

How to Host Initials Game Live

So you want to be an Initials Game Live host? Great choice! This guide, and the pages that follow, will outline everything you'll need to know to become a successful IGL host.

Before You Arrive



First, your pregame checklist:

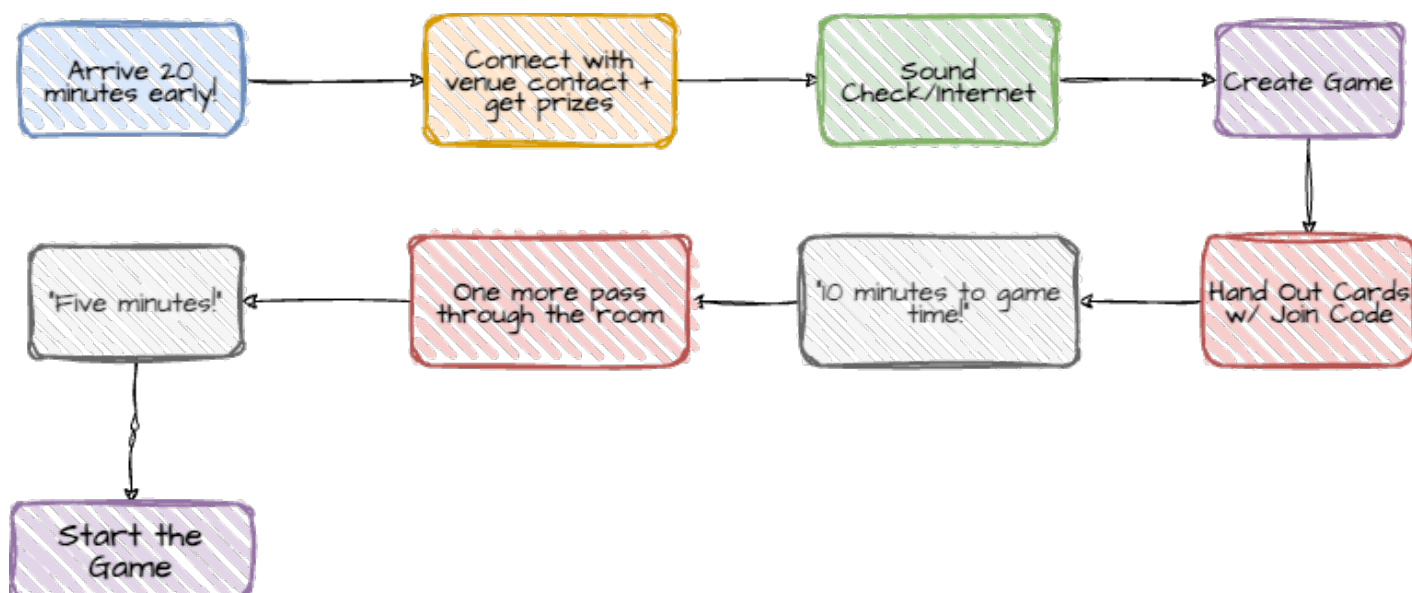
- On the day of your event, double-check the **location**, **travel time**, and **event time**. You are expected to arrive on-site **at least 20 minutes prior** to the game's start time.
- Make sure you have a stack of **IGL instruction cards** (pictured at left). These cards help your teams/players navigate to the game website (play.initialsgamelive.com) and create an account. They include a space to write down your game's join code. Make sure you bring a Sharpie to jot down this four-digit code on each card you hand out. (Note: These cards are glossy, so ballpoint pens won't work.)
- Bring the **tablet/phone/device** you will use to run the game. Make sure it is fully charged. Even if it is, bring an extra charging cable. You will need to plug this device into a sound system; Apple users should keep a dongle handy.
- If you are unfamiliar with the sound system at your venue or other venue-specific particulars, please review the venue's **ICOE document**.
- If you are DJing music between rounds, make sure you have a **playlist** ready to go.

If you do not have any app instruction cards or you're running low, reach out to Chuck (chuck@triviamafia.com) or Sam (sam@triviamafia.com) right away to get more. You can also order more when you fill out your host feedback.

