

Gophers: Rules of Conduct

1. Behaviour Towards Convention Attendees

Be polite. You should be polite to attendees at all times. As a gopher you are representing the committee. You are our eyes and ears, however there is no devolved authority. You will need to contact a committee member if any action is needed.

Be helpful. When you are on duty be prepared for attendees coming up to you and asking questions. It is worth making sure you keep a copy of the timetable and map on you so that you can help direct attendees as needed.

Make the convention fun for everyone. Should an attendee be causing a problem then you should politely request that they stop, providing that it is safe to do so. If they stop then make a (mental) note of their badge name and let Ops know of the incident. Should they not stop then find a committee member (or come to Ops) and we will handle the situation.

Use your judgement. Attendees being loud and having fun is different from one screaming abuse at another. Being loud and performing cartwheels outside causes less problems than inside. One would just require politely asking them to keep it down, the other requires intervention and reporting to Ops. Remember everyone is here to enjoy themselves. We are not a totalitarian state, and as long as people are enjoying themselves, not affecting or upsetting others and are not putting anyone, including themselves, at risk then they should be left alone.

Venue employees. Always be polite to them. If they are not being polite do not confront them, take their name if possible and inform Ops.

2. Gopher Duties

Be there. The most important rule is to turn up for any duty signed up for. If you cannot for any reason then it is vital you let Ops know as soon as possible, so another gopher can be assigned.

Arrive early. The gopher you relieving may have to go on duty somewhere else. If you are late this can have a knock on effect through several events.

Ask what needs to be done. For any specific duty there will be a person (normally a committee member) who is running the event. They should be the first point of contact for anything relating to that event.

Check in with Ops. If you have spare time, check in with Ops to see if gophers are required for any duties. You can also go to the gopher area, where we can find you if needed.

3. Health and Safety

Moving things. Gopher duties can involve lifting and shifting so remember to think before lifting anything heavy or awkward. Remember to ask for assistance and use trolleys whenever possible. If you have not undergone any formal lifting training with your employer, then please ask for help from someone who has.

Help others. With other duties you might have specific training that could assist others. Please offer that assistance.

Report potential dangers. It is essential that if you spot something that is unsafe that you let the individual know immediately.

If in doubt, ask. Do not be scared to question if something seems odd or dangerous to you. People will be under pressure over the weekend and mistakes can be made by anyone.

In case of emergency. If a person has a medical emergency, such as a fit, call Ops or contact venue staff if there (a bartender for example). The venue has its own emergency medical staff. Do NOT interfere unless it is immediately necessary for the persons safety or you have appropriate training. You may accidentally cause severe trauma. The venue also has it's own security staff in case of physical altercations. Do NOT leap in yourself unless absolutely necessary to protect someone else. Again, call Ops who will be able to contact them, or a venue employee if they are there and inform Ops as soon as practicable. In case of fire, ring the nearest fire alarm, help evacuate the attendees and inform Ops after you and the attendees are safe.

4. Gopher Support

If in doubt, ask. For any specific duty there will be someone (normally a committee member) who is running the event. They should be the first point of contact for anything relating to that event. For more general questions and support there are the Ops team, staff and committee. The Ops team are here to assist you in all cases. One of us should always be available in Ops. Ops will have a mobile phone. The telephone numbers will be available from Ops at the weekend.

5. Gopher Rewards

As a thank you to gophers we will have an area in Ops with seating and snacks. It will be kept supplied with some snacks and soft drinks.

On Sunday evening there is a gopher party where food is provided. If you are interested in this please make every effort to attend at that time. The details (time and location) of the gopher party will be available in Ops on Sunday.

6. Legalities

We are still in England and need to obey the law. This means that touching someone without consent can be construed as assault. This is especially true if someone needs to be escorted from the premises. Leave it to trained security staff. Shouting at people can be threatening behaviour. People have different levels of tolerance for certain things, and telling blue/racist jokes might be funny to some, or harassment to others. To summarise be aware of and considerate to other people. There is no legal protection offered by virtue of being a private convention.