



On the road

Your band should aim to arrive at the carnival as early as possible as you'll have lots to do. When travelling any kind of distance you have to be prepared for worst case scenarios – getting lost, breakdown, traffic congestion, tyre punctures, refreshment breaks, finding somewhere to set down and park. If you do stop on route make sure you have a register with you so you don't drive off without anyone! In some cases it might be worth sending an advance party ahead of the main troupe who can pass on travel advice. The advance party can also get ready for carnival.

It can take upwards of three hours to prepare for carnival. For example, PA systems have to be rigged and tested, equipment mounted, costumes prepared and fitted. You have to factor these set-up times in to your schedule.

You should provide everyone with a timetable listing the key times and actions for the day.

Before you set off for carnival, you should make sure that:

- you carry lots of water and liquids and freeze water to keep it cool for longer
- you have plenty of petty cash for emergencies and on-the-road purchases (e.g. diesel)
- you stock up on refreshments with sugary and salty food to help re-energise your performers during the day
- you are aware of the need for performers to rehydrate whilst they are performing
- you make sure that members eat breakfast - it will be a long day
- you have allocated roles and responsibilities to band members and they have been briefed and are prepared
- your health and safety representative has carried out all necessary checks
- chaperones are appointed to look after children and necessary paperwork and consent forms are in place
- you check the weather forecast - pack sunscreen or waterproofs
- you carry a repair kit for costume repairs and emergencies

Be prepared for changes on the day – you have to accept that things may change on the day. It will be appreciated by organisers if you can be flexible in your approach. It's always best to set aside a bit of time to do warm up exercises which will help to increase energy levels and loosen the muscles. And of course, sensible footwear should be worn by members of the troupe when on the road. You don't want any blisters!