Set-Up & Pre-Game

Hosts are required to arrive at least 20 minutes prior to game time. This ensures plenty of time to get set up and start spreading the word among the customers that Initials Game Live is about to happen. If you suspect your crowd is unfamiliar with this game, give yourself extra time so you can introduce the game to as many people as possible prior to starting. There's plenty to do between your arrival and when you hit "Start" on the app!

You've arrived — now what?



1. **Connect with the site contact** (usually a manager or bartender). Introduce yourself (if you haven't already) and confirm where you should set up shop.
2. Ask for the **three prizes** (usually \$20 gift cards) that you'll be giving away during the course of the game. If your site provides additional prizes (free beer tokens, merchandise, etc.), get that as well.
3. **Plug your device into the house sound system or PA.** Remember: This game has an audio component, so you'll need to make sure your device can play audio through the room's speakers.
4. Make sure you're connected to the **internet**.
5. **Pull up a playlist** (if you're DJing music between rounds) and start playing music. Test your audio levels. Test the microphone. (Tip for iPad users who need to use Spotify and a browser at the same time: [Use split screen!](#))

6. Pull up a **browser window** on your device and head to play.initialsgamelive.com. Click "Host" and select your venue, then hit **Create a New Game**. If you are unfamiliar with how this app works, make sure you've read the [app instructions](#).
7. Once you've created a new game, you will be shown that game's **join code**. Write this code down on about a dozen IGL instruction cards, and begin handing them out to patrons. If players are unfamiliar with the game, let them know how it works, ensuring that it's extremely fun for people of all skill levels. Remind them that it is free to play, and there are prizes for the winners. See below for an example pre-game script.
8. Ten minutes before game time, jump on the mic and let everyone know that Initials Game Live will be **starting in 10 minutes**, and invite curious players to come to you with any questions they may have about the game. Give another announcement five minutes before game time as well. Do one more pass through the room to catch any late stragglers or hesitant players who decided to give it a try.
9. Game time: Hit **Start the Game**.

You're ready to begin!

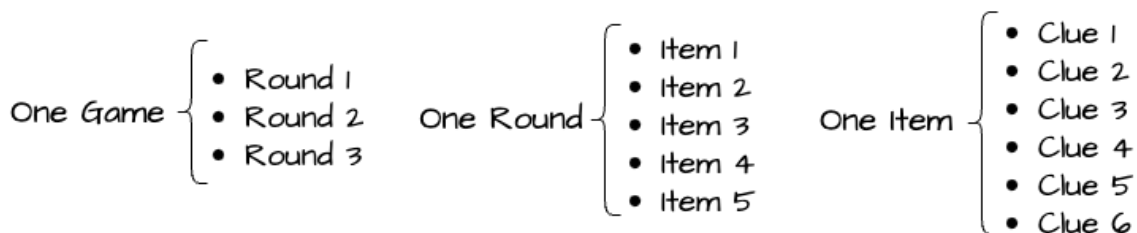
Run of Show

The Initials Game Live is a faster-paced game than traditional pub-style trivia. Players/hosts who are accustomed to Trivia Mafia Classic may require a few games to adjust to the quicker pace!

Initials Game Live is played over the course of **three rounds**, with a prize awarded to the winner of each round.

Each round consists of **five items**. These are the "answers" to each round. They can be a person, a thing, a title, a concept, anything at all. Each item is a two-word phrase, and every item within a round have the same two-letter initials.

Each item contains **six clues**. These clues are revealed to players at 25-second intervals, at which point they are read aloud by the host. They generally begin vague and tricky, and grow progressively more obvious.



Every round should take around 20 minutes to complete, followed by a 10-minute break. Hosts use this break to deliver the prize to the winning team/player. Players use this break to use the bathroom or order more food and beverages.

A full three-round game, with breaks, should be about 90 minutes long.

The 10-minute break between rounds is important! Players tend to be glued to their seats while an Initials Game Live round is in play. We want to make sure they have plenty of time to order food and beverages between rounds.

Example schedule (6:30 p.m. start)

6:10 - 6:30 Host arrives on site, gets set up, helps players get to the game on their phones.

6:30 - 6:35 Host welcomes players, explains the game, and announces first set of initials for Round 1.

6:35 - 6:50 Round 1.

6:50 - 7:00 Break. Host hands out prize for Round 1, announces Round 2 will start in 10 minutes.

