

Hooping Etiquette

Mind Your Manners at Live Music Events

For me there is nothing better than hooping to live music, to really connect and get into the vibrations being created at that moment by another living soul, to let go and be in the flow. There is also nothing more disappointing than being told either I can't hoop or the people around me are not happy about it. I think this happens as a result of previous bad experiences with hoopers.

Here is an example: One night at an indoor show I allowed someone, who was obviously too sloppy to be hooping, to use my hoop, and it went flying. It hit someone and spilled their beer, and we got shut down. More and more lately I hear of similar stories, where hoopers cannot bring their hoops into a venue at all.

This is saddening to me, so I want to share the hooping etiquette that I follow when hooping to live music. These are the things I do that ensure a positive experience, not only for me, but also for all the lovely people who go to see and hear live music.

1. Find an appropriate place to hoop. If there is a big crowd, find a spot in the back or off to the side so that you are not in the way of others dancing. If there are people sitting, ask them if they mind if you hoop there in front of them. This is a respect thing and most people will appreciate this.
2. Use your best judgment on whether or not you should hoop in front of the stage. If there is hardly anyone there and you are not disrupting dancers, go for it. Don't overstay your welcome. Hoop a couple songs, or the ones you really feel. This gives those wanting to come up and dance or be close to the band a chance to, without feeling like they are gonna get hit with a hoop. It's like taking turns.
3. No drinking and hooping. I don't know about you all, but even after one beer it becomes harder and harder to spin around gracefully. If you are at a party with your friends, that is a different story, but out at a concert or a show, you really don't want to get shwilly and toss your hoop around. It can hurt to get hit with a hoop and it really gives hoopers a bad name when a drunken hooper can't even hold on to their hoop. I am guilty of this myself and learned this lesson the hard way. I was at a bar hooping and after a few drinks I accidentally threw my hoop, sending it flying over the bar, knocking over glasses. I almost ruined it for all hoopers at that bar. And I felt so ashamed to do that to my fellow hoopers that I have never been so careless about drinking and hooping again.
4. Think twice about letting intoxicated persons, or those who don't really know what they are doing, use your hoop in small spaces. Once again, use your best judgment on this one. If you are out in a large open field and someone who is clearly intoxicated wants to try, it may be fine; but indoors this could be a disaster. Instead, encourage them to keep it on their body in a "sneaky" way; for example, teach them on-the-body tricks to distract them from wanting to use their arms.
5. Apologize when your hoop goes flying and lands near or hits someone. I have actually seen a hooper repeatedly throw their hoop and just run over laughing and not apologize. Not cool. Nothing says "I don't care about anyone but myself" more than this.
6. Pay attention to your surroundings. If you notice people are uncomfortable with you hooping near them, move. If the crowd is getting bigger and you are getting less room, move. From time to time you will be doing such a good job that people will gather to watch. Keep going.

The last thing I can say is just use common courtesy, respect, and good judgment. By following your morals and using good etiquette, we will continue to give hoopers a good name and people will have no problem having us hoop to live music. Keep sharing tricks with other hoopers, be family. Remember that kids will look up to you, so smile at them, say hello, and maybe teach them a trick if they show interest. Have respect and you will get respect.

Much love to you all. Keep smiling, keep hooping.

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