

# FAQs

Some of the hot topics of frequently asked questions - from how to pronounce "archipelago" to how to handle hecklers.

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# How do I pronounce this?

## The Official Trivia Mafia Pronunciation Guide for Words We Use a Lot

Thank you for caring about saying words right. This document contains words we use frequently (as opposed to one-off words) that we've heard hosts have a hard time with. Have an idea that should be added? [Email Senior Editor Ruby!](#)

### Entries are in the following format:

word ([link goes to an audio pronunciation](#)): pronunciation guide /International Phonetic Alphabet guide/, (additional explanation of pronunciation) definition

### Common words

**archipelago**: ark-ih-PEL-ah-go /ˌɑrkɪˈpɛləˌɡoʊ/, a chain of islands

**archipelagic**: ark-ih-puh-LAH-djik /ɑrkɪpəˈlædʒɪk/, of or relating to a chain of islands

**biopic**: BY-oh-pik /ˈbaɪ.əθ.pɪk/, (like “bio” and “pic” put together), a biographical film

**Wiktionary** says by-AP-ik is “nonstandard” but listed in some places; you go ahead and say it that way if you want

**colonel**: KER-nul /ˈkɜːnəl/, a military rank below a general

**couture**: kuh-TOOR /kuˈtʊər/, fashion designers and the high-end clothes they make

**coxswain**: KOK-sihn /ˈkɒk sən / (like “cocks sin” if you said it fast), the athlete who steers a racing shell

**titular**: TICH-uh-ler /ˈtɪtʃələr/ or TIT-yuh-ler /ˈtɪtyələr/, of or relating to the title of something, usually the character after whom a work is named (“the titular character”)

**posthumous**: PAWS-chew-mus /ˈpɒs.tʃū.məs/, after death, usually referring to a work published after the author's death

# Names

**Janelle Monáe**: juh-ENL moh-NAY, /dʒəˈneɪ moʊˈneɪ/, singer songwriter of “The Electric Lady” and “Dirty Computer”

**Kamala Harris**: KAH-muh-luh, /kɑːmələ/ (like “COMMA-lah” – her stepkids call her “mom-ala” if that helps you) the 49th Vice President of the United States

**Kamala Khan**: kuh-MAH-luh, /kəˈmɑːlə/ Ms. Marvel from the Marvel comics/MCU

**Keanu Reeves**: kee-AH-noo reevz, /keɪˈɑːnuː rɪvs/ Neo from “The Matrix,” John Wick from “John Wick,” et cetera

**Madeleine L’Engle**: LEHNG-gul, /ˈlɛŋɡəl/, author of “A Wrinkle in Time”

**Marquis de Sade**: mar-KEE duh SAHD, /marki də sad/, French writer famous for his libertine sexuality (see also Sade, the singer)

**Megan Rapinoe**: ruh-PEE-noh /rəˈpiːnoʊ/, Captain of the US National Women’s Soccer Team

**Nicki (Onika) Minaj**: NIH-kee (oh-NEE-kah) min-AZH, /ˈnɪkiː oʊˈniːkə mɪˈnɑːʒ/, Rapper, songwriter, Queen Radio host

**Nguyen**: WIN /wɪn/ or NOO-yen /nuːˈjɛn/ (you can read more about different pronunciations [here](#); please feel free to say it correctly if your Vietnamese is good!) The most common surname in Vietnam

**Sade**: SHAH-day [ʃɑːˈdeɪ], a Nigerian-British singer, a smooth operator (see also Marquis de Sade)

**Sia**: SEE-uh [siːə] an Australian singer songwriter

**W.E.B. DuBois**: double you ee bee doo-BOIS, /djuːˈbɔɪs/ Sociologist, founder of the NAACP

# Brands/Institutions

**Atari**: uh-TAR-ee, /əˈtɑːri/ (middle syllable rhymes with “star”), a video game company

**Carnegie**: kar-NEH-ghee, /kɑːrˈnɛgi/ is closer to the original Scots pronunciation and preferred by **Carnegie Corporation and Carnegie Mellon**; **many English-speakers** say KAR-nuh-ghee /ˈkɑːrˈnɛgi/; you can’t really go wrong with either. (Carnegie Hall more frequently uses the second pronunciation, but seriously, either is fine.) The Carnegie family were industrialists, lots of things are named after them, Andrew is probably the most famous one.

**Duquesne University:** doo-KAIN /du:'keɪn/ a school in Pittsburgh

Dufresne (as in Andy Dufresne from “Shawshank Redemption” follows the same pattern; doo-FRAIN)

**Jägermeister:** YAY-ger-my-ster /'jeɪgərmaɪstər/, a German aperitif

**Reuters:** ROY-terz /'rɔɪtərz/, a news agency

## Places

**Côte d’Ivoire:** KOHT dih VWAR, /,koʊt di'vwɑː/, the French name of the Ivory Coast

**Mojave:** moh-HAH-vee, /moʊ'hɑːvi/, a people from the Southwestern United States and the places named after them

**Sioux City:** SOO /suː/ A city in Iowa

Same pronunciation for Sioux Falls, South Dakota

## All Caps – Do I Say The Letters??

ABBA: AB-uh, not ay bee bee ay, '70s Swedish pop band

A\$AP Rocky: AY-sap, not ay ess ay pee, rapper

H.E.R.: HER, not aitch ee ar, current guitarist

GZA: GIZ-uh, not gee zee ay

NAACP: en double-ay see pee, not NAK-puh

RZA: RIZ-uh, not ar zee ay

Sports Leagues: say the letters in general! MLB = em el bee, NBA = en bee ay, NCAA = en see double-ay or en see ay ay, etc

# How do I decide if this answer is right?

Sometimes it is tricky to determine when to give full or partial credit for an answer that doesn't perfectly match what our Editorial team has provided. Don't sweat it too much! You got this.

