

## How to...



## ...learn stand-up comedy

### Dive in

**1** You do not necessarily have to do a comedy course to try stand-up comedy. Do watch professional stand-up comics, check out local new act nights and just be willing to have a go (and be patient – it can take months to get a spot at popular nights). Have fun embracing the challenge of being ‘you’ on stage, but, to give yourself the best chance of success, make sure that you create an actual stand-up comedy set to work with. Stand-up material involves jokes (with proper punchlines) and as such is very different from the type of funny monologue or sketch material that you might perform at an acting showcase

**2** Find the correct course If you decide to take a comedy course, do your research to find one that has a solid, well-established reputation and a continuous track record of helping professional stand-up comedians get started. There are a lot of people running comedy courses who, in spite of what they say in their promotional information, have no more qualifications to run a comedy course than you do. A comedy course affiliated with a bigger professional comedy club or organisation can be a better bet. Ask around for recommendations. Most people actively involved in comedy know which courses are the best and won’t be shy about sharing their opinions.

**3** **Go beyond a joke**  
The way the material is presented may be different but stand-up comedy basics apply to all areas of comedy. My experience of teaching professional actors has been that by learning how to write jokes and understand the distinct rhythm and the ‘language’ of stand-up comedy in writing and performance, they’ve become much more successful at landing comedy roles.

Jill Edwards has helped launch the careers of many top stand-ups and runs Jill Edwards Comedy Workshops at Komedia Brighton, [jill-edwards.co.uk](http://jill-edwards.co.uk) - She was talking to John Byrne