

Guidance

Entertainment Licensing

Information on whether you need approval to put on certain types of regulated entertainment.

From: **Department for Culture, Media and Sport**
(/government/organisations/department-for-culture-media-and-sport) and
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
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1. Overview

Businesses, organisations and individuals who want to provide types of entertainment may require a licence or other authorisation from a licensing authority - a local council.

The types of businesses and organisations that need a licence for entertainment might include:

- nightclubs
- live music venues
- cinemas
- larger theatres
- larger street and open air festivals
- larger indoor sporting arena

In particular a licence may be required by:

- anyone that provides any entertainment between 11PM and 8AM;
- anyone that provides amplified [live or recorded music](#) to an audience of more than 500 people;
- anyone that provides [recorded music](#) to an audience on premises not licensed for the sale or supply of alcohol;
- anyone that puts on a performance of a [play or a dance](#) to an audience of more than 500 people, or an [indoor sporting event](#) to more than 1,000 spectators
- anyone that puts on [boxing or wrestling](#)
- anyone that screens a [film](#) to an audience

2. Do I need a licence for music entertainment?

Whether a licence is needed for music entertainment will depend on the circumstances. A licence is not required to stage a performance of live music, or the playing of recorded music if:

- it takes place between 8AM and 11PM; and
- it takes place at an alcohol on-licensed premises; and
- the audience is no more than 500 people

You also don't need a licence:

- to put on unamplified live music at any place between the same hours; or
- to put on amplified live music at a workplace between the same hours and provided the audience is no more than 500 people.

In other circumstances, a licence may be required. One [licence application \(https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing\)](https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing) can cover all types of regulated entertainment and the sale or supply of alcohol.

There are exemptions from the need for a licence for music entertainment, in defined circumstances as set out in the [Guidance](#) , including for:

- places of public worship, village halls, church halls and other similar buildings
- schools
- hospitals
- local authority premises
- incidental music - music that is incidental to other activities that aren't classed as regulated entertainment

The [Guidance](#) also sets out the process by which a local council can review a licence where problems may occur in relation to music entertainment and noise nuisance.

3. Do I need a licence to put on a play or a performance of dance?

Whether a licence is needed for a performance of a play or a dance will depend on the circumstances. A licence is not required to stage a performance of a play or a performance of dance if:

- it takes place between 8AM and 11PM; and
- the audience is no more than 500 people.

In other circumstances, a licence may be required. One licence application can cover all types of regulated entertainment and the sale or supply of alcohol. A licence is always required for any activity that is [sexual entertainment](#)

(<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100413151441/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction057a.pdf>) .

4. Do I need a licence to stage an indoor sporting event?

Whether a licence is needed for an indoor sporting event will depend on the circumstances. A licence is not required to stage an indoor sporting event if:

- it takes place between 8AM and 11PM; and
- the number of spectators is not more than 1000 people.

In other circumstances, a licence may be required. One [licence application](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing>) can cover all types of regulated entertainment and the sale or supply of alcohol.

5. Do I need a licence to stage boxing or wrestling?

You will need a licence to stage boxing, wrestling and mixed martial arts. One [licence application \(https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing\)](https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing) can cover all types of regulated entertainment and the sale or supply of alcohol.

6. Do I need a licence to screen a film?

A licence is needed to screen a film or exhibit moving pictures. One [licence application \(https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing\)](https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing) can cover all types of regulated entertainment and the sale or supply of alcohol.

There are exemptions from the need for a licence for film entertainment, in defined circumstances as set out in the [Guidance](#), including for:

- places of public worship, village halls, church halls and other similar buildings
- education
- incidental film – moving pictures that are incidental to other activities that aren't classed as regulated entertainment
- television broadcasts

In other circumstances, a licence may be required to show a film:

- in public
- or in private, if those attending are charged for entry and the intention is to make a profit, including raising money for charity.

Licensing of entertainment under the Licensing Act 2003 is entirely separate from copyright authorisation to show [films in public \(https://www.gov.uk/showing-films-in-public\)](https://www.gov.uk/showing-films-in-public).

7. Guidance

Further detail is set out in [Guidance \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-memorandum-revised-guidance-issued-under-s-182-of-licensing-act-2003\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-memorandum-revised-guidance-issued-under-s-182-of-licensing-act-2003) issued under the Licensing Act 2003.

You can also contact your [local council \(https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council) for advice.

Elsewhere on gov.uk

[Alcohol licensing \(https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing\)](https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-licensing)

[Early Post-Implementation Review of the Live Music Act
\(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328503/Post-implementation_review_Impact_Assessment_of_the_Live_Music_Act_2012.pdf\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328503/Post-implementation_review_Impact_Assessment_of_the_Live_Music_Act_2012.pdf)

[Intellectual property – guidance: Licensing bodies and collecting societies
\(https://www.gov.uk/licensing-bodies-and-collecting-societies\)](https://www.gov.uk/licensing-bodies-and-collecting-societies)

[Performance licences for children \(https://www.gov.uk/child-employment/performance-licences-for-children\)](https://www.gov.uk/child-employment/performance-licences-for-children)

[Safety certificates: sports stands \(https://www.gov.uk/safety-certificates-for-regulated-stands-at-sports-grounds-e-s-w\)](https://www.gov.uk/safety-certificates-for-regulated-stands-at-sports-grounds-e-s-w)

[Organising a street party \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party)

[Entertainment Licensing Statistics 2014
\(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/entertainment-licensing-2014\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/entertainment-licensing-2014)

Elsewhere on the web

[Licensing Resource \(http://licensingresource.co.uk\)](http://licensingresource.co.uk)

[British Board of film classification \(http://www.bbfc.co.uk/\)](http://www.bbfc.co.uk/)

[Copyright Hub \(http://www.copyrighthub.co.uk/\)](http://www.copyrighthub.co.uk/)

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