WHAT IS BUSKING?
Busking is a person (or group of people) performing within a public place in exchange for a donation. Council divides busking into 2 categories.
Category A busking covers activities such as playing a musical instrument, dancing, singing, puppetry, miming or other acts of a similar nature.
Category B busking covers:
- Acts that use dangerous materials or instruments
- Balance, juggling or circle acts
- Pavement art performances
- Those using percussion or noisy instruments

DO I NEED A PERMIT TO BUSK?
Yes. Council issues permits for busking on Council-controlled land, such as footpaths, the Esplanade and parks. Council issues two types of Busking Permits – an Initial Permit and a Standard Permit.
Initial Permit
An Initial Permit is for four weeks (unless otherwise stated) and will be issued if the busker has not had a permit before
Standard Permit
A Standard Permit is for 12 months (unless otherwise stated) and will be issued if the busker has previously had an initial permit and wishes to continue busking
- The busking activity is a Category B activity
- The busking activity will take place outside the pre-approved locations in the Cairns CBD

DOES IT COST TO GET A BUSKING PERMIT?
No. There are no fees or charges associated with obtaining or holding a busking permit.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A BUSKING PERMIT?
How to apply
Fill in a Busking Permit Application Form and submit it, in person, to Council at our Esplanade Office between 9am and noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The office is not open on weekends.

DO I NEED TO AUDITION?
Buskers applying for an Initial Permit need to audition. You must have a performance-ready repertoire sufficient for a 50-minute set, without undue repetition.
A date and time for your audition will be set once Council receives your application for a busking permit.
WHEN CAN I BUSK?

Busking is permitted between 8am and 11.50pm, 7 days a week.
In order to provide fair and equitable access to busking sites,
particularly popular sites, busking performances are limited to
50 minutes, with 10 minutes either side of the performance to
set up and set down.
Buskers can only busk once at one location, but can busk at
multiple locations on any one day.

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WHERE CAN I BUSK?

Your busking permit allows you to busk at any of the CBD
locations on the map on the next page. Please note there are a
limited number of locations where noisy or dangerous acts are
allowed.
If you wish to busk in an area not on the map, or outside the
CBD, please specify the location on your busking application.

CAN I SELL CDs?

Yes, buskers are allowed to sell their own CDs.

DO I NEED INSURANCE?

Public Liability Insurance is designed for professionals who
interact with customers or members of the public. It protects
against claims of personal injury or property damage that a
third party suffers (or claims to have suffered) as a result of your
business activities.
Category B busking performers (those involving dangerous
materials or instruments) must obtain their own Public Liability
Insurance of $20 million.
You will need to provide a copy of your Public Liability
Insurance Certificate with your permit application.

If your performance does not include the use dangerous
materials or instruments, you do not need to obtain individual
Public Liability Insurance.

WHAT ARE DANGEROUS MATERIALS AND
IMPLEMENTS?

Dangerous materials and implements are materials and
implements that may pose a risk, hazard or uncertain outcome
for people or property.
Dangerous materials include flammable materials and
chemicals, fire, fireworks, smoke, flairs, heated elements or
anything giving off a level of heat or toxicity that poses a
threat of harm or damage to members of the public and public
property.
Dangerous implements includes knives, spears, swords, spikes
and sharp implements of any kind that pose a threat of harm to
the general public.

I'M UNDER 16 DO I NEED SUPERVISION?

Buskers aged 16 and under must be supervised by a parent or
guardian at all times.
BUSKING FAQ

BUSKING LOCATIONS

Approved busking areas
Suitable for busking actions including percussion instruments, close acts and dangerous materials and instruments