

OPEN MIC OPPORTUNITIES AND SINGING CLUBS IN DUBLIN

This article consists of information scavenged from a variety of locations which has been double checked with the various venues (and is correct as of 1st June 2014).

The article first lists open mic venues. This is followed by advice on open mic etiquette (a well-informed set of tips penned by Peter Fitzpatrick in 2009). Finally, there is an outline of singing clubs operating in the Dublin area.

OPEN MIC VENUES IN THE DUBLIN AREA

Apollo Sessions

Bleeding Horse, 24 Upper Camden St., Dublin 2 (phone 01-4752705)

Every Sunday this singer-songwriter open mic night takes place in the Bleeding Horse from 9 pm. Performers can just turn up and put their name on the list for that night.

www.facebook.com/apollosessions

The Song Room

The Globe, 11 South Great George's Street, Dublin 2 (phone 01-6711220)

Some open mic opportunities at this session but mostly pre-booked original bands. A weekly free night every Wednesday at 8.30 pm. "We like songs that make us sing, rhythms that make us move and words that lodge in our brain like shiny diamonds. The buzz is upbeat and fun for music lovers to hear original music and for artists to have a great crowd to play to in a buzzy atmosphere". Going strong since 2008. The booking manager is Hamlet Sweeney.

Email: info@thesongroom.com

www.thesongroom.com ALSO www.theglobe.ie/events

www.facebook.com/groups/31145025423/

The Zodiac Sessions

Bruxelles, Harry Street, Dublin 2 (phone 01-6775362)

A singer/songwriter showcase every Wednesday, starting at 8.30 pm and finishing about 1 am. Admission is free and there is a different line-up every week. Aimed at unsigned musicians.

<https://www.facebook.com/zodiacsessions>

<http://www.myspace.com/thezodiacsessions>

Song Cycle

Whelan's, 25 Wexford Street, Dublin 2 (phone 01-4780766)

Now into its second year, Whelan's singer/songwriter night 'Song Cycle' offers a Monday evening platform for local and non-local acts to experiment, sing and share in the friendly informal setting of Whelan's front window. The session gives artists a stage to breath life into songs, experiment with ideas or simply just play for the sheer enjoyment of it. Regular hosts Ollie Cole and John Byrne help curate the evening and take part as well, performing some of their works in progress as well as old standards. Admission is free and all are welcome to play. Starts 8 pm approx.

Email: songcycle@whelanslive.com

www.whelanslive.com/index.php/song-cycle/

The Songwriter Club

Anseo (Upstairs), 18 Camden Street Lower, Dublin 2 (phone 01-4751321)

A forum which brings bring songwriters together every month to chat about songwriting issues, share ideas, set up collaborating groups and to get to know each other. There is usually a special guest from the music industry (e.g. on June 10th the guest was David Wilkinson from the Marketing & Membership Department of the Irish Music Rights Organisation/IMRO). After the meeting, a Singer/Songwriter open mic entitled “The Camden Sessions” takes place in the same venue (from 9.30 pm onwards). All songwriters, whatever the genre, whatever the standard, are welcome to attend. Admission is free. The session does not operate during July and August. The Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 8 pm.

www.facebook.com/events/711554858896902

Pleasing Features

Workman’s Club, 10 Wellington Quay, Dublin 2 (phone 01-6706692)

Not an open mic as such. Pleasing Features was formed in October 2013 as a project to host live music featuring innovative acts with a diverse line-up. Admission free. Over 18s. Starts 7.30 pm. Takes place on the first Monday of each month. To get an opportunity to perform at this event, send a message with a link to your Facebook/Soundcloud/Bandcamp page to shanechambers23@gmail.com
www.theworkmansclub.com/index.php/events/pleasing-features-4/
www.pleasingfeatures.com

Open Mic

Eagle House, 18 Glasthule Rd, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin (phone 01-2804740)

Popular 'show up and play' open mic night, with a regular group of performers. Takes place every second Tuesday or so. Phone in advance to confirm.

The Ruby Sessions

Doyle's Pub, 9 College St, Dublin 2 (phone 01-6710616)

Tuesdays at 9pm. Not an open mic as such, but still a great showcase session. An “acoustic” club which has been held weekly every Tuesday night for over 14 years. Admission €6 (all proceeds to Simon Community).

