

What Is An Open Call Audition?



“Open Call” is an industry term meaning “Anyone can audition.” Shows like “American Idol” and “America’s Next Top Model” are great examples of having open call auditions. Usually an open call is announced through the media and is held on a specific day or weekend, depending on the project and the turnout. Obviously

an open call for the next “Harry Potter” movie will have a bigger turnout than a cable access show, but the rules are usually the same.

A date is circulated through a press release, radio spot or newspaper about a specific project. It would say something like, “Open call audition for new talent. If you are male, 18-25 and live in the Los Angeles area, open call auditions will be held for John Doe’s upcoming film.” It will then tell you the date, time and location. A lot of producers and casting directors use open call auditions to find fresh talent and new faces. Open calls also give people who are casually thinking about acting, a chance to audition without having any prior experience or agency help.



If you had fun, and auditioned well at the open call, a casting director may call you back to read again, or perhaps give you another part. The open call can open many doors and hopefully find you jobs that will give you the experience needed to join the unions like SAG (Screen Actors

Guild) or AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Arts.) Keep an eye out in local papers and trade magazines for open call advertisements. If you fit the bill, give it a try. It can never hurt your career and you never know whose attention you might catch.

What to Bring To an Open Call Audition



When attending one, bring something to keep you occupied. Books or music will help pass the time. You should also bring clothes that you will be comfortable in. No one wants to wait five hours in line wearing a suit or dress and high heels. If the role calls for this type of dress, pack it and change before the audition.

On every audition you go on, bring your headshot. With open calls this is even more important because the casting directors haven't seen you yet and do not have a previously sent headshot. When you finish your audition, leave a copy of your headshot with the C.D.'s.

When going on an [open call audition](#), be prepared for anything. The content you will be reading will be given to you when you arrive. A well-run open call will hand you the sides when you arrive so you will be able to review them before your performance. Some open calls may also ask you to improvise or perform a monologue. So come prepared with a well-rehearsed monologue of your own.



How to Enter and Exit an Open Call Audition



With open calls, the amount of people auditioning is much larger than normal [auditions](#) as well as the time it takes to see everyone. So when entering the audition, be quick with your introduction and begin your performance.

The casting directors have a lot of people to see and the last thing you want to do as an actor is irritate them by taking too long, or starting small talk that has nothing to do with the role you are auditioning for.

Once you have finished your audition, thank everyone involved in the casting room, leave your head shot with a casting assistant and leave quickly and quietly. These auditions may seem very impersonal, but that is why they are nicknamed, "cattle calls."

Hopefully, with the allotted time you were given to perform, you will be one of the lucky cows to emerge from the heard.



Performing At Open Calls



Open calls are a great way for an actor to get his/her foot in the door. And everyone needs a place to start. Remember, even the best actors started with behind the scenes work and small parts, which many times open calls, call for.

Take whatever parts you can get. As you improve your skills and experience, you will get better and better roles. Don't be in such a rush to start at the top. Learn your craft slowly; improve your knowledge and skills step by step. You'll find building that resume a lot more fun and much less discouraging if you take a smart and methodical approach to your acting.

Performing an open call requires the same performance rules as any other audition. Don't chew gum or smoke, don't perform directly at the casting director or touch anyone in the room. Be professional and polite. Being prepared is critical, but many times with open calls, your scene is not given to you until you arrive. So find a method to rehearse quickly once you receive the material. Find a quiet place and read over the lines. But be aware that casting directors understand you have just received the pages, so reading straight from the page is acceptable.

Time is of the essence with open calls, so when performing, be brief and don't take it personally if a casting director is short with you and doesn't offer suggestions. Just go in confident, try your best and respect that fact that the people you have auditioned for have sometimes one hundred other people to see.

How Open Calls Differ From Other Auditions



The biggest difference between [open call](#) auditions versus other auditions is a combination people and time. The bigger open calls like "American Idol" can have thousands of people audition in one day.

Though most [open calls](#) are not that big, they are more populated than a standard audition, making them more chaotic.

With the amount of people involved in open calls, time is also a big difference. Casting directors at open calls are seeing so many people in a limited amount of time that the personal attention you will get while auditioning will be minimal.

Open calls are also known as "cattle calls". Sometimes they feel just like that. Learn to expect anything from an open call.

Sometimes an actor will strictly read from pages given. Other times they may perform their own monologue, and sometimes they may ask an actor to improvise a scene.