7:00 - 7:20 Round 2

7:20 - 7:30 Break. Host hands out prize for Round 2, announces Round 3 will start in 10 minutes.

7:30 - 7:50 Round 3

7:50 - 8:00 Wrap up. Host announces scores, awards Round 3 prize. Thanks to the venue, get home safe!

8:00 - 8:10 Pack up and complete Host Feedback.

Example Scripts

Pre-Game (introducing the game to a new team):

"Hi there! Would you like to play a trivia game tonight? We're playing The Initials Game Live. It's a super fun, fast-paced game where you enter the answers into your phone, and the sooner you get the right answer in, the more points you get.

It's called "The Initials Game" because I'll give you two-letter initials of each answer, plus a bunch of clues that will eventually lead you to that answer. You only get to submit one answer per item, though, so you have to be careful.

Each round is 20 minutes, and we're giving away \$20 gift cards to the winner of each round. It's free to play! Just scan this QR code, follow these simple instructions, and enter this code when prompted.

You can play solo or with a team. Only one device per team, though. I'm your host tonight so just let me know if you have any questions.

Good luck!"

Pre-Game (announcing the rules):

"Are you ready to play Initials Game Live? Great, because the game is about to begin!

The rules are simple: I'm going to give you a two-letter set of initials, followed by a series of clues that will help you identify a mystery item with those initials. It could be anything: maybe it's a person, maybe a movie title, maybe an object, whatever. The sooner you identify the item, the more points you get. BUT: If you submit a wrong answer, you get zero points and you're out until the next item.

We'll play five items per round. The winner of each round gets a \$20 gift card to [Venue Name]. Give it up for [Venue name]! What an awesome place. And don't forget to tip your bartenders and servers! OK, let's reveal the initials for Round 1... "

Mid-Game:

There are a variety of shout-outs and conversation points a host can/should touch on throughout the game, to keep things lively and fill time. These include:

- Thanking the venue's staff and encouraging patrons to tip generously. Always do this at least once per night! The staff will appreciate you, and your venue's staff are the successful trivia host's number-one allies.
- Congratulating players/teams on their scores throughout the game.
- Hosts can toggle between the game tab and the scoring tab in the app during a round to watch answer submissions as they are entered. This is endless fodder for commentary. "Team X is in with the first correct answer!" always plays well, because that team will invariably cheer while the rest of the teams groan to learn that someone else has gotten it before them.

Post-Game:

- Remind players that The Initials Game Live is played every week at your location (usually — check the schedule to be sure), and invite them to come back next week and bring friends.
- Shout out initialsgamelive.com, where players can find a full schedule of Initials Game Live locations.

