

SO YOU WANT TO DO A SHOW... THINGS TO CONSIDER
A Presentation by the Bucks County Guild of Craftsmen
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1. Why do I want to do a show?
(Do I need to decide between online sales and in-person craft shows?)
 - a. Help pay the costs of doing your craft.
 - b. Develop the ability to make money selling
 - c. Gets rid of inventory so you can make more!
 - d. It's fun to do shows, and you meet interesting people. It's a privilege to get to meet and know other craft people.
2. How do I find shows
 - a. Search Established web resources such as Zapp, Juried Art Service, Art Fair Insiders, FestivalNet, etc. You can also consult specialty publications specific to your craft, i.e., Ceramics Monthly.
(Zapapplication.org, juriedartservices.com, artfairinsiders.com, festivalnet.com)
 - b. Talk to friends who are doing shows. This information may be invaluable when deciding which shows to do!
 - c. Facebook pages that announce shows and call for artists
 - d. Once you identify a show you are interested in, you can do further review. Open the website of the group or company putting on the show. Look for photos of last year's event. Look at the list of participating artists look at their websites. Does the event look organized? Is the work quality? Would my work fit the quality of the show? Google the event's name and organizers to see if there are comments.
 - e. Consider local shows first: Look for shows associated with artist groups, such as guilds or art centers, as a first step.
3. Am I ready to enter the show circuit?
 - a. Start slow! Start with one or two shows and see if it works for you. Then, look for a mentor to help you.
 - b. Attend shows first as a "buyer" and see the type of fine crafts/art they sell and how artists arrange their booths and display their work. The most creative thing at a craft fair is the individual craft displays. How would you like to show your work?

- c. Can you afford the booth fee? Do you think you will recoup the booth fee? What if you don't? Are you willing to possibly lose money in your first couple of shows as you learn the process of doing shows? Although, as you progress in your show career, the business you are creating can help pay for itself if you need to upgrade your display or purchase an expensive canopy, your business income can pay for it.
 - d. Talk to artists at a show, especially if they are creating work similar to yours (or if they're swamped, ask if you could email them a question or two about the show. Just don't monopolize their time unless they make it clear it's okay)
 - e. Do I have transportation that will hold everything for a show, or will I need to rent a vehicle? Can I design a display that I can transport?
 - f. The vast majority of people will be kind and supportive of your efforts. But you need a thick skin to ignore comments like "\$28.00? Wow, that's expensive, "Who would ever buy this?" Instead, be firm in your conviction of the value of your work!
4. What kind of basics (equipment display) do I need to start- Outdoor
- a. Most show promoters require a white tent with 50 lbs of weights on each corner. "Pop Up Tents" are not a good investment! Some shows allow them, but most don't.
 - b. The most used tents are Trimline Canopy by Flourish Displays and Craft Hut Canopy, both by (www.florishdisplays.com) and Light-Dome Canopies (www.lightdomecanopies.com) Others include Showoff Canopy (www.showoffcanopy.com). Some shows will not allow EZ-Up or Caravan tents.
 - c. To cut costs, you could consider the purchase of a used canopy. EBay and artfairinsiders.com are good sources for these canopies.
 - d. When considering outdoor shows, be aware of the elements, such as wind and rain. Plastic boxes for packing materials and making sure displays can accommodate wind.
 - e. You may want to start your craft career with indoor shows.
5. What kind of primary display do I need for Indoor shows
- a. Most shows will limit your display to 10'X10' feet. You will need a chair and packing materials for your sales.
 - b. Adequate inventory
 - c. Display that would fit your craft.

- d. Most show promoters supply a sign for your booth. It wouldn't be a bad idea for you to also have one for display if the promoter didn't provide one. The poster should include your name (or company name if it includes your name (Joe Smith Ceramics), where you are from, city, and state. Staples can make a foam core poster that contains a picture and company name for less than \$20.
 - e. What name should I use for my business? Using your name as your business name may be a good idea. This is because people visiting a show and looking for you may not remember a business name that doesn't refer to you. An example would be "Joe Smith Pottery."
 - f. Have you thought about pricing?
6. What other "essentials" do I have to think about
- a. Payment method: Square or similar, Zelle, Venmo, Cash
 - b. Material to wrap your sales: bubble wrap, paper, boxes, and bags. Some shows are limiting the use of plastic bags and plastic-based packing materials.
 - c. Business cards It may not be suitable to use business cards at craft shows. A better alternative would be a postcard with a photo of your work and a prominent listing on your website. In this world, listing your address and phone is not a good idea.
 - d. Insurance! PA Guild has business insurance as well as Art Fair Insiders. Many craft people use Act Insurance (actinsurance.com)
 - e. Lights
 - f. Power sources when electricity isn't available
 - g. Creating a mailing list of buyers and interested people- this is essential start this early in your career!
 - h. Marketing – on your personal and business Facebook/Instagram pages; emails to friends; emails to people on your mailing list
7. What would be helpful?
- a. Facebook page/Instagram for business
 - b. Business web page (almost a must)

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