

# THANKS FOR READING



Find more information about my  
magic shows and entertainment at

[WWW.READYSTEADYMAGIC.CO.UK](http://WWW.READYSTEADYMAGIC.CO.UK)



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YOU ARE READING VERSION 6 – UPDATED IN SEPTEMBER 2021

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

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### What's a superstar birthday party?

This booklet is designed to help you and your child to have a superstar birthday party! That's one where everything runs smoothly, your child can be involved to whatever level they feel comfortable, and you get to enjoy it too. After all when you're a child you're birthday party is the most important day of the year. These are the moments that, whether they are good or bad, they'll look back on and remember for the rest of their lives.

That's why, I've filled the booklet with questions and answers, which I hope you will find easy to read and useful when planning your child's party.

### OK, but how do you know what works best?

I always think the best person to choose to answer any question is someone with experience in that field. I'm trying not to blow my own trumpet, but I've performed at over a thousand children's parties throughout the years. It's that experience that allows me deal with issues that someone else, less experienced, may not have even thought of yet, and it's that experience that I've tried to distil into this guide.

That's me, by the way, hello! →



## Just before we get started...

In the spirit of openness, I wanted to let you know that I am going to recommend to you that you choose a professional children's magician. I honestly believe it is quickest, easiest and most cost effective way for you to put on a fantastic party!

In fact, spoiler alert! I'm also going to recommend my own company Ready Steady Magic! That's perhaps no surprise, but in chapter 8 you'll be able to read why I'm so passionate about magic, and why I'm proud of the packages I'm able to offer through Ready Steady Magic.

Of course I would love you to book Ready Steady Magic, but deep down I am just as happy if you take the knowledge here, find it useful in booking another magician or entertainer, and ultimately end up having a great party. That's still a good ending to this story, isn't it?

## Chapter 2

### The #1 Advice

Here at Ready Steady Magic, I have two simple aims for your event. I aim to make sure that:

- the children and their friends have a fun, interactive, magical party.
- that you and the other adults are able to enjoy spending time with the children.

You see the real 'magic' isn't the tricks I do, but the memories that are created when people share a unique experience together. The time you spend with your family is precious. If you're running around trying to organise everything, then you're likely to feel anxious or stressed.

Part of my job should be to make your party experience easy. That starts right now, with this guide. So without further ado, if I could pass on to you only one thing about planning a special event for children then it would be this. You are allowed to enjoy the party too!

Unfortunately, I've been to too many parties where too much time, money and effort has been spent trying to impress other parents. What should really matter is the experience that you have together. Children are incredibly perceptive, which is why I want you to have a good time too, and it's why I always invite parents to watch the show too. I never embarrass anyone, but I can see the difference in the children's faces when their family are there to support them and be a part of their special day.



## Chapter 3

### Party Timing

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How long should the party be?

The vast majority of children's birthday parties taking place across the UK are two hours long. A long lingering all day 'drop in whenever' party does not suit children.

I've found children prefer a short fast paced, dynamic party rather than a longer slower one. Not only that but children are often invited to multiple parties on the same day. If they are lucky, they'll be able to double up and attend one in the morning and another in the afternoon, just like I often do as an entertainer!

With that in mind, at Ready Steady Magic I have two preferred party time slots for weekends, 11am to 1pm and 3pm to 5pm. I can sometimes accommodate parties slightly outside of these times, but your best bet is to plan your party with this in mind or check in advance.

### What if I can't suit everyone?

It's a fact of life, that you'll never be able to please all of the people all of the time. Finding a party time to fit with everyone else's busy lives is a difficult task. One day, you'll get it all perfect then someone will phone to say they've changed their schedule and it's a slide down the snake back to square one!

I suggest that you get a feel for what might work for most people, set the time that suits you, your child's best friend and your chosen entertainer then fix that date in the calendar.

Don't forget that bit about checking with your preferred entertainer! I often receive calls from parents who have booked everything and then call me. Even if they have left plenty of time in advance before booking, as a busy professional performer, I'm often already booked. Side note: I have a small team of super subs who can stand in on my behalf. They don't offer the exact same show that I do, but they are very good in their own right.

## What day should the party be?

I do get booked up in advance, especially for weekends, so if you can make it work, an 'after school' party is absolutely as much fun as one at the weekend. For midweek parties, I would suggest a party starting at 4.30pm / 5pm. That's a great way to ensure that everyone can get changed after school, and be with you on time ready to P A R T Y!

