Card not collected within **2 months from date of issue** will be made void.

BUSKING SCHEME TERMS & CONDITIONS

The Terms & Conditions are applicable to busking in Singapore.

1. An endorsement obtained from the National Arts Council has to be clearly displayed during performances.
2. Buskers have to perform at the designated busking sites and times. Busking at outdoor spaces of private properties requires prior permission from the property owners and the Council.
3. Busking hours are generally from 10am to 10.30pm daily.
4. Buskers do not have exclusivity over busking sites. Buskers performing along the same location should keep a reasonable distance from each other for safety reasons and to ensure an enjoyable experience for both the buskers and audience.
5. Buskers cannot obstruct or cause obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
6. Buskers cannot sell any items/merchandise (i.e. hawking) or actively solicit for gratuity.
7. Buskers have to use sound amplification devices that are battery-operated. The sound level generated from busking activities should not exceed 55dBA.
8. Buskers should comply with the Singapore constitutional laws at all times when busking. Buskers shall ensure that the busking act(s) are not (i) offensive or obscene in nature, (ii) derogatory to or defamatory of any third party; (iii) to bring dispute to or prejudice to the Council in any way whatsoever.
9. Buskers shall be liable for and shall indemnify the Council from and against all claims, demands, losses, damages, penalties, expenses and liability of any kind.
10. The Council reserves the right to revise the Terms & Conditions of the Busking Scheme.

The Council reserves the right to withdraw the Busking Card should there be a breach in the Terms & Conditions of the Busking Scheme.

BUSKING TIPS AND ETIQUETTE



For many, the idea of busking to a passing crowd of people who are going about their daily activities can be a little daunting. Below are some recommended tips and etiquette to help you make the most of your busking experience:

1. Project a positive and professional image as first impressions count.
2. Interact with and engage your audience as this enhances the quality of your busking act and creates meaningful connections with your audience.
3. Refresh your busking repertoire periodically as busking acts with varied content will showcase your versatility and attract more attention.
4. Learn how to make your act more successful by observing other experienced buskers in action!
5. Pack light. It's easier to change locations, or find shelter from sudden downpours.
6. Vary your busking schedule and limit your time at each allocated busking site, so you can reach a wider and more diverse audience.
7. Be considerate to fellow buskers and look out for one another. Every busker has a part to play in developing the busking scene.
8. Display your Busking Card prominently so that the public is aware that you are endorsed under the Busking Scheme.
9. Be self-sufficient for your own power supply when busking; only battery-operated amplifiers and equipment are allowed.
10. Be considerate. Do not set your amplifier at a high volume level. Many busking locations are surrounded by flats, shops, offices or hotels and you should be mindful that people may be busy at work or trying to rest.
11. Buskers can accept voluntary tips but the public must not feel obliged to give anything.
12. Pay attention to safety as public spaces can be crowded and busy with human and vehicular traffic.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS





ELIGIBILITY

1. Am I still eligible to apply for the Busking Scheme if my Employment Pass has expired?

You are only eligible to apply for the Busking Scheme with a valid Employment Pass.

2. I am a foreigner visiting Singapore on a Social Visit Pass. Can I apply for the Busking Scheme?

Only foreigners on Employment Passes residing in Singapore may apply for the Busking Scheme with written permission from the Ministry of Manpower.

APPLICATION PROCESS

3. Is there a registration fee when I apply for the Busking Scheme?

There is no registration fee.

4. How do I submit my busking application form?

To avoid duplication and unnecessary delays, please submit your busking application only ONCE, either via email (soft copy) or by post. Please refer to our Contact Details on page 16 for email and postal addresses.

5. Can I include more than one busking activity in my busking application form?

Yes. Please indicate in your application form if you plan to audition for more than one busking activity.

6. Where are the Designated Busking Locations?

Please refer to the list of Designated Busking Locations at www.nac.gov.sg/busking

7. Is there a limit to the number of group members for a busking group?

The maximum number of group members in a busking group is 10.

8. As a busking group, does every group member need to submit an application form?

Please nominate a representative from the group to complete and submit the busking application Form A2 with the particulars of all the performing members.

9. Can I change my designated busking locations after I have passed the audition?

This is considered on a case-by-case basis. Please refer to the Contact Details section and get in touch with us.

PRE-AUDITION WORKSHOP

10. What are the dates, timing(s) and venue(s) for the Pre-Audition Workshops?

Please refer to www.nac.gov.sg/busking for the latest details.

11. What do I need to bring to the Pre-Audition Workshop?

Instruments and performance equipment are not required for the Pre-Audition Workshop.

12. What should I do if I am unable to attend the Pre-Audition Workshop after confirming my attendance?

Please refer to the Contact Details section and get in touch with us.

