

ROCK ISLAND 2026 QUICK REF

What do I need to do?

- Opt in to Rock Island through your performer/guest checklist and provide us with the requested information by the deadline(s). **This is very important. We cannot accommodate last-minute opt-in requests.**
- Bring your merch to Rock Island (or arrange to have it shipped in advance).
 - All t-shirts **must** be individually rolled or wrapped with the type/style and size clearly labeled.
- Check in with us when you arrive at the event to confirm your details.
- Check out with us and pick up any unsold merch (or arrange to have it shipped) on Sunday.
- Watch your email after the event for your final sales report and payment confirmation!

What are the important deadlines for 2026?

Opt in on Performer Checklist by **November 30, 2025**

Fill out merch/inventory info in Performer Checklist by **December 20, 2025**

When do I give you my merch?

If you are transporting your own merch, you can drop it off between the following hours:

- **Weds (Jan 7): noon-8pm**
- **Thurs (Jan 8): 9am-9pm**
- All merchandise should arrive at Rock Island **no later than Thursday 9pm** (unless you request an exception by emailing rockisland-heads@magfest.org).

If you instead want to ship it to the warehouse (at your own expense), do so

by **December 20, 2025** and then also check in with us when you arrive on-site.

What are the hours Rock Island is open to the public?

Thurs: 6pm-3am

Fri, Sat: 12pm-3am

Trolley (mobile sales) by request starting at noon on Thursday and ending at 3pm Sunday

ROCK ISLAND FAQ

What is Rock Island?

Rock Island is a 100% volunteer-staffed ‘storefront’ that sells merch for any/all booked talent - guests/bands/performers - at Super MAGFest! We do NOT take a cut - you bring inventory and set the prices, we make sales and send you the proceeds (minus taxes and fees). No need to staff your own merch booth - but we do provide space to meet your fans and sign after your set! We can even bring our merch ‘Rockipelago’ trolley to panels or side stage performances! Our storefront is conveniently located at the corner of the Mainstage concert hall and is a one-stop shop for merch from all the performers and guests selling with us.

How does it work?

Opt in through your Guest/Performer Checklist, then let us know what kind of merch you’ll be planning on bringing! When you arrive at the Gaylord, bring us your merch - we’ll count it and confirm your prices. Throughout the weekend, our staff make the sales, while you enjoy the event and provide amazing content for your fans! On Sunday, come pick up any unsold merch - you’ll get your payment a few weeks after, with a complete accounting of what items sold. If you are unable to bring the merchandise yourself, you can arrange for it to be shipped to us in advance and/or shipped back to you afterwards.

How do I get my merch to you?

Option A (most common, recommended): Bring your merch with you when you travel and drop it off with us when you arrive at the Gaylord. If you need help transporting your merch inside the building, let us know - volunteers are available to assist. Performers may drop off their merch between the following hours:

Weds (Jan 7): noon-8pm

Thurs (Jan 8): 9am-9pm

All merchandise should arrive at Rock Island **no later than Thursday 9pm**. This is to ensure that we have enough time to properly account for all merchandise before the event so inventory is accurate and nothing gets lost. We will gladly make exceptions for those who need it (if you don’t arrive until Friday, just let us know when to expect you!), but you must contact us

ahead of time. ***Your merch must be at Rock Island at least 1 hour before your performance.***

Option B: Have your merch shipped to our warehouse in advance (at your own expense; MAGFest does not cover shipping). All items must be **received** by no later than **December 20, 2025**. Shipping can be slow around the holidays, so please account for that in your timeline! Our logistics staff will transport your merch to Rock Island, but you still need to check in with us when you arrive before we can start making sales.

The shipping address is:

Rock Island c/o Matthew Beale
10820 C Hanna St.
Beltsville, MD 20705

Please let your artist liaison and Rock Island staff (rockisland-heads@magfest.org) know if you choose this option so we know to look for your merch. Any fees incurred relating to the shipping will be deducted from your total sales.

