

A Virgin's Guide

VIRGIN - In the common world, this usually refers to a person who has not engaged in sexual relations. In the ROCKY HORROR world, this word refers to the many unfortunate people who have never experienced THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (RHPS) in a theater with an audience and a live cast. Seeing it on home video (Blu-ray, DVD, VHS, Netflix, etc.) or on TV doesn't count!

You came to this page because you are hopefully going to consider attending a showing of Rocky Horror in a theater.

If you've already seen the movie by itself on TV or home video and wondered what all the fuss was about, read on. If you haven't seen the movie on TV or home video - GREAT! The more surprised you are on your first time, the more fun it is.

Rocky Horror is the first and only true audience par-ti-ci-(SAY IT!)-pation movie. People yell back lines at the screen during the extended pauses between dialogue, dress up in costume and act out the film, and throw props various times during the film. The audience participation phenomenon was observed as early as the film's first run in 1975 (when it bombed during limited engagements in 7 of 8 cities), and was later re-released as a midnight movie where the audience participation really began to flourish. And by the way, for the "gore sensitive", Rocky Horror is NOT a horror film. It is a rock-musical send-up of old science-fiction and horror films.

Enough history! You are interested in going, so here's what you really need to know.

First, the only thing you really need to bring your first time out in order to have fun is a sense of humor, and money for admission (and food at the nearest 24-hour diner afterwards.) Of course, being surrounded by 10-15 of your friends is also a good thing. You should dress in whatever makes YOU feel comfortable, but also does not violate any local standards (this usually means nudity is out.) Speaking of violating laws and norms of society, it is usually best to go to RHPS sober the first time. Not only will you be more in-tune to pick up all the clever things going on around you, some theaters will not admit those people who look drunk - what theater manager wants to clean up after a drunk at 2:30 a.m.?

But hey, what about the props and audience participation lines and dressing up in costume? Well, no one expects you to know much of anything your first time out. While audience participation is mandatory to keep the show alive, it is not mandatory that everyone participate, every time. Virgins are not expected to know a damn thing (just like in sex.)

If you really want to bring props, check with your local theater and ask what props are not allowed. The safest ones to bring are bubbles, flashlight, newspaper, toilet paper and a deck of cards. Watch everyone else to figure out when to throw these items.

There is one line that is almost universal to every theater that you can use multiple times. Whenever you hear the name "Brad Majors", yell "ASSHOLE", okay? An important note here: audience participation is NOT fixed; it varies from theater to theater and night to night. If you feel a new line coming on, YELL IT! A big part of keeping the show fresh is creating new lines with topical humor.

Hmmmm... sounds interesting. I am not going to be targeted for some humiliation because I am a virgin, right? Maybe. Usually, theaters will have some sort of virgin ritual which almost always only includes 2 virgins. Since at any one time, an audience can consist of 25%-50% virgins, it is not likely that you will be chosen for this harmless ritual (well, usually harmless, it varies by theater!) If it looks like you are about to be picked, the best thing to do is point to a friend of the

same sex and mouth to whoever (whomever?) is looking at you that he or she is a "virgin" (the soon to be ex-friend that you are pointing at.) Once you have completed an entire showing of Rocky in a theater, they cannot ask you to participate in this ritual... you only have to worry about this once. (And once you see it, sometimes you actually WISH you were picked!)

REMEMBER: Rocky Horror is like sex, you can only have one first time so make the most of it.