

WARNING: PROBLEM SESSION IN PROGRESS!

You should run, not walk, in the other direction if any one or more of the following conditions is present at the session you're visiting for the first time:

... A super-star (e.g. Liz Carroll, Kevin Burke, Frankie Gavin) is there.

... Someone who *thinks* he's a super-star is there.

... The pub owner seems to have a thing for leprechauns.

... The family of piano-accordion-playing quadruplets from the next town shows up and is warmly greeted by the others.

... Eight of the ten musicians sitting at the table have tune-books open in front of them and the other two are reading Pizza Hut take-out menus.

... Al, the tone-deaf florist who specializes in attempting to sing John McCormack songs, grabs the seat next to yours and introduces himself with a limp handshake.

... There are three mikes, two speakers, one monitor, and 14 chairs. The sound system is controlled by the Alpha Musician and the others seem grateful for his "assistance".

... No one pretends to know the names of ANY tunes.

... There's a semi-professional Pun Vendor in attendance who doesn't play much but makes many stupid comments.

... The Alpha Musician refuses to play "Haste to the Wedding" or "The Boys of Blue Hill" but can imitate (badly and continuously) every reel Martin Hayes ever played.

... The local bodhrán institute adjourns from its weekly class just in time for its students to make it across town to this particular session.

... Three members of the local Angry Feminist Poetry Sisterhood are preparing to inflict their most recent works on everyone during anything that looks like a break in the music.

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... You start to play something and two people down at the other end of the table start to giggle uncontrollably.

... You start to play something and YOU start to giggle uncontrollably.

... You get up to take a leak and find your whistle stuffed with feta cheese when you return. Everyone feigns innocence but no one offers to help you get the cheese out.

... You tentatively join in on a tune, and the Alpha Musician stops and glares at you until you stop playing. The music does not resume until you have put your instrument on the table and removed your hands from its immediate vicinity. You never get the sliding microphone again, ever.

... The cute blonde flute player who you swear winked at you when you came in turns out to be a transvestite pipe-fitter named Shank.

... Three of the local Celtic (Hard C) Dance Cooperative members attempt an eight-hand reel while you're playing the "Kesh Jig". They get a big hand from audience and musicians alike when they finish.

... A fuzz-cheeked youth who has been playing for all of two months and knows exactly eight tunes makes a face when you suggest a slide or a polka. He mutters something about "not really traditional" but emits an audible sigh of relief when the gang swings into "Planxty Irwin".

Do NOT attempt to deal with any of these issues by yourself. Seek professional help immediately in any of the above circumstances!

