



# How to...

## DID YOU KNOW?

Researchers have found that more than 65 animal species—including seals, cows, and dogs—have their own form of laughter.



# Perform stand-up comedy

**Gain confidence and make people laugh with this hobby.**

Stand-up is a type of comedy in which someone performs a series of jokes in front of a live audience. Kids can create a stand-up comedy act to perform for family and friends or at a school or community talent show. Through stand-up, you get to be creative, boost your confidence, and polish your public-speaking skills. Here are some tips to help you get started.

## Get inspired

A good first step in stand-up is watching other comedians. With an adult's help, you can find some kid-friendly comedians on YouTube or on streaming services like Netflix and Hulu. (Some family-friendly comedians to check out together might be Jim Gaffigan, Anjelah Johnson, and Preacher Lawson.) Pay attention to what they do during their routine and what kinds of jokes work.

## Write your material

To begin writing jokes, start brainstorming topics. Many comedians talk about their personal experiences or make humorous observations about popular topics like sports or movies. Think about who your audience will be and what will be relatable to them. For example, your friends would probably understand your funny observations about middle school, but your family may not. When you have an idea for a joke, approach it like writing a short essay. It should have a beginning that hooks the listener, followed by a middle that sets up characters

or provides information people need to know to understand the joke. Then finish with a "punch line"—the point of the joke.

## Pull everything together

Once you have several jokes written, you can add them to a stand-up routine, called a "set." A set can be anywhere from a few minutes to more than an hour, but for beginners it's best to keep it short. Open your set with a joke that will get your audience laughing. Between jokes, include transitions to help link one story to the next. You should conclude with a strong "closer," one last joke that will leave your audience laughing.

## Perfect your routine

Once you've created your set, it's time to practice. You can perform in front of a mirror or record yourself and play it back. This will help you see how long your set is and where you might make changes.

Next, perform in front of a friend or family member who can help you see what people laugh at the most or tell you if any of your jokes are confusing. Take notes and make changes as necessary.

## Plan a performance

Once you feel comfortable with your stand-up material, it's time to perform! A party with family or friends can be a good place to start. When you're ready to perform, remember to take a few deep breaths. Then relax, be yourself, and have fun!



**Practice your performance.**

## 4 funny books you'll love

Get inspiration for your own comedy with these books that are packed with laugh-out-loud lines and silly scenes.

### Mayor Good Boy

In this book by Dave Scheidt and Miranda Harmon, a puppy politician helps the town while also making readers crack up.



### Marcus Makes a Movie

Written by comedian Kevin Hart, this graphic novel follows a middle school

student who decides to make his own movie. Watching him figure out how is both hilarious and inspiring.

### The Ice Cream Machine

This book of stories by Adam Rubin includes six funny tales about the frozen treat, including one about an ice cream stand run by a penguin.



### Funny Girl: Funniest Stories Ever

Get ready to giggle at short stories by 25 funny female writers. This

collection, edited by author and librarian Betsy Bird, includes sidesplitting stories by Cece Bell, Shannon Hale, and Raina Telgemeier.