

REVIEWERS GUIDE

Thank you for signing up as a Voice Reviewer – welcome!

Here's our top tips for writing good reviews for the magazine.

PREPARATION

Before you head out to review a show:

- Check out the company's website or the venue's publicity so you know what you're seeing
- Make sure you have your tickets or know where to pick them up
- Take a notebook to make notes during or immediately after the event
- Arrive at the venue in good time to pick up tix and get a good seat

TIMING

It's important to get a show review online as quickly as possible and definitely **within 48 hours**. The show will be fresh in your mind and the company or venue will be looking out for your review and may re-post it on social media. If for any reason you can't do this, let your Voice editor or facilitator know when your review will be published.

USE THE SUMMARY SECTION AND INCLUDE A PHOTO

When writing a review (or any article on Voice) please use the summary section. Add one or two lines that either explains what the show is, or neatly captures what you thought of it, whether good or bad.

People like to read reviews of shows that were poor just as much as the spectacular ones, so in either case you should write something eye-catching that draws the reader in. The summary will also appear on the website's listing page (as seen below) and will be a key way for people to decide if it's worth reading.

A screenshot of a review listing on the Voice website. On the left is a photo of three people from the TV show 'The Good Place'. The photo has a pink 'REVIEW' tag in the top left corner. To the right of the photo, the date '29 APRIL 2020' is displayed. Below the date is the title 'The Good Place finale review' in a large, bold, black font. Underneath the title is the author's name 'by Sadhana Narayanan' followed by a pink 'LOCAL REVIEWER' tag. Below that is a short summary: 'A fitting finale to four seasons of fantastic TV!'. At the bottom right of the listing is a pink button that says 'VIEW REVIEW' with a right-pointing arrow icon.

Also, be sure to include a photo. You can often find good images on the venue or company's website, or their social media accounts. Please use a high res image, at least 1000px wide for the banner image.

LENGTH

People reading online are impatient and they don't want to read long essays about a show - they want to know if it's worth seeing or what you thought of it. The preferred length for a review is between 300-500 words.

CAPTURE THE ESSENCE OF THE SHOW IN YOUR FIRST PARAGRAPH

Your first paragraph has to be spellbinding! Those first 50 or so words should grip the reader and compel them to read on. You can really take two approaches to this. You can either give a brief summary of the premise of the show (example 1), or you can use leading questions to try and engage the reader (example 2).

Example 1:

After their triumphant fringe last year, Casual Violence have returned, expanding the Nostril universe to introduce new characters and even more obscure and twisted humour.

Example 2:

Have you ever wanted to see conjoined hitmen, coeliacs, gullible orphans and a gherkin in the same storyline? If so, Casual Violence is definitely one show you shouldn't miss!

FINISH WITH KEY INFORMATION

Inspired by your review, a reader might want to experience the show for themselves so make it easy for them to find the show. Whenever you have reviewed a live event, you should end your review with these bullet points:

- **Show title:** *The title of your show as advertised*
- **Venue:** *Where you saw the show*
- **Review date:** *When you saw the performance*

You can adapt this info for other art forms that you review. For example, for a book you might use **Title** and **Author**. Or if it was an album, you could use **Title** and **Artist**. A video game review could conclude with **Title**, **Reviewed on** (as in, what did you play it on), and **Available on** (where can people play it).

HAVE A QUOTABLE LINE

Try to include a "zinger" line that could be extracted by the company and used on their flyers, social media and/or websites. This is a sentence that perfectly summarises and captures your feelings on a particular show. Here are two Voice quotes previously used on flyers:

'A fantastic show, with charm, talent & innuendo in abundance. A simply must-see show.'

'A triumphant return for the man who knows you better than you know yourself.'

GROUND RULES AND GOOD LUCK!

- **Praise what you think is good and be willing to criticise anything that you think is poor.** You may think a show is good but it's not your taste, so say this.
- **Back up your comments with examples.**
- **Explain if the work is new to you or whether you have seen similar to compare with.**
- **Comment on the audience's reaction (especially if it's different from yours).**
- **Be fair. And enjoy the experience!**