13. Can my parents or friends accompany me to the Pre-Audition Workshop even though I am the only one applying for busking?

Yes. Please indicate your request when you receive notification of your application.

BUSKING AUDITION

14. What are the dates for the Busking Auditions?

Please refer to www.nac.gov.sg/busking for the latest details.

15. Where are the Busking Auditions held?

Please refer to www.nac.gov.sg/busking for the latest details.

16. Do I need to bring all my materials, instruments and equipment for the Busking Audition?

Yes, please bring all relevant materials, instruments and equipment you need for your busking act to the Busking Audition.

This is to simulate actual busking conditions. Please note that no materials, instruments and/or equipment support will be provided during the Busking Audition.

17. Can I tap on the electrical supply at the audition venue for my amplifier?

No. All equipment used for any busking activities is to be powered by a portable battery that is fully charged and in working order. Under the Busking Scheme's Terms and Conditions, buskers cannot use any equipment (e.g. sound amplification device) other than those that are battery-operated.

18. Can I send a video of my previous busking acts instead of auditioning in person?

No. The audition has to be conducted live in person so that the panel can assess your performance and ability to engage the audience in real time. This also allows you to explain your busking act(s) to the panel.

19. Can I sing with pre-recorded music on playback?

As busking emphasises live performance, all singing acts have to be accompanied by live music accompaniment and not pre-recorded music on playback.

20. What happens if one of my group members is not able to make it for the busking audition?

Only group members who are present will be endorsed to busk if the audition is successful.

BUSKING ON THE STREETS

21. Why do I have to display my Busking Card?

This is to inform the public and the authorities that you are permitted to busk under the Busking Scheme. Anyone without a Busking Card is not permitted to busk under The Exemption Order to the Public Entertainments and Meetings Act.

22. What is the limit on the sound level generated from busking activities?

The sound level generated from busking activities should not exceed 55dBA.

23. As a busking group, do all members need to be present when we are busking?

Yes, this is to ensure that the quality of your busking act is not compromised. Stand-ins are not allowed.

24. Can individual buskers gather and busk as a group?

If you intend to busk as a group, please submit an application as a group to audition and apply for a separate Busking Card for your busking group.

25. There are buskers who insist that I cannot busk at a certain location because they were there first or have been busking regularly at that spot, what should I do?

The Busking Scheme Terms and Conditions state that buskers do not have exclusivity over busking locations. We encourage you to work out a mutually agreeable schedule with your fellow buskers if both parties would like to busk at the same location.

26. Why can't I put a price-tag to my works? (e.g. balloon sculptures, caricatures, music CDs, etc.)

Putting a price-tag on your works is considered hawking and is not permitted under the Terms and Conditions of the Busking Scheme.

27. Can we raise funds through busking activities for charitable causes?

The Busking Scheme is not for the purpose of fund-raising for a cause or organisation. You will need to apply for (1) an Arts Entertainment Licence from the Media Development Authority or a Public Entertainment Licence from the Singapore Police Force and (2) a House-to-House and Street Collections Licence if you are planning to fund-raise under Singapore law.

28. What should I do if I lose my Busking Card?

Buskers who have lost their Busking Cards will need to report the loss to the Police and inform the Council for a replacement copy within 14 days. Please attach a copy of the police report when applying for the replacement copy. A replacement fee of \$20 is chargeable.

OTHER QUESTIONS

29. Is the Busking Scheme a welfare support initiative?

The Busking Scheme is not intended to provide welfare support. If you require welfare assistance, please approach your nearest Community Development Council (CDC), Citizens' Consultative Committee (CCC) or a Family Service Centre (FSC) for more information on the types of assistance available. Alternatively, you may also call the ComCare Hotline at 1800-222-0000 to enquire about the assistance programmes available.

30. Can I list the National Arts Council (NAC) as my employer since I am busking full-time?

While the Busking Scheme is managed by the National Arts Council (NAC), buskers are not employed under the Council and should not list NAC as their employer.



CONTACT DETAILS



For application and enquiries:

Tel: 6438 6466

Email: busking@thepresentingcompany.com

Mail your application to, or collect your Busking Card at:

Attn: Busking Scheme

20 Upper Circular Road, The Riverwalk

#02-13

Singapore 058416

(Operating hours: Monday to Friday, 11am – 6pm. Closed on public holidays.)

For more information about the Busking Scheme:

www.nac.gov.sg/busking

To contact the Council on the Busking Scheme:

nac_artsforall@nac.gov.sg

“ *Keep on playing, sharing and
inspiring people with your craft.
It will be a very exciting journey.* ”

Ivan Ng Sheng Kai, 23
Appalachian Dulcimer



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
SINGAPORE