Email: conordonovan@hotmail.com

www.rubysessions.com

www.youtube.com/rubysessions

www.facebook.com/therubysessions

Crafty Mondays

Sin É, 14-15 Upper Ormond Quay Co. Dublin 7 (phone 01-5554037)

Every Monday. All singer/songwriters, bands and poets are welcome. Acts are generally booked in advance (contact the organisers via Facebook). Free admission. Music from 9 pm. Drink promotions. Back line and PA provided.

www.facebook.com/TheCraftyMondaySessions

Thursday Chancers

Chancery Lane, Dublin 8 (phone 086-7320301)

Thursday Chancers is a weekly music night in a small theatre venue. Each Thursday from 8.30 p.m. they present four upcoming artists/bands. At the end of the evening there are some slots available for those who turn up to play (put your name down on arrival as it is first come, first served). Run by Seán O'Neill.

www.facebook.com/pages/Thursday-Chancers-at-Chancery-Lane/308345992639941?fref=ts

Back Door Open Mic

Sweeney's Mongrel, 32 Dame St., Dublin 2 (phone 01-6350056)

Open mic night plus special guests on the ground floor. Sign up (from 7 pm) and play. The performer list fills up fast so get in early. Singers are allowed 2 or 3 songs each, depending on the turnout. Mondays 8 pm. Event promoted by Super Happy Funtimes, a creative arts management group. Admission free.

www.superhappyfuntimes.ie/

www.facebook.com/sweeneysbar

www.sweeneysdublin.ie/gig.php?id_event=9&event_date=23%2F12%2F2013 (click on gigs)

Open Mic

Patriot's Inn, 760 Sth. Circular Rd, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 (phone 01-6799595)

The Kilmainham Arts Club event takes place on the first Monday of each month (7.30 pm till 10.30 pm). This free event features photography, dance, painting, comedy, song, music, poetry, and art film in a lively and eclectic evening. An opportunity for artists and performers to share their work in an informal setting. Local acts particularly welcome. Email: kilmainham.arts.club@gmail.com

There is also an Open Mic event, usually on the first Thursday of the month. 9 pm.

www.patriotsinn.com

The Brownbread Mixtape

The Stag's Head, 1 Dame Court, Dublin 2 (phone 01-4751590)

A monthly live comedy, poetry & music show. Each eclectic show has a theme. Each act does a performance based on the theme. Last Wednesday of every month (upstairs in the Stag's Head). €5 admission.

www.facebook.com/thebrownbreadmixtape

<http://brownbreadmixtape.wordpress.com/>

Email: thebrownbreadmixtape@gmail.com

The Cabin Sessions

Uncle Tom's Cabin, Dundrum Road, Dublin 14 (phone 01-2984357)

Acoustic session last Thursday of each month from 9.30-11.30 pm. Mostly folk, bluegrass and Americana. Admission free.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Cabin-Sessions-Acoustic-Music-at-its-Finest/172602396180287?fref=ts>

Gilbert & Wright's Open Mic

Gilbert & Wright, 128 Lr Georges Street, Dún Laoghaire (phone 01-6636148)

An enjoyable community of musicians/magicians/comedians perform here every Sunday. If you're interested in performing, drop in and ask for Ronan or send a quick message. A casual night, usually good fun. 8:30pm.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Open-Mic-Night-at-GW-Dun-Laoghaire/309848052400029?id=309848052400029&sk=info>

email: dunlaoghaire@gilbertandwright.ie

www.gilbertandwright.com/events/event/open-mic-night-2/

The Sunday Roast

The Mercantile, 28 Dame Street, Dublin 2 (phone 087-8387987)

One of Dublin's longest running weekly music club nights (9 years old). Not really an open mic. Showcases up and coming and well established homegrown music. A fresh mix of musical styles and acts every week. Customers receive complimentary bowls of the legendary home made roast potatoes. Run by Keiron Black and Alan Starr. 8pm-1am.

Email: bookings@thesundayroast.net eardrumbuzzdublin@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/thesundayroast www.thesundayroast.net

The Monday Echo

The International Bar, 23 Wicklow St, Dublin 2 (01-6779250)

A weekly songwriter and poetry live showcase held on Mondays in the basement of The International Bar. Each evening features 3 songwriters and 3 poets who perform for about 20 minutes each. Admission is free. The weekly line-up can be found listed on Facebook. Doors 7 pm. First Act 8pm. If you are interested in performing, send an email to themondayecho@gmail.com. Include your telephone number.

www.facebook.com/themondayecho

Electric Fridays - Open Mic

The International Bar, 23 Wicklow St, Dublin 2 (01-6779250)

"Electric Fridays with DUB" is a weekly gig/open mic night. Free admission.