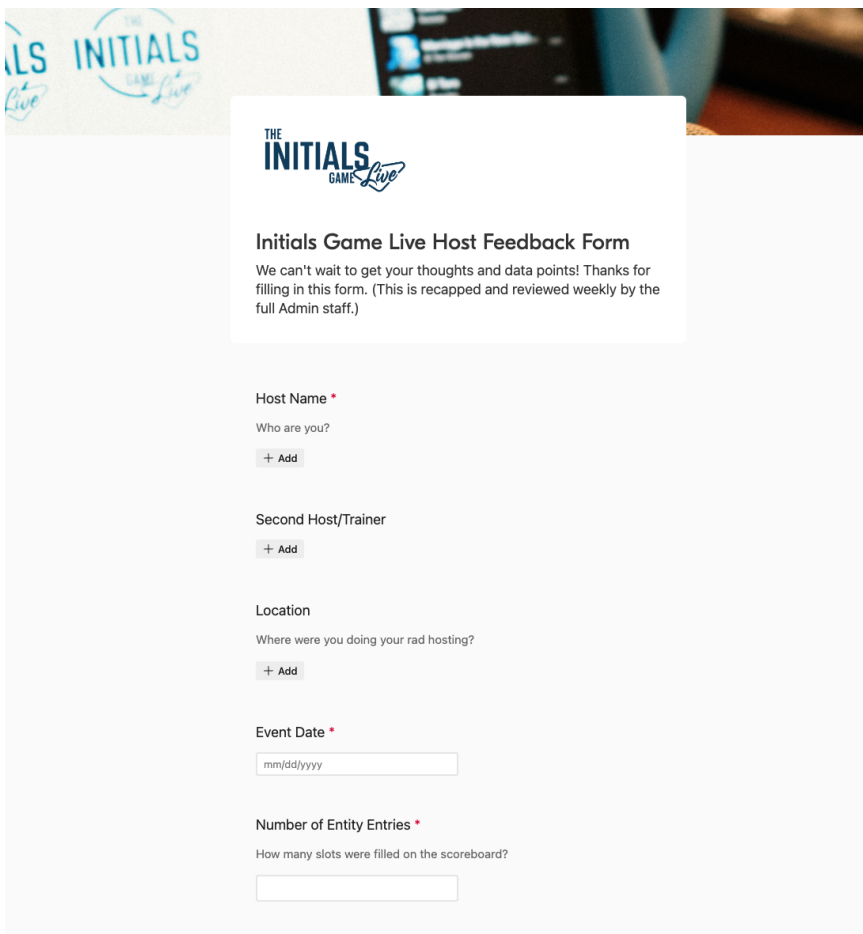
Not Done Yet! The Host Feedback Form

The Host Feedback Form is a requirement of every hosting at Trivia Mafia! This includes Initials Game Live as well as Trivia Mafia Classic.

You are required to fill out your Host Feedback within 24 hours of your shift. This form allows us to track turnout rates at all of our events, collect photos of winning teams for our online slideshows, and, most importantly, it gives our hosts a direct line of communication with the Trivia Mafia administrative team, so we can be immediately made aware of any notes or issues our hosts may have regarding their Trivia Mafia Classic quizzes, Theme Nights, or Initials Game Live nights.

The Host Feedback Form is located at hosts.triviamafia.com
Password: *FeedMe*

For Initials Game Live, your Host Feedback will include the following:

A screenshot of a web browser displaying the 'Initials Game Live Host Feedback Form'. The form is overlaid on a background image showing a person's hands holding a smartphone with a game interface. The form has a white header with the 'THE INITIALS GAME Live' logo. Below the header, there is a title 'Initials Game Live Host Feedback Form' and a paragraph: 'We can't wait to get your thoughts and data points! Thanks for filling in this form. (This is recapped and reviewed weekly by the full Admin staff.)'. The form contains several input fields: 'Host Name' with a red asterisk and a 'Who are you?' label; 'Second Host/Trainer'; 'Location' with a 'Where were you doing your rad hosting?' label; 'Event Date' with a red asterisk and a date input field showing 'mm/dd/yyyy'; and 'Number of Entity Entries' with a red asterisk and a label 'How many slots were filled on the scoreboard?'. Each input field has a '+ Add' button next to it.

THE INITIALS GAME Live

Initials Game Live Host Feedback Form

We can't wait to get your thoughts and data points! Thanks for filling in this form. (This is recapped and reviewed weekly by the full Admin staff.)

Host Name *
Who are you?
 + Add

Second Host/Trainer
 + Add

Location
Where were you doing your rad hosting?
 + Add

Event Date *
 mm/dd/yyyy

Number of Entity Entries *
How many slots were filled on the scoreboard?

- Your name, your venue, and the date of the event

- Photos of all winning teams/players (make sure to ask before you take their photos whether they would mind us posting them on the internet). The best time to take these photos is immediately after awarding the prizes at the end of each round.
- Winning scores.
- The number of "Entity Entries" (i.e. players/teams appearing on the leaderboard)
- The average numbers of players per team
- The initials used in your game
- Any editorial notes relating to the items and/or clues in your game.
- Checkboxes to check if you need more app cards or posters at your site
- Any other notes you have about event — successes, failures, hiccups, audio problems, bugs in the app, funny moments, brilliant ideas — this is your time to let us know your thoughts. Remember: All feedback is reviewed by the Powers That Be, as well as the Editorial staff, the Host Manager, and the Marketing department on Tuesdays. If there's something personal or sensitive that you'd rather not share with more than a dozen people, please email Brenna, Chuck, or Mary Kate directly.

Next: [The Initials Game Live App >](#)

Revision #25

Created 29 August 2024 03:50:38 by Chuck Terhark

Updated 2 October 2024 18:03:38 by Brenna Proczko