

What's in my 'Gig Bag'?

As a gigging singer over many years I have different items in my gig bag depending upon the type of gig I'm heading off for. I'm a freelance vocalist doing various styles of live performance and studio singing on a regular basis, so let me tell you what I may need for the following typical scenarios:

- A live 'corporate' gig: this type of gig requires me to 'dep' (or 'deputise') or in other words fill in for another singer or augment an already existing band. Since there's generally no prior rehearsal involved I've got to know A LOT of repertoire, and since I don't always know exactly what's going to be thrown at me at the gig, my most valued possession is my **folder of lyrics** and I always carry a robust **music stand** to put it on (it's so heavy because of how many songs are in it). **Spare paper** and a **pen** are always good to have to write set lists on or last minute lyrics. I'm mostly required to drive to the gig which is usually in any one of the many 5-star venues within driving distance of London, therefore a very useful tool for my gig bag is a **Sat Nav**! I like to have my **iPod** with me for going over any new repertoire I may have been required to learn. And of course, my '**posh**' **dresses, stockings, shoes, glam stage jewellery** and **make-up** for the performance (it's a 'girl' thing!)
- A standard studio session: these can be held in any number of studio facilities in and around London. If I'm driving I may need that handy Sat Nav again, but generally I travel by public transport for sessions so I'm going need my **Oyster card** (don't worry, it's a 'London thing!') and mini 'A-Z' **Street Directory** (another 'London' thing!), a **bottle of water** (which is often not provided at sessions I've found) and a **pencil & eraser** for making notes on provided lyric sheets and/or scores. If I've been sent any material beforehand on mp3 to learn, which only really happens for BVs on albums or recording demo songs for published songwriters, then my **iPod** is needed again to go over the material on the way to the session – a great way of maximising 'down time' on public transport! From a marketing perspective it's important to always carry **business cards** with you too as you don't know who you're going to meet and this industry is all about networking!
- A live 'feature' gig: it's at this sort of gig that I would generally need to bring my own gear (whereas at corporate events it's generally provided) as it's often at an intimate jazz venue. I'd bring my Shure **SM58 Beta microphone** – an industry standard mic that happens to suit my voice and is a robust, timeless 'classic' live mic, a **mic lead** (and a spare just in case) and **hand percussion** such as my 'egg' and/or tambourine. For this sort of gig I mostly need **charts** for the band so I'd better have them with me. A **minidisk recorder** always goes down well for recording the gig to 'post mortem' afterwards. And of course, a **sexy outfit** to wear and a **digital camera** to capture those special live performance moments for posterity!

As they say in the Scout's motto, it's always best to "*be prepared*" which is one of the hallmarks of the professional singer. Make sure you've got everything with you that you need for your specific gigging requirements – it greatly reduces the stress of the gig which is often stressful enough already!

Enjoy your gigging life ☺

Kim

To find out more about Kim Chandler's performing experience and the vast array of international artists that she's worked with check out her CV and the audio & video clips on her showreels by visiting www.kimchandler.com