For older children, an early evening party works really with my Ready Steady Magic Workshop.

## Chapter 4

### Party Venue

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#### Can I hold the party at home?

Absolutely, some of the best parties I've attended have been house parties. Should you hold the party at home is a very different question.

Some children are more reserved, and may prefer the surroundings of their home. That's one great reason to keep the party at home, but do consider the space you have available and the number of children you invite (plus their parents, and a few younger / older siblings). The Ready Steady Magic Show can squeeze up or stretch out as the space demands, but there are limits.

I was once asked to provide my games and music at home for a group of 12 children. I checked with the client that they had enough space to accommodate a little moving about and dancing, and they assured me there was no problem.

Imagine how I felt when fifteen minutes before starting I was told there were now 37 children expected in the small conservatory. In that space the party would not have been safe to run. After discussing my concerns with the parent, we were able to rearrange some furniture in a larger room, and run the party there instead.

#### How about my garden, is that a suitable space?

Ah.... encountering error! ...most gardens are not a suitable party environment. If it rains (and in Britain that's always a possibility) do you have space for all of the party to move indoors? Also unless you have the correct weatherproof electrical points, connections and cabling, I'm not able to use any music or microphones.

At the opposite end of the scale my show involves sitting down for a minimum of 45

minutes. Do you have space for a marquee or shading if the day is very sunny? This needs to be positioned correctly so that the children will not have the sun in their eyes.

So while it is possible to have your show outside, please do think about it first. Last but not least, if you do choose to have the party outside, I strongly recommend that you lay something down on the floor. While it sounds fun, in reality 'ants in your pants' is anything but!

## Where do you recommend I hold the party?

We are fortunate in the UK to have an abundance of community centres, church halls, village halls, function rooms and scout huts that hire out their venue space for a nominal fee. The best halls are clean and modern, have industrial kitchens, and if you can find one that has a separate room to eat the food in, that is a big bonus too. They also have easily accessible parking which is great for everyone. With all of the equipment I bring along, I especially appreciate that.

As well as lots of space for energetic children to run around and have fun in, some venues also have a suitable stage to make your magic show even more of a theatrical experience.



Believe me, the fee for the hall is well worth it for the stress it saves you in cleaning / repairing your home after a big party. If you can't find a venue, let me know and I'll send you my list of some suitable places near to you. I've been to many, so I can usually point you quickly in the direction of the spaces I recommend.

## Should I decorate the venue?

Absolutely! Colourful streamers, ribbons, banners and balloons are a great idea. Some simple items that transform the venue into a party venue instead of a plain hall is all that's required!

This is the same advice I give about party food. Keep it simple. At all the thousands of parties I have performed at, I have never heard the children talking about the food or the decorations. Some adults will but remember what I said earlier, it's about the children, not the parents, right?



A word of warning. Please don't put loose balloons on the floor. They create far too much distraction from the main party games and the magic show. I'm also sorry to report that I've seen more trips and falls caused by stray balloons than anything else you might find at a party.

Children do like balloons though, so why not hang some on the walls, set some weighted helium balloons on the tables or ask me to provide each child with a balloon model to take home with them?

Don't forget to hang some balloons outside on the gate too, It's a great visual signpost for the guests (and the entertainer) that they have found the right place!

## Chapter 5

### Party Guests

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#### Should I invite the whole class?

There is nothing wrong with having a smaller party of your child's best friends, and that might be a great way to keep the party at home!

Most parties are for about twenty to twenty-five children. If there are substantially more than this, then you would be looking at a larger style of magic show and you may require staging, lighting and sound, all of which I can advise you on.

#### Should I ask the parents to stay?

For younger children, the answer is a resounding yes. As I've mentioned above, adults are invited to watch the show too. I won't embarrass you or ask you to come to the front, but I know the children enjoy the show more when their family are there to share it with them. The magic show is a family experience that is enjoyed best when everyone shares in creating the memories of it together.

For the older children, I find that many parents drop and go, but it's useful to have a few on hand, especially if I'm running a magic workshop. A few extra pairs of hands are always useful to help out when learning a few tricks.

When I provide music games, I always finish with a sing along number for example. "Superman" - you know the one - Sleep, Wave, Hitch a Ride ... Superman! When you're a child grown-ups seem serious all the time, so they love seeing grown-ups having fun and being silly. One of my best experiences at a party was when all the parents got up and joined in with last dance. I didn't ask them to, I never do. They just did it. And you know what? The kids loved it!

