

Do you have what it takes to be a stand-up comedian?

By Adam Ruben, Independent Stand-Up Comedian

(1) You enjoy making people laugh, and you'd love to take humor to the next level in your life and make it a career. Well, becoming a stand-up comedian might just be the right path for you. Making jokes with friends might be easy, but writing them and performing in front of a crowd that you do not know might just need a little more work. It's not about just standing up and having the audience laugh. If you choose to be a comedian, you'll need to create your repertoire, learn how to have great stage presence, and be prepared for a tough road to the top, just like most artists. You'll also need talent, willingness to put in some long hours, good observation skills, and lots of curiosity for the world around you.



It's more than stand-up

(2) Remember that the "stand-up comedian" part doesn't have to be 100% of your career. And I don't just mean that you should look for a fulfilling day job, though that's of course a good idea. I mean that there are tons of other comedy-like gigs out there in addition to the traditional microphone-at-a-comedy-club thing. Here are some options: comedy writing, comedy teaching, storytelling, humorous public speaking, humor writing, humor blogging, character acting. So while you're looking for comedy gigs, don't dismiss similar things that you may end up enjoying just as well.

Get a little education

(3) I highly advise taking a stand-up comedy class. Mine was strange in that it was actually offered for credit by a university, but many are offered by comedy clubs. Not only will you learn a lot and have great practice and feedback, but you'll have a lot of fun, too. Comedians will say "You can't teach funny," but what you can teach (or learn) is how to write jokes, how to get better on stage, and a bunch of mistakes not to make. Always better to learn by hearing rather than making the mistake yourself. Especially if it's how not to hit yourself in the face when you pull a stuck mic from the stand. Plus, in a class there are other students that can form a group to support each other.

Master It

(4) The best teacher of stand-up comedy is stage time. Perform in as many shows as you can, and when you're not performing, watch the other open mic comedians perform. See what works and what doesn't. The five minutes you'll spend on stage that night will teach you so much more than the hours you spent practicing your material alone in your room. Even better, open mic nights will allow you to meet other comedians, which is the first step toward finding out about other shows.

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- 2p 31 Wat is er nodig om een goede stand-up comedian te worden volgens alinea 1?
Omcirkel 'wel' of 'niet' in je uitwerkbijlage.
- 1 er veel tijd in steken
 - 2 vaak willen reizen
 - 3 eigen materiaal schrijven
 - 4 nieuwsgierig zijn
- 1p 32 "It's more than stand-up" (kopje alinea 2).
Wat wordt hiermee bedoeld?
Als stand-up comedian
- A draait je hele leven om je werk.
 - B kun je naast optreden ook ander werk doen.
 - C weet je nooit hoeveel geld je verdient.
- 1p 33 Welk van de volgende dingen leer je onder andere van stand-up comedy lessen volgens alinea 3?
- A fouten durven maken
 - B grappen schrijven
 - C samenwerken
- 1p 34 Wat is de **beste** manier om stand-up comedy te leren? (alinea 4)
Je moet zo veel mogelijk
- A kijken naar andere comedians.
 - B thuis oefenen en voorbereiden.
 - C zelf optreden.

Let op: de laatste vraag van dit examen staat op de volgende pagina.