

Effective Advocacy for Animals in Circuses

Thank you for taking the initiative to speak up for animals in circuses! This short guide offers some helpful tips on the best ways to distribute your leaflets and will help ensure that your efforts have the greatest impact for the animals. Whichever strategy you choose, please make sure always to be polite and respectful whilst campaigning for the animals.

Printing Your Leaflets

The last two pages of this document can be printed back to back to create your leaflets. The leaflets are A5 in size, so if printing on A4, this will give you 2 leaflets per page. Print out the leaflets, read the tips below and you're ready to go!

Note: This instruction page is only intended as a guide for you. It is not for public distribution.



Letterbox Drops

Most circuses rely on families in the local neighbourhood for business. Letterbox drops in the area surrounding the circus are an easy, non-confrontational way to inform these families and get fit (and walk the dog) