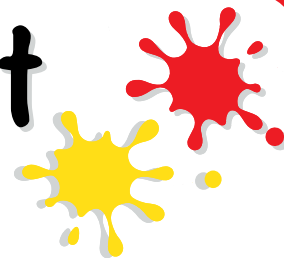


# Paintertainment

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## How to Prevent the Preventable

by Gretchen Fleener

*It's happened to the best of us: detours, road construction, illness, forgotten gear, etc. Most of the catastrophies that face painters encounter, however, could have been prevented. Of course hindsight is 20/20, but it can be very hard to prevent the preventable when you are brand new to face painting, and don't know what might go awry!*

*Many of these tips may be obvious to the veteran face painter, some may not. I love being prepared when something goes wrong. Even moreso, I love preventing things from going wrong in the first place. My hope is that you will benefit from these things I overlooked at one point or another in my early years!*

### Avoid getting lost

Now that we all have smartphones with GPS, the idea of getting lost is all but impossible. However, what do you do if you're heading to a gig out in the boonies, and you lose cell coverage?

Give yourself a backup plan by printing out or writing down the route on paper before you leave. Don't want to take the time to do this? Pull up the route in Google Maps before leaving, then take screen shots of the turn-by-turn directions. that can be referenced offline in your photos.

Always, ALWAYS ask your clients for a contact phone number where they can be reached ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT. Not their office, not their home, but a cell phone. This way, if you are still lost, you can at least give them a call and get directions, or give them a heads up that you are on your way. If you use a smartphone for your calendar, put the client's phone number right in the event information on your calendar.

And most importantly, always fully charge your phone before you leave, and/or keep a dedicated charger in each vehicle.

### Avoid being late

Build in extra time. I always add in extra time on top of the Google Maps' estimated travel time. To avoid adding too much unpaid time sitting in the driveway,

the amount I add is on a sliding scale depending on how far away the gig is. If it's 15-20 minutes away, I'll add 5 minutes to my travel time. If it's 30-45 minutes, I'll add 10. If it's an hour drive, I'll add 10-15. (The longer the trip, the more opportunities there are for delays!) Traffic jams, accidents, train crossings, road closures...there are so many things that can turn an on-time arrival into stars lost in your client's review. This practice has saved me many times.

### Avoid missing tools

Make a gig checklist. Most items seem totally obvious, but usually those are the things that get forgotten. If you're one to forget things now and then, a checklist is great.

Think of some items that you absolutely couldn't do without if they broke or went missing. If you are a balloon twister, keep an extra hand pump in your car. Face painters, slip a couple brushes in your glove compartment just in case. Upgrading to new brushes? Your old set can be your spare...believe me, if you show up to a gig with no brushes, you'd do just about anything to have those old ones back vs nothing!

Do you ask your clients to provide you with a table and/or chairs? Sometimes I'll ask for a table, but I ALWAYS bring my table and chairs. Often times they forget or just ignore the request, or give me something I can't really use. It's always better to have what you know works for you, tucked away in your trunk in case you need it, rather than try to get by with whatever you are given. I'd much rather waste a trip hauling my table from my garage into my car and not need it, than have to suffer through hours of painting on a wobbly, child sized card table at knee height!

### Avoid Environmental and Medical Hazards

Bug spray & sunscreen for outdoor gigs is a good thing to have on hand. You can get pocket sized sprays or even wipes! Pack a dose of your preferred pain reliever for headaches. Tuck a band-aid or two into your kit. You may not ever need it yourself, but that tiny, flat, and virtually weightless item might enable you to save the day for the parent of a crying child in your line. Heroic day-saving is VERY good for business!

### Avoid Not Getting Paid

If you have a credit card swiper, BRING IT! The client who forgot to bring their checkbook or cash now has no excuse. If you have a few small bills on hand, put them in your pocket. That way, if someone is short some change, you can make some for them. (or thank them for their very generous tip before they can say they need change...ha!) Carry a pen. A checkbook is no good without a pen! Not getting paid should be completely avoidable with the right contract though, but those are just a few backup plans! Nowadays I require full payment before I ever show up!

### Avoid the Unexpected

What if twice as many kids show up? What if there's a storm and the event is outside? What if you were given the wrong address? What if you are sick and can't make it? Clients need your requests and expectations outlined clearly for them. You are the professional, which is why they are hiring you, and it is your responsibility to manage their expectations. A well written contract can avoid all sorts of mishaps by outlining what is to be done in all situations. For a much more detailed article on what to include in your contract, visit Paintertainment's "learn" page and click on the link for what to put in your contract!

### Avoid Miscommunication

Always ensure contact at least a day or two before the gig, just to make sure you both have the same date and time on your calendar, and that you have a current contact number for the day of the event. This is a good time to ask them if they have had any changes in their guest count, to avoid surprises. This is also a great time to send the final invoice for whatever balance is due the day of the event. Just know that 90% of the time they will still ask you how much they owe you when you show up, if you haven't already required full payment up front!

These are just a few tips to prevent the preventable. I will be writing a more in depth article including more tips in a future blog post! In the meantime, think ahead, learn from every gig, and you'll find that most of these issues will become a thing of the past! 🌟



# What's News?

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