

### Manners at a Performance



Today, there's a wealth of entertainment offered in widely differing settings, but the following fundamentals of good audience behavior are adaptable to virtually any situation:

*No talking, unless audience participation is requested by the performers.* If something must be said, whisper it quickly. Excessively shushing a talkative neighbor can be just as disturbing.

*Use good posture.* Auditorium seating is often arranged so that the person in the seat behind can see between the two seats in front, so slumping sideways or lounging on a partner's shoulder blocks the view.

*Remove hats.* Ladies, if your hat is part of your outfit, you can keep it on as long as it doesn't block anyone's view.

*Noises off.* Turn off cell phones, beepers, audible watches, and any other sound-making gadgets before any performance.

*Lights out.* Don't forget, the screen on your mobile device can be a distraction too.

## Audience Etiquette

---

*Snap, crackle, pop.* No rattling of candy boxes or ice in cups, shaking popcorn containers, or slurping drinks.

*Control coughing.* Muffle coughs and sneezes with a handkerchief. Cough drops and mints may be helpful, but leave if you can't stop the attack.

*Avoid other sounds that can disturb the people around you and the performers.* Munching noisily, smacking or cracking gum, rattling the pages of programs, tapping feet or drumming fingers, humming or singing along, rummaging in purses--these are just a few of the things that can annoy those around you.

*Smoke only in designated areas.* Leave and find a place outside if you must smoke.

*Don't take flash photos or shoot video during live performances.* The point is to do nothing that will distract the performers or disturb others in the audience.

*Dispose of trash, including chewed gum, in waste containers.* Tell an usher or attendant if anything was spilled, as a courtesy to the next person who has your seat.

## Outdoor Etiquette

Many outdoor performances have a relaxed atmosphere, but a little consideration will make the experience enjoyable for all.

*Keep it down please.* Unless the performers encourage you to, don't sing along or repeat dialogue.

*Keep charge of children and pets (if they're allowed).* Know where they are at all times. Sit

near the edge of the crowd in case you need to take your daughter or your dog for a walk.

*Use common sense about outdoor seating.* Seating and accessories that can block others' view or cause congestion should be placed as far from the center of the crowd as possible.

*Be careful with food and drinks.* Wipe up spills, especially on surfaces where others may sit or eat.

*Smoke away from the crowd.* Head for the fringes where the smoke is less bothersome and you're unlikely to bump a lighted cigarette into someone.

*Clean up.* Obviously, it's disrespectful to leave a mess.