With that in mind, I want to be serious for just a brief moment. There is a trend for some parents to turn their child's birthday into a social occasion for their own circle of friends. Nothing makes me more disappointed (and if I'm honest, a little angry inside) when the birthday child is enjoying the show, and at the same time they are looking around casting ever hopeful glances over to parents, who are eating, drinking and loudly discussing last night's TV.



Taking this route, will cost you a precious moment with your child that money can never buy back. Why not get involved, take some snaps for the family photo album and above all have fun!

**Where can I get some fun party invitations?**

I'm glad you asked! When you book a Ready Steady Magic party, I'll give you access to a free party pack that you can download. It includes invitations, a party check list, and lots more other goodies too!

If you tell everyone that you have booked a Ready Steady Magic show, no-one will be late.

## Chapter 6

### Party Entertainment

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#### How much entertainment should I have?

A magic show and party games / music is more than enough to fill a two hour party. No need to have bouncy castles, character appearances or any other entertainment. In fact, more is in most cases not better. I've found that children get distracted far too easily if there are multiple things to do. It's much better to have one thing done well, rather than lots of other things competing for attention.

I once performed at a birthday party where as well as my magic show, there was also a disco, a face painter, a popcorn machine, an extra balloon modeller (that wasn't me) and a bouncy castle. All going on at the same time as my magic show.

Are you surprised that I started with thirty children and ended up with only eight still watching at the end!

**But children love bouncy castles. They must be a good idea, right?**

Bouncy castles are wonderful things. Children love them and they work especially well at family fun days and community events. Don't tell anyone, but I still secretly love a quick bounce when I'm allowed. Unfortunately I can't recommend bouncy castles for a birthday party. They just don't fit with the idea of a family celebration. A bouncy castle is one of those, 'stick it in the corner' entertainments. It's just not the same as everyone sitting down and enjoying something together.

Plus there is that question of where to put it. Indoors, and it's a screaming match between the castle motor noise vs the jumping, running and screaming. Outside isn't

much better. If it rains, which it always seems to when you don't want it to, you are left with a major slipping risk and thirty soggy children.

To limit distractions and noise levels, when I perform at a birthday party with a castle, I always request that it is fully deflated before the show begins.

## What about a face painter?

Some children enjoy having their face painted, others are a bit more hesitant. I personally think it's great, and the best face painters have skills in not only the artistic side, but also in putting children at ease and communicating with them on a one to one basis.



Therein lies the problem. Face painting is fun for the person who is having their face painted. For everyone else it's about as fun as standing in a queue waiting to be painted. In short, not very fun at all.

It's what I call passive entertainment. A face painter is never going to step your party into action with a fantastic all singing, all dancing, lights and sounds show! Well I haven't seen it yet.

But I don't fully un-recommend them. I just think they need to be managed. Here's what I suggest. If you want to include a face painter for your child's birthday party, ask them to paint before the magic show starts. By the time the children are ready to sit down and watch everyone should be all fully painted and ready to give the magic show their full attention.

Talk to me and I'll recommend someone professional who uses the industry standard face paints and carries the relevant insurances.

## My child loves magic! What should I look out for?

If your child loves magic, and most of them do! You should book a children's magician. At Ready Steady Magic I understand that children still believe in magic, and that's why I've created a show that contains magic that is both mystifying and fun.

I'm not a children's entertainer who throws in "some magic tricks." I am a professional magician with a magic show crafted with comedy that I know children love! If you want a real magical experience, there's really only one option.

## Can you entertain younger / older children?

Most Ready Steady Magic birthday parties fall within the 5 to 8 age range. While I don't personally perform shows for children younger than this, I would be happy to recommend a colleague to you, so please do get in touch.

I've found that older children will prefer my unique half 'n' half show where they get not only a short show of incredible magic, but a magic workshop so that they can learn some tricks for themselves. Imagine them going home to share the magic with their friends and family.

For those that are extra keen, I even provide magic lessons. See [www.readysteadymagic.co.uk/magic-lessons](http://www.readysteadymagic.co.uk/magic-lessons) for more information

# Chapter 7

## On the Day

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We know that children can be excitable, run around, laugh a minute, jump on anything little bundles of joy. So, I've put together this 'on the day' party advice guide to help you to minimise distractions.