Musicians, artists, bands who want to play a 25 min set should contact the organisers via the Facebook page below. A PA and some equipment is available.

www.facebook.com/dubgoeselectric

Brady's Sessions

Gub Dandy's, rear Brady's Pub, Terenure, Dublin 6 (01-492 0141)

A monthly singer/songwriter night on the last Friday of the month. Visit "Brady's Sessions" on Facebook. Hosted by Keith McLoughlin. Admission free.

www.facebook.com/events/241319032725801/

Singer/Songwriters Night

Mother Reilly's, 26/28 Upper Rathmines Road, Dublin 6 (phone 01-4975486)

A singer/songwriter night at 9.30 pm every Wednesday. If you would like to perform your music live, send an e-mail. Admission free. (Apart from this session, Mother Reilly's is always looking out for good bands to perform live during the week).

Email: annmarie@uppercrosshousehotel.com

www.myspace.com/motherreillysbar

www.facebook.com/motherreillysADMIN

Three Rock Sessions

Taylor's Three Rock Bar, near Marley Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16

Open-mic night based on country, folk and blues. Second Thursday of every month. Admission free. Artists interested in participating should get in touch through the Facebook page or phone Paul on 087-6135290.

www.facebook.com/pages/The-Three-Rock-Sessions/227888557223278

Saucy Sundays

The Grand Social, 35 Lower Liffey St., Dublin 1 (The Loft)

Not an open mic but a good weekly showcase of the best new musical acts from around the country. Free admission. Check out the Facebook page for weekly line ups and stage times. 7 acts take to the stage every week. 6pm – 12pm.

Email: saucysundays@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/thegrandsocialdublin

www.thegrandsocial.ie/event/saucy-sundays-2/2015-04-05/

“Battle of the Axe” Open Mic Comedy & Singer/Songwriters Club

Halfpenny Bridge Inn, Wellington Quay, Dublin 2

Every Tuesday since 1996. Stand up comedy, singer/songwriters, etc. Prepare a 7min piece of stand-up comedy or two songs or a couple of tunes or a few short poems. To book a slot, contact Tony well in advance of the intended performance date on 086-8156987 or email battleoftheaxe@hotmail.com. Doors open 9 pm; all shows start at 9.30 pm. Performers must be at the club by 9.30 pm; otherwise, they lose their place on the night. Admission €7 (students €5).

www.battleoftheaxe.com/

The Fireplace Sessions

Tolka House, 9A Glasnevin Hill, Glasnevin, Dublin 9 (phone 01- 8371082)

Open mic for singer/songwriters on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 9.30pm. If you want to perform, contact Keith at 087- 9398635.

www.dublinsessions.ie/tolkahouse.html

The High Noon Sessions

Thomas House, 86 Thomas Street, Dublin 8 (phone 01-677 2619)

Local & non-local performers get together for an evening of music-sharing. Once the most popular Open Mic session in Dun Laoghaire. Booking Agent- Erik Noon. Every Wed night at 9.30 pm. Can be cancelled at short notice – check with Thomas House.

www.facebook.com/pages/High-Noon-Sessions/147129171074

VeloCoustic

The Black Sheep, Capel St., Dublin 2 (phone 01-8730013)

An acoustic night held every Wednesday. Launched in April 2012, this is a meeting place for up and coming singer/songwriters, bands and music lovers. Now in a bigger venue. If you want to perform, get in touch via facebook, or call in.

<https://www.facebook.com/VeloCoustic>

OPEN MIC ETIQUETTE

APRIL 8, 2009 By Peter Fitzpatrick

I had a couple of emails recently where I was asked to recommend some open mic sessions in Dublin. Since mid-2007 I've been playing around Dublin and have picked up a few pointers along the way. I'd like to share them here.

If you're not familiar with the open mic concept, in a nutshell it is this:

You turn up with your instrument(s), stick your name on the list for the night and wait your turn. Depending on the policy of that open mic, you might be able to perform as a group but generally these open mics are geared toward solo or duo acoustic performances. Some open mics are booked days or weeks in advance so it's best to drop in and check things out with the person running the gig. You might have to wait a couple of weeks to get a slot.

