

Line Control Tips

We've all experienced it at busy events...the rush of procrastinating kids wanting to get painted as we are packing up our kit to get to our next gig. What do you do when you are nearing the end of your time and are forced to cut off the line?

No face painter likes turning away kids unpainted. Sadly, it is often unavoidable. Here are a few tips from myself and from other professionals who have shared their tips online to help with cutting off the lines and appeasing unpainted children:

Manage clients' expectations.

If the client is expecting hundreds of kids and they are only willing to hire me for an hour or two, I make it clear that not all children will be painted, resulting in some unhappy guests. As long as they are okay with it and expect it, in the end it is their choice.

Limit 1 per Child. No matter how small the gig, I always start with a "one painting per child" rule and make sure everyone is painted before offering up seconds. After that, any un-painted kids who show up are allowed to go ahead of all the painted kids.

Enlist the Last in Line. Have the last child in line wear a sash, a sandwich board, or hold a sign notifying the kids that they are the last one to be painted for the day.

Use Tokens. Hand out stickers, tickets, or poker chips to the kids to be painted that must be redeemed. You can do this at the start of a party when you know how many you're able to paint that day, or towards the end when you can estimate how many more you have time for. Make sure you collect them as you paint. A rubber stamp on the hand works too!

Try a Sign-Up Sheet. Try a sign-up sheet system where the kids can sign up for a 10-15 minute time slot, go enjoy the event, and then come back to get painted. Only offer as many slots as you know you can paint during your shift.

Assign Helpers. Appoint an adult to stand at the end of the line towards the end of your gig to inform kids for you. Often times you can snag a volunteer at large events to do this for you, or hire a line manager to help.

Use clear signage. I'll put a sign right in the middle of my design board that says "open until 9:00." I also have a "sorry, we're closed" sign on the back of my board, which I flip over at the end of the gig.

Be polite. I know, this can sometimes be incredibly hard when you have an irate parent. A simple "I'm sorry, I wish I could but I need to get to my next event" seems to work most of the time for me.

Consolation Prize. Some painters like to hand out stickers or temporary tattoos as a nice gesture to the last few kids who were not able to get painted.



"End of the Line Sash" made with red felt and fabric paints! A fabulous idea I got from someone on the "New Face Painters Help Group" on Facebook!

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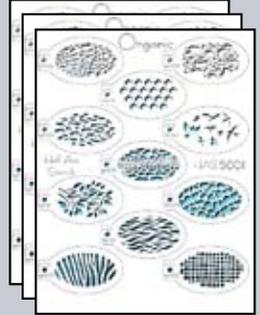


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