



A LAUGH AND A HALF

A Guide to Writing Your Comedy Bio



Version 2

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Why Have A Comedy Bio?

Generally, you should have a comedy bio (biography) for these reasons, among others:

1. **To Get Booked by Promoters & Room Runners:** Your comedy bio will give comedy promoters and room runners a better idea about you and your comedy, to entice them to book you.
2. **For Promoters to Promote You:** So that comedy promoters have info about you to 'sell' you to comedy audiences, they can use all or part of your bio in flyers, websites, advertisements, press releases, etc.
3. **On Your Own Website:** to promote yourself and your comedy shows. You may also use part of your comedy bio on your social media accounts (Facebook profile, Twitter profile, LinkedIn profile, etc.)
4. **For Festival shows:** If you register your own show for a festival, they usually ask you for a bio, so by having one written in advance you can save yourself a lot of time and stress as the festival application deadline approaches.
5. **It's A Good Comedy Writing Exercise:** Writing your own bio is an excellent comedy writing exercise to get you to define who you are in comedy, what your style is, what's unique and interesting about you and your comedy. Like any comedy writing, it may require time, discipline – and several re-writes!

The comedy bio you give to promoters and room runners should include your contact details, however if you are applying to '**A Laugh And A Half**' we don't require this on your bio as we ask for that information in the application form.

If you are selected to perform regularly with us, we may publish all or part of your bio:

- On our websites
- In our printed programs
- In other promotional publications (online and offline)

Your Comedy Bio for 10 Comedians / A Laugh And A Half

There are some specific things we require in your bio, more than normal. The good thing is, if you write the bio we require, you will be able to easily edit it down for many other uses in your comedy career.

Some comedians find it easy writing their bio for us. Others struggle with it. So to help make it easier, we have compiled some guidelines and broken it down into some straightforward steps for you.

We recommend reading all of this document before you start writing or amending your bio.

Tips for Writing Your Comedy Bio

Tip 1. Write It In the Third Person.

Talk about yourself using your name and use the pronouns 'he' if you identify as male, or 'she' if you identify as female. For example:

- ✓ Jane Citizen is a comedian based in Sydney. She has been performing... (3rd Person)
- ✗ I am a comedian based in Sydney. I have been performing... (1st Person)

If you have reasons to use other pronouns for yourself, be our guest! This is a just a guide.

Need help? Extra reference – click on this link:

- [How to Write in the Third Person](#)

Tip 2. Write 300 Words

We want 300 words or more.

If you perform regularly with us, we will publish this on your own page on our website, along with your photo and social media links.

We will also edit this down to use in other ways to promote you in our shows.

We don't want padded-out waffle or loquaciousness and unnecessary verbosity, so don't put in lots of extra additional words just to extend or stretch out or artificially increase your word count (number of words in your bio) because that is something that we definitely, definitely, definitely don't want. Just like that last sentence, which would have been better written as 'Don't waffle'.



Note: If you can't write 300 words, you aren't ready to perform with us.

Need help? Extra references – click on these links:

- [Online Word Count Tools](#)
- [How to Use Word Count in Microsoft Word](#)

Tips for Writing Your Comedy Bio (continued)

Tip 3. Be Original - Avoid Clichés in Your Bio

With your bio, we want you to show us – and the world – what is interesting and unique about you and your comedy? Why should audiences come and see you? If you describe yourself like a pale imitation of a famous comedian, it is not an advertisement for you, it's an advertisement for the famous comedian.

If we can hide your name on your bio and read it and it could be about pretty much anyone, then it's probably not original and cliché-free.

(a) Clichés to Avoid

This is not an exhaustive list, but it should give you an idea of unoriginal phrases we are sick of seeing in comedy bios:

- Describing your comedy as unique (doing this is not unique).
- Describing your comedy as self-deprecating (sorry, someone has already cleverly claimed “the world’s best self-deprecating comedian”). Your bio can BE self-deprecating or include self-deprecation like the first sentence of [this bio](#).
- His/Her mum thinks he’s/she’s funny.
- He/she is even funnier naked.
- He/she is even funnier in the bedroom.
- He/she is taking Sydney/Melbourne/The Comedy Scene/Australia by storm.
- He/she is a much sought-after comedian.
- He/she is a much [sort-after comedian](#). (Who can’t spell)
- He/she burst/exploded onto the comedy scene....
- He/she is the second/third/tenth/second-last funniest person in his/her family.
- He/she is a force to be reckoned with.
- He/she is a must-see comedian.
- He/she was the class clown.
- He/she has been killing it / smashing it / destroying all over city/state/country...