Option C (not recommended): Ship your merch to National Harbor, pick it up when you arrive, and bring it to us. MAGFest does not cover any shipping costs or transport any packages except for those sent to our warehouse. If you are unable to travel with your merch and unable to ship it in time to meet the warehouse deadline, the cheapest option we've found is the UPS Store, which charges an acceptance fee (at least \$15, might be more) in addition to the shipping costs. Shipping directly to the Gaylord (via FedEx) is very expensive and not recommended. Please contact the UPS Store for information on their package acceptance policy: <https://locations.theupsstore.com/md/national-harbor/145-fleet-st>

Please let your booking contact or artist liaison know if you anticipate needing any assistance with this process.

How are inventory and sales handled? What fees do you charge? How do I get paid?

MAGFest will **not** be taking any cut of your sales! This service is provided at no cost to you by MAGFest in order to support our community of musicians and artists and make sure the talent can take time to enjoy the rest of the event! Our trained volunteers use iPads running the Square app to process sales (cash and credit) and track inventory. The only fees we will be taking are Maryland sales tax (6%) and Square fees (2.6% + 15¢ on all credit card transactions; see their pricing page for more information: <https://squareup.com/pricing>), which will be deducted from gross sales.

Please note that the taxes and fees are removed from the sale price, not added on (e.g. if an attendee purchases a shirt priced at \$20, you would receive approximately \$18.13), so apply the appropriate markup when setting your prices! Whole dollar amounts only, please; we do not handle coins.

About a week after the event, you will receive an email with your final breakdown of sales - you need to respond to that email for your payment to be sent! Your net proceeds will be sent to you no later than January 30, either by mailed check or by electronic transfer (PayPal payment), based on the information you provide in your performer checklist.

How does it work once we arrive at the event?

1. The first step is to check in with us. Your group's point-of-contact person (ideally the person filling out the checklist and/or handling the money) should be the one to meet with us. You can name 'trusted handlers' on the checklist as well, but they should be prepared to confirm the payment information and sign some paperwork. We will count your inventory and confirm the item prices. If any apparel items are not rolled or otherwise individually packaged, we can provide you with rubber bands, table space, and a demonstration of our preferred method, but you should be prepared to roll and label them yourself if our volunteers are busy with other tasks. If you wish to arrange to have any leftover merch shipped back to you (at your own expense) rather than picking it up on Sunday, we can confirm that during check-in as well; otherwise we will expect to see you on Sunday for check-out.
2. Our staff will display and sell your merch in our 'storefront' space throughout the weekend! We also have a listening station where attendees can check out the sample tracks you provide through the performer checklist.
3. Your merch will be highlighted during/after your set/signing/panel - see below for more details on meet-and-greets and the Rockipelago trolleys.
4. Come back on Sunday (between 9am and 3pm - earlier is better) to check out - we will provide you with a preliminary estimate of your total sales amount, count your remaining inventory, and help you pack it back up for transport.

What if my travel plans include a late arrival or early departure?

Rock Island's process is designed for sales to take place over the full weekend (Wednesday or Thursday arrival, Sunday departure). We are able to make exceptions - but this needs to be

clearly communicated well in advance so we can prepare properly! Please reach out to us ASAP.

Meet & Greets // Rockipelago Trolley

MAINSTAGE* BANDS/PERFORMERS:

If you would like to hold a meet-and-greet (hang out, sign merch, chat to fans) after your set, we will set up a table selling your merch at the exit from the concert hall into Rock Island, and attendees will line up there. (Performers should exit through the green room into the hallway to reach Rock Island through the staff entrance.) We provide the Sharpies and make the sales, so you can focus on meeting your fans! Headliners who anticipate drawing a large (100+ person) crowd are offered the same meet-and-greet opportunity utilizing the Autographs department space rather than the Rock Island storefront - attendees will exit the concert hall and go around the corner to get in line. Please feel free to shout out Rock Island and the meet and greet from the stage at the end of your set - but be sure to give accurate directions! Ask your liaison / booking contact / Rock Island staff if you have any questions.

If your band members are participating in a panel or another event where you would like your merch sold, please see the “Guests” section for information on the Rockipelago trolleys.