Some etiquette and basic manners that should be observed:

- ⤴ Nobody owes you a gig so be respectful of the person running the open mic. They're not getting paid for this and deserve a thank you before the end of the night.
- ⤴ Bring some friends, even 1 or 2 extra people will make all the difference. Nobody owes you an audience.
- ⤴ Be respectful of the other performers and remind your friends of this. Don't talk all the way through everyone's set. If your friends aren't able to chill out and not talk for a few minutes, then perhaps you're better off not bringing them.
- ⤴ Turn off the mobiles. Unless you're a doctor on standby or a superhero, do you really need to share that ringtone and conversation with everyone?
- ⤴ Be respectful of the audience. With the exception of your friends, these people haven't come to see you. Keep the songs to a reasonable length. Avant garde is all well and good but ask yourself whether the audience really want to hear a screamfest.
- ⤴ These gigs happen in bars & pubs. Try not to get drunk before you play. Nerves are a good thing to a certain extent because they'll keep you on your toes but if you're plastered and can't play properly you will get a reputation around town pretty quickly.
- ⤴ Try to stick around for the night and listen to the other performers. Encourage your friends to do the same.
- ⤴ Introduce yourself to the other performers. Say hello, compliment them on their set (don't exaggerate though... nobody likes a bullshitter).

- ⤴ If you've got a CD and want to sell it after your set, then check with the person running the gig. It can be a bit disruptive. Apart from which you should offer them a copy first (promo free copy, of course).
- ⤴ Don't be a tightwad skinflint: if another musician expresses an interest in your CD, then try not to charge them for it. If you're in short supply, then run off a few CD-Rs without the expensive printing and keep them for freebies.
- ⤴ Turn up. That's right: turn up. If you've booked in advance, then have some consideration for the person running the gig and the other musicians who wanted to play but couldn't because you had been given a slot.

A few performance tips:

- ⤴ Decide in advance what songs you are going to play. Don't wait for divine intervention when you get on stage. If you don't know how many songs you will get to play, then think in advance of a 2, 3, 4, 5 song set list.
- ⤴ If you're not 100% confident of your own songs, then think about doing a cover version. Don't pick an obvious cover version. Try to find something a little different and do your own version of it. Experiment at home and see what you can come up with.
- ⤴ Don't apologise if you fluff a chord or lyric. Most people at these gigs can't play music. Let's face it, they don't know the chords or lyrics to your songs. Nobody will really notice.
- ⤴ If you're lucky enough to get a 5 or 6 song set, then really think about breaking it up with a cover version. The audience will have to listen carefully to your original material so it'll be appreciated when they hear something a bit different.
- ⤴ Drunk and/or loud audience members are tough to deal with. Try not to be distracted and don't take it too seriously. I've never seen anyone heckled so don't worry about that happening. It's just a gig and eventually it will happen that some idiot will shout something in the middle of a song. Usually it's a drunk trying to be funny and making an arse of themselves. You will have audience sympathy when that happens. Best thing to do is not engage with them because they're looking for attention so don't provide oxygen to their flame.
- ⤴ Guitar players: learn how to tune your guitar. Seriously people, it's painful listening to an obviously out of tune instrument. Tune it when you arrive at the venue and then check it again before you go onstage. If you don't know how to tune the guitar, then ask one of the musicians at the gig to show you. It's a good ice breaker and what the 'community' is about.
- ⤴ Try to communicate a little with the audience. But don't over do it (I'm guilty of this... I need to rein in some of my song introductions).

- ⤴ Don't worry about playing the same 3-4 songs at open mics. Remember that your friends will not have heard the songs that often (if at all) and the people at the gig won't have ever heard them before. Even if you play the same venue 2-3 weeks in a row, you will probably only play to a few people more than once, if at all.
- ⤴ If you have a MySpace site then mention it during the set. Here is mine <http://myspace.com/iMADEtheBBC>
- ⤴ Don't forget to thank people for listening and most of all don't forget to thank the person running the gig.
- ⤴ Enjoy yourself. Definitely enjoy yourself.