1. Provide a soft rug or mat for the children to sit on. This is not only more comfortable but also keeps everyone together as an audience.
2. The show is designed for families, so **arrange space for the adults to sit with the children**. Ask me where if you are unsure. This also helps parents to be close to the action to deal with any issues the children may have.
3. **But please keep quiet!** Adults chatting through the show is just a little bit very distracting. It's a bit like when people talk at the cinema. If you went to the cinema with your children everyone would sit and enjoy the show together. It's the same with my magic show!
4. If you are having music, dancing and party games at the party then feel free to get involved too. Children love to see the adults having fun. This is especially useful with quieter children.
5. Hang balloons on the walls as decoration, and outside as a visual sign post. **I strongly un-recommend loose balloons on the floor**. They create a distraction from the main party games and the magic show, and I've seen far too many trips and falls! Children do like balloons, so why not ask us to provide a balloon model for each child to take home?
6. Have individually wrapped food items so that you can take them home. Avoid messy food or things that can be spilled easily. Also, **keep the food during the food time**. Children find it hard to clap and wiggle their fingers while holding

popcorn, ice cream, lollies and cake.

7. Likewise, please don't distribute rattles, squeakers or noise makers during the show – I am confident the children can make more than enough noise without them!
8. The Ready Steady Magic show is a family experience. It is designed to make children giggle, gasp and smile, and with magic that is equally impressive for grown ups, I'm confident you'll love it too! But don't worry! I will never embarrass an adult or ask them to stand at the front.
9. There's no limit to the number of still photos you can take. If you ask me on the day I'll pinpoint the best angles and the moments when you should be on high alert to capture the best pictures. If you wish to take videos, please check first as there are a few restrictions.
10. Finally, get to know me in advance by watching some videos of my magic on <https://youtube.com/readysteadymagic> This not only gives you a sneak peek of the magic, but also helps quieter children to familiarise themselves with Ready Steady Magic. Watch together and don't forget to let me know what you think in the YouTube comments.

## Chapter 8

### Why Ready Steady Magic

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#### Why a choose a birthday party magician?

Children love magic shows. They always have, and as long as live entertainment is popular, they always will. It's interactive entertainment that keeps children engaged, and it's a whole lot of fun too. Not only that, but great magicians aim to entertain everyone at the party, children, adults, maybe even the family pets! There's no limit to where the fun suddenly runs out.

#### So why choose Ready Steady Magic?

Anyone can advertise themselves as a children's entertainer, but most children's entertainers are part time, perform a handful of shows a year and have nothing that could even remotely be construed as training.

I am a professional magician with a background in professional performing arts and many years of experience of running parties just like yours. I've also been fortunate to provide my magic on my own TV series on MADE IN BIRMINGHAM, but if you're still not sure the best way to find out about our magic is to take a look at some the pictures and videos on my website. I believe they speak for themselves.

Not only that, but I know you want an easy life (who doesn't?) which is why I pride myself on providing a professional, efficient and friendly service throughout the booking process. At no point should you be concerned about what will happen on the day, or worried that I'm not turning up. Clarity is key, when you choose to work with me.

## What about family events?

If your event is a little different, perhaps a Christening, naming ceremony, a school fayre, or family fun day then the information in this guide could still be useful to you. If you have other questions, I am happy to provide more specific details on how entertainment would work at your event. All you have to do is ask.

## Anything else?

A Ready Steady Magic show is a wonderful thing but I've got some extra icing on the birthday cake for you. You see, a good performer works hard to ease the burden of keeping the children and adults engaged, interested, happy and relaxed.

That's why we'll take charge of the main chunks of the party and support you during the other bits. In fact with my top package, full event hosting, all you'll have to do is greet people, serve the food and wave goodbye.

If you choose to book my Ready Steady Magic show, you can be sure of hiring a professional who knows how they can make your event easier for you and more fun for everyone.

## Great! I'm interested, what do I do next?

Well thank you for your kind words! Dates do get booked up, especially for weekends, so if you haven't already sent in an enquiry then the best thing to do is to get in touch with me (Ed) by:

calling 07792 129 828

emailing [ed@readysteadymagic.co.uk](mailto:ed@readysteadymagic.co.uk)

or visiting [www.readysteadymagic.co.uk](http://www.readysteadymagic.co.uk)

*i look forward to hearing from you*

# THE SUPER STAR BIRTHDAY PARTY

A guide for all those looking to plan  
the **best birthday party ever!**

free

Inside you'll learn:

- How to pick the best time for your party
- How to find a great venue in your area
- What entertainment works best and why
- What to do on the day to have the most fun

and much more!



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