



How to keep your visitors comfortable in the heat

After weeks and months of preparation, the Columbia Basin Culture Tour weekend arrives. You may have created artwork, cleaned the venue, sent out invites and articles, and placed directional signs that will remind visitors to stop by...and now you're ready to open the doors and welcome everyone in.

However, are you ready for high temperatures?

Even if you don't have air conditioning, you can create refuge from the heat for you and your visitors. Here are some ideas to consider:

How to make your venue a cool destination

- **Open your windows** early in the day and **close them** once the temperatures inside and out equalize. In August, this usually means by early to mid-morning, just before visitors arrive.
- **Use reflective film or curtains** on the windows, particularly those facing south.
- If you have room, **place fans** inside the venue, with bowls of ice water in front of them.
- **Turn off lights** if practical. If not, try to use LED lights and lower wattages: these produce significantly less heat than other alternatives.
- **Implement the above tips to safeguard your artwork, too.** (See [this Getty Museum article](#) to learn what can happen to art when the weather gets hot, such as breaking down the chemical compounds that make up materials like paper, canvas and wood.)
- To keep people hydrated as they sweat and lose salt, **offer salty treats and ice water.**
- Potters: Here's an opportunity to **offer cups for sale**, and water coolers if you work in sizes that large.

- If you have space outside your venue, **set up a sunshade with a table and chairs** in a north-facing area.
- **Offer cooling scarves** for visitors to hang around their necks. They can receive them for free as promotional material (perhaps with your logo printed on them) or you can ask for them to be returned so you can wash them for the next folks to enjoy. (Learn how to make cooling scarves [here](#).)
- **Create a small folding hand fan**, another piece of “memorabilia” that’s not expensive and can remind visitors about you; [here’s one site](#) where you can order them. Artists: You could order plain paper paddle fans and add your own style to them.
- If it’s forecast to be extremely hot, **consider moving your venue** to a local community venue that has a cooling system—perhaps you could share the rental costs with other artists. (However, **only do this as a last resort**, as the tour’s print brochures won’t reflect this change of venue and people may show up at the original location. Best to keep this strategy in mind for future tours.)
- In a worst-case scenario, **keep in mind that your community may have an emergency cooling centre set up**. (Contact your local government or Band office for details.)

We hope this helps!

Tips provided by Deb Borsos, a pastel artist and [specialist in community disaster recovery](#).