Note: These are examples of some of the common bio clichés. There are too many to list here.

Tips for Writing Your Comedy Bio (continued)

(b) You Are Welcome to Take the Piss Out of Bio Clichés

It is OK to take the piss out of bio clichés in your bio. For example:

Cliché: Horatio Boring is a stand-up comedian based in Sydney.

Piss-take: Sean Morahan is a stand-up comedian physically based in Sydney and mentally based nowhere in particular.

Cliché: Nigel Tedious took his act on the road for three years.

Piss-take: Leonie Funster took her act on the road, where it was a hit by an out-of-control unicyclist. It remains on the road in a critical but unstable condition.

Need help? Extra references – click on these links:

- [What's a cliché?](#)
- [5 Comedy Bio Clichés](#)
- [Example 1 of an original, funny, non clichéd comedy bio](#)
- [Example 2 of an original, funny, non-clichéd comedy bio](#)

Tip 4. Make It Funny

When it comes to a funny bio, don't tell how funny you are, show it in your writing.

Note: some room runners and promoters may require a more serious, résumé style of bio. We do not. We want you to show how funny you are in your writing.

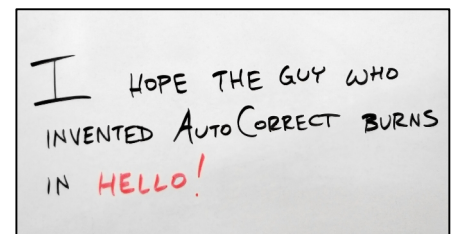
Tip 5. Check Your Spelling and Grammar

Check yourself before you wreck yourself.

We prefer Australian spelling and grammar.

Need help? Extra references – click on these links:

- [Online Spell Checker](#)
- [How to Use Spell Checker in Microsoft Word](#)



Prompts to Help You Write Your Comedy Bio

We know it can be difficult to sit down and write about yourself, especially within constraints like those on the previous pages.

So let's make it easier by just breaking it down into steps. There is no obligation to follow all or any of these steps, but we have found that it is much easier to write when you have shorter, simple steps to guide you, especially if you are writing a bio for the first time.

1. The description of your style of comedy. Make it funny!

A good example I received:

Jane Citizen's comedy is like a chocolate pizza – it combines things you love into something bizarrely intriguing that you need friends there to witness.

Jane's performances quietly yell 'quality comedy' as she delivers live deadpan, stern witticisms and home-made, factory-farmed jokes.

2. Performance History – Make it Funny

We are trying to promote OUR shows and OUR rooms so I avoid mentioning other comedy rooms in the bios. We are marketing our shows to people who haven't necessarily seen much live stand-up before, so a lot of the names of rooms won't mean much to them.

We are, however trying to promote you as an experienced, hardworking comedian. One example might be:



In her head, Jane has been discovering jokes she didn't know existed and performing them all over Sydney, including in suburbs she didn't know existed.

3. Awards – Nice but not essential

You can include them but we may edit them out in some of the places we publish your bio, as we are interested in promoting our rooms, not other rooms. We can still refer to you as an award-winning comedian.

Note: Exclude any awards from your total word count.

Prompts to Help You Write Your Comedy Bio (continued)

4. What's Unusual or Interesting About You?

- What unusual/interesting jobs have you had?
- What unusual/interesting places have you been?
- What unusual/interesting achievements have you completed?
- What else?

Tell us in a funny way. For example:

After achieving her life's ambition in her early twenties, Jane realised there may be more to life than eating a record number of pizza slices at 'all-you-can eat' night at Pizza Hut. So after bouncing like a pinball between careers in removing burnt cornflakes from a conveyor belt, milking hamsters and exorcising bananas, Jane has accidentally bounced her way into stand-up.