## You have three key resources:

- **the internet:** teams are not allowed to use their Google, but you definitely can!
- **the team:** reply-all to the question email thread, or head to the [#content channel](#) in the Host Slack.
- **the vibes:** trust your instincts! Is the challenge from a team you know and trust? Is it something you just "feel" is more fair to credit or not? You're the one on the scene, so you get to decide.

Some examples:

## Do we require the full name?

In general, we follow *Jeopardy!* rules that Last Name Only is sufficient, unless there is plausible confusion. Kennedy, Roosevelt, Jones, Hepburn - there are multiple famous people with those last names, so they should include the first name.

Team answered "Kardashian"; official answer was "Kim Kardashian." We recommend a half point for "Kardashian." However, it's zero points if they say Kourtney instead of Kim - because just "Kardashian" was generally right but "Kourtney Kardashian" was specifically wrong.

As much as possible, alert teams when you're looking for a full name when you're reading the question! Sometimes, that's a hint in and of itself.

## Should we accept "Korea" for South Korea?

Technically, no. "[Korea](#)" refers to the peninsula, on which there are two countries. South Korea is also known as the Republic of Korea, so you can accept that answer! However, if asking for the nationality or language, "Korean" would be correct without the North or South designation.

# How do I suggest content?

## Become a Content Creator

If someone doesn't currently work for us but is interested in writing questions for pay, [they can apply here](#).

Existing staff can submit question ideas at any time by emailing them to [submissions@triviamafia.com](mailto:submissions@triviamafia.com), which is monitored by Editor-in-Chief [@Aaron Retka](#) and Senior Editor [@Ruby Levine](#).

- All submissions are vetted by our Editor-in-Chief, Aaron, so **first send a pitch** with your round theme and an example question or two.
- **Any round/question type is accepted:** General Knowledge, Themed Round, Image Round, or Lightning Round (we don't currently need Sound Rounds, but if you have a genius idea we'll look at it!). Get bonkers with your mystery round idea, or just share ideas for topics that we have historically overlooked.
- **Pay** is \$35 per round, or \$6 per GK question, after approval by Aaron.

## Suggest a Theme Night theme

Head to our [suggestion form](#), or [email Brianna](#) directly with your ideas! **Be sure to take a look at the [archive list](#) so you can see which themes we've done in the past.**

Keep in mind that themes that are **too broad** don't always work well - for example, we did a theme on Saturday Morning Cartoons, but got a lot of feedback that the shows we covered were too concentrated on the '90s (and some of them aired in the afternoons, or were on cable, or...). So, what seemed like a fun theme ended up being too poorly defined for people to know what to expect when they attended - or rather, what they expected didn't match what we provided.

The opposite challenge has happened with focus on a single person's oeuvre - Stephen King, John Carpenter, and Keanu Reeves have all gotten their own themes, but either there was too much to cover (King's books AND movies AND TV shows??) or players who liked Keanu in a general sense were not actually well versed in all of his movies.

We also need to have a staff writer who is at least peripherally interested in the theme. Trivia Mafia never wants to create a set of questions that are only sourced from internet searches; **the best sets are infused with the enthusiasm of a true fan** or willing acolyte. So there is some self-selection based on making sure that we can ask questions that real fans will recognize as

understanding the subject and delivering a really fun event.

**A note about "Harry Potter" theme events:** We regularly get requests to run "Harry Potter" theme nights, and have done so in the past. However, in light of [the increasing transphobia from the author](#), we just can't do it anymore. We love the source material as much as anyone, making this a very difficult decision, but we value our trans players and employees over these books and movies. Thank you for understanding.

# What if the site tells me they want to cancel a game/make a schedule change?

The host is the reporter-on-the-scene - but all you have to do is report back. **Include the info in your [Host Feedback](#)**, and/or send an email or Slack message to the Host Manager to pass along to the correct person.

**We ask sites to give us 48 hours notice for any regular game cancellation** (save for a site emergency or inclement weather), and when they fill in the [cancellation form](#) it automatically sends an email to the regular host to notify them!

Sidenote: Our staff are allowed to **use PTO** at any time for any reason, but it's very common for hosts to use those banked hours to cover a cancelled shift! Just email [payroll@triviamafia.com](mailto:payroll@triviamafia.com) with the date and your request, and 2.8 hours (or your full balance, if less than that) will be applied to the corresponding payroll.

**We ask for at least 15 days notice if a site wants to change their schedule** (i.e. start an hour earlier during the winter, move the game to a different day of the week, etc.), and they must work with the [Sales & Account Director](#) or their account person to put the gears in motion! We will alert the host, update their marketing assets and our internal database, and post on socials ahead of any change.

**It is not the host's responsibility to manage a site's schedule**, but we do appreciate getting updates if they are talking to you directly about things.

If you show up to work and the location is closed, or if they tell you after you arrive that they don't want to run trivia (because they have something else going, or there aren't enough players), **you will still get paid, and the site will still be charged.**



# A Holiday is coming up - is trivia cancelled?

Trivia Mafia does not run any live, regular games for five holidays a year: Independence Day (July 4), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Day (Dec 24 and 25), and New Year's Eve (Dec 31).

For any other holiday - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Halloween, whatever - we assume everything is happening as scheduled unless the site cancels. **If you want to make other plans, first find a sub for the shift!** We will alert you (and the sub) if the site decides to call off the game.

We have made exceptions to the above list of dates for [Private Events](#), so if a location really wants to have trivia to ring in the new year, they just have to set that up as a special one-off situation.

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