



COURTESY OF ATMA ANUR

Atma Anur—Drums

Richie Kotzen/Tony MacAlpine

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“Bring your own drum rug and mark the stand layout on it, mark your stand heights, and use memory locks. Having the same setup every time makes playing easier and more fun. I have been carrying a tool kit with me for almost 20 years. In it are tools for fixing and maintaining the drums, various drum keys, two kinds of tape, glue, hose clamps, oil, WD-40, files, sandpaper, Band-Aids, extra wing nuts and screws, hand cream, a flashlight, reading glasses, and aspirin.

If possible, rehearse the order of the set before the show. I also suggest a short preshow warm-up to get you loose and relaxed before playing. This also means getting where you have to be . . . early! Matching preset volumes, knowing which effects are for what song and exactly where they are in your set will help.

Having a calm, friendly attitude and keeping an open mind will get you through every unexpected situation. *Peaceful communication is the key to conflict resolution and problem-solving in the music business.* Try to at least ‘appear’ to be humble and grateful. I find that soundchecks are generally a waste of time unless you are headlining, but you should do them anyway. Make your needs known, but be prepared to not have them met. Headlining is quite a different story, and your soundcheck is essential to the show being great!”

2. HAVE A LOOK AROUND

“Okay, I’m here early, now what?” Find the closest parking spot to load in. Go in and have a look around. Check out the current soundcheck and see how it’s going. Pay attention to the stage levels by walking right up to the stage and having a listen. It might not be a good idea to walk onto the stage during someone else’s soundcheck, but walk all the way around it, front to back, side to side. Listen to how loud their amps are, how loud the monitors are and what the mix sounds like out front. This will give you an idea of what you may need to do for your band. Pay attention to how they are set up as opposed to how your band sets up. Would the difference cause a problem? Is there an adjustment from chapter 2 that would help? Is the headliner striking their drums? What is the best way to load in? Is the rest of your band here checking things out too? How about the lights? Will this work for our stage props?

Once you have a good idea of what’s going on, talk to the stage manager and see where you can stage your gear and what time you can get started. If you’re there early, the engineer may get you started sooner. If you’re late, it means that you don’t care; why should he? Even if it isn’t time to start your soundcheck, get your stuff in and preassembled. Tune your drums and guitars, set up stands, and do whatever else you need to. Now would be a great time to get something to drink, hit the bathroom, smoke a big fatty, or whatever. When you can have a minute to relax and warm up your instrument, you have nailed it! It is at this point that you know you have gotten there on time. Keep pushing your starting time forward until you have time to relax and warm up. It really matters! Showing up on time is simply professional courtesy. This is for the benefit of others you’ll have to work with, and will definitely help their attitude when you do. Showing up early is not for your benefit only. It may not really matter to anyone else, but it will make things easier for you in the long run.