5. How did you get started in comedy?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful). An example:

Jane once witnessed some very bad comedy so she is now regularly on stage as part of her witness protection program.

6. Who have you shared a stage with?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful). An example:

She has shared a stage with Judith Lucy and Wil Anderson: she cut the stage into three equal pieces then messaged Judith and Wil to come get their share. It's that sort of generosity that her audiences appreciate, even if they do find it amusingly weird.

7. What do you enjoy about comedy?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful). An example:

Jane enjoys the feeling of people laughing at her and she especially enjoys the nights when the laughter starts after she gets on stage.

8. What do you hate/regret about comedy?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful). An example:

So far, Jane's only regret in performing is that time constraints on stage mean she can't spend time connecting in a meaningful way with drunk hecklers.

Prompts to Help You Write Your Comedy Bio (continued)

9. Who is your favourite comedian / who do you admire in comedy?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful).

Inspired by her comedy heroes – Ali G and several federal parliamentarians, Jane's performances combine the chutzpah of the former with the drinks bill of the latter.

10. Do you have any favourite comedy topics you talk about on stage?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful).

She enjoys theorising onstage that we are all adopted: some of us are adopted by our biological parents and some of us are adopted by someone better.

11. What's the 'best' advice you've been given in comedy?

Make your answer funny (doesn't have to be truthful).

Always striving to improve and evolve, Jane says the best advice she ever received in comedy was from a drunken heckler. She has hired a professor of linguistics to translate it, which she hopes to have completed by 2039.

12. Call to Action – A clever quip or quote urging people to come see you.

Like some ham on wry? Or some chocolate pizza? Come and get a taste of Jane's comedy!

If you can provide 2-3 sentences on most of these questions, you'll get to 300 words pretty quickly.

On the following page, we have combined the example answers given to each question into an example of a completed comedy bio, which easily reached 353 words.

If you [meet ALL our criteria](#) and would like to send a draft comedy bio for feedback, or have any questions about this, you can contact me via the form on this page:

www.alaughandahalf.com/contact-us/

Wishing you luck with your bio and your comedy career,

Sean Morahan

A Laugh And A Half

Complete Example Comedy Bio (353 Words)

Jane Citizen's comedy is like a chocolate pizza – it combines things you love into something bizarrely intriguing that you need friends there to witness.

Jane's performances quietly yell 'quality comedy' as she delivers live deadpan, stern witticisms and home-made, factory-farmed jokes.

In her head, Jane has been discovering jokes she didn't know existed and performing them all over Sydney, including in suburbs she didn't know existed.

After achieving her life's ambition in her early twenties, Jane realised there may be more to life than eating a record number of pizza slices at 'all-you-can eat' night at Pizza Hut. So after bouncing like a pinball between careers in removing burnt cornflakes from a conveyor belt, milking hamsters and exorcising bananas, Jane has accidentally bounced her way into stand-up.

Jane once witnessed some very bad comedy so she is now regularly on stage as part of her witness protection program.

She has shared a stage with Judith Lucy and Wil Anderson: she cut the stage into three equal pieces then messaged Judith and Wil to come get their share. It's that sort of generosity that her audiences appreciate, even if they do find it amusingly weird.

Jane enjoys the feeling of people laughing at her and she especially enjoys the nights when the laughter starts after she gets on stage.

So far, Jane's only regret in performing is that time constraints on stage mean she can't spend time connecting in a meaningful way with drunken hecklers.

Inspired by her comedy heroes – Ali G and several federal parliamentarians, Jane's performances combine the chutzpah of the former with the drinks bill of the latter.

She enjoys theorising onstage that we are all adopted: some of us are adopted by our biological parents and some of us are adopted by someone better.

Always striving to improve and evolve, Jane says the best advice she ever received in comedy was from a drunken heckler. She has hired a professor of linguistics to translate it, which she hopes to have completed by 2039.

Like some ham on wry? Or some chocolate pizza? Come and get a taste of Jane's comedy!