SINGING CLUBS IN THE DUBLIN AREA

Bray Singers' Circle

Strand Hotel, Bray Seafront (south end), Co. Wicklow (phone 01-2862327)

Hosted by Alan Stout, this session runs on the third Saturday of each month at 9pm (including the summer months). All singers and listeners very welcome. Free. No mic; no 'standard' of voice. Any genre. Acoustic self-accompaniment welcome. from 6pm to 11 pm. Late bus service to Dublin (Finegan's bus at 11.40pm & 1.45am from outside the door via N11 for €5). See Facebook page for event details.

Email braysc@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/braysingers.circle

The Clé Club

Liberty Hall, Eden Quay, Dublin 2

A traditional music and singing club that meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 8 pm, usually in Liberty Hall. Mostly unaccompanied singing. Songs from the labour movement and republican tradition feature strongly. Contribution €5. All welcome. No meeting in August.

Email: cleclub@gmail.com

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/cleclub>

<http://cleclub.wikifoundry.com/>

The Croonerista Social Club

**Inchicore Sports & Social Club, Inchicore Terrace West, off Grattan Crescent/
Inchicore Road, near Kilmainham, Dublin 8**

Hosted by Charlie O'Neill, the club operates on the second Friday of every month, starting at 9.30 pm. A relaxed mix of singers and other impromptu and entertaining contributions. No mic. Musical self-accompaniment permitted. Instrumental musicians welcome. All styles of music encouraged. No charge. Optional raffle.

Email crooneristasocialclub@gmail.com

www.inchicoresportsandsocialclub.com/en/

www.facebook.com/inchicoresportsandsocialclub

The Góilín Traditional Singer's Club

Teacher's Club, 36 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1 (Phone 086-8161557)

This traditional singer's club has a singing session most Friday nights at 9.30 pm. No meetings in Jul & August. For over 35 years, the Góilín (founded by Tim Dennehy and Donal de Barra) has given a platform to people who like to sing and listen to traditional Irish songs. When someone is singing, reciting or performing in any way, total attention is given to the performance. Primarily a singer's club but musical accompaniment is permitted. No mic. Contribution €3.

Email: info@goilin.com

www.goilin.com

The Howth Singing Circle

Howth Sea Angling Club, 15A West Pier, Howth

Howth Singing Circle was started in 2001 in memory of Brendan 'Bull' Moore, local fisherman and fine singer. The club meets on the first Thursday of the month at 9 pm sharp, usually upstairs in the Angling Club (but sometimes in the abbey Tavern). A contribution of €4 is expected. No mic. Instrumental accompaniment welcome. This is a traditional singers' club; however, any type of song is welcomed. Each monthly session is run on the basis of a theme; songs are suggested for a printed Song Book. Sandwiches are provided half way through the night. High profile guests from the folk world feature regularly. No meetings in July & August.

Email: howthsingingcircle@gmail.com

howthsingingcircle.com

www.facebook.com/pages/Howth-Singing-Circle/233809083299916?ref=hl

The Malahide Singing Circle

Oscar Taylor's Restaurant, Malahide, Co. Dublin

This club meets monthly, usually on the last Thursday of the month, at 8.30 pm. All singers and listeners welcome. Mostly unaccompanied singing. Contribution €4.

Email: malahidesingtrad@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/malahide.singingcircle

Song Central

Chaplins Bar, Hawkins St., Dublin (upstairs) - by the Screen Cinema

Hosted by Alan Stout, this session runs on the second Sunday of each month (including the summer months) from 6pm to 11 pm. All singers and song-lovers very welcome. Any song; any ability level. No mic; acoustic self-accompaniment welcome. No pressure to sing. The only rule is respect for the singer. No charge. Optional raffle. It is worth subscribing to the email listing as Alan makes a point of publicising any other singing club sessions that are brought to his notice.

Email songcentral1@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/songcentral.dublin

INFORMATION SOURCES FOR THIS ARTICLE

www.dublinsessions.ie – a good list of open mic venues

<http://blog.peterfitzpatrick.net/2009/04/08/the-open-mic-scene-in-dublin-some-pointers-and-some-open-mic-etiquette/> for the longer article on open mic etiquette

www.facebook.com/groups/dublinmusicians/ for some open mic suggestions

http://www.yelp.ie/search?find_desc=open+mic+night&find_loc=Dublin – for a helpful open mic listing

www.dublineventguide.ie (this site does not have separate listings for open mic events but nonetheless contains very useful information within its seven day listings. Sign up for a weekly email service).