***DJ Block and Chiptune Block performers and visualists:**

Generally, the back-to-back nature of the DJ and chiptune sets does not lend itself well to the post-show meet-and-greets, and we are unable to remain open after the last performance of the night. If you would like to schedule a time to host a meet-and-greet in Rock Island, we are happy to work with you to choose a time (during the day - outside of Mainstage concert hours), put it on the official schedule, and advertise it. Please see the “Guests” section below for more information, or ask Rock Island staff in Discord.

SIDE STAGE* PERFORMERS (Belvedere / XP Stage / Arena):

Our staff will bring a trolley and set up a ‘Rockipelago’ mobile merch booth nearby during and after your set! If you opt in for a meet-and-greet, you are welcome to hang out at our table after your performance to sign merch and chat with your fans.

If your band members are participating in a panel or another event where you would like your merch sold, please see the “Guests” section for information on the Rockipelago trolleys.

*Due to space constraints, we are generally unable to provide this service to DJs performing in POSE - please see the “Guests” section below for options.

GUESTS & ADDITIONAL EVENTS:

Our 'Rockipelago' mobile merch trolleys are available for each Guest/group up to **two** times over the course of the event. Our staff will set up a table at your autograph session, or in the hallway outside a panel room. Our ability to be in multiple places at once is limited, so the schedule is subject to availability of staff, but we are happy to discuss your event schedule and options with you.

If you do not have an official Autographs session scheduled, we have limited daytime availability to host smaller meet and greets at our Rock Island storefront signing space. Please reach out ahead of time to arrange this with us, so we can make sure it's adequately advertised on the official event schedule!

How much merch should I bring / what kind of items sell best?

It depends! With MAGFest being a music-centered event, CDs are always an excellent choice and tend to sell very well. Vinyl and cassettes appeal to a certain kind of collector, but are, broadly speaking, less popular. Digital download codes don't tend to sell very well (but are inexpensive for you to pack/ship, so go for it). Prints/posters are more difficult to transport the larger they are (we recommend supplying plastic sleeves!) but are an especially good choice for Guests offering autograph sessions. Small and inexpensive items make great impulse purchases - especially stickers, pins, and patches. If you have items that are higher-tier (more expensive) or bulky, we recommend bringing a limited number. T-shirts (or hoodies, long-sleeves, tanks, etc) are a very popular option, but please consider limiting the total inventory you bring, particularly if you are not performing at Mainstage. A small number of larger and smaller sizes are appreciated (particularly plus sizes), but most shirts sold are Medium, Large, or Extra-Large. **We request that you provide a maximum of 3 different shirt designs or 100 shirts total** unless you are certain of your merch's popularity from prior experience! Please remember that Rock Island has a limited amount of storage for a growing number of acts (we hosted 53 performers/guests in 2025!).

If you're still not sure, please feel free to reach out to the Rock Island heads or your booking contact / artist liaison for a more personalized recommendation based on our experience.

Can I sell merch for my solo project / other band / featured performer?

Yes! On your performer checklist, you will designate the point of contact - where we should send the payment. When we send the payment, we will include a spreadsheet with a detailed

breakdown of sales by item. If you have band members or featured performers that you would like to sell merch for, we will enter it in our system under the primary act, and you will be responsible for arranging the split afterwards amongst yourselves. (For example, in 2025 Marshall Art featured Lacey Johnson as a guest performer for their set. Lacey's CDs were treated as part of Marshall Art's inventory, and after we sent the total payment to their point of contact, he separately forwarded Lacey's cut to her.)

If you utilize this option, please drop off / check in all merch at the same time for inventory tracking purposes!!

What's the tl;dr?

Opt in by the deadlines on your performer checklist, get your merch to us, check in when you arrive, put on an awesome show, enjoy the event, check out when you leave, get paid approximately 2 weeks later!

I have another question?

Reach out to us in the booking Discord (@Rock Island, @Blueberry, @mixter_eyeball, @megatron) or email rockisland-heads@magfest.org!

What do the storefront and meet and greet area look like?

Here are some pics from MAGFest 2023, but it gets cooler every year! Just ask if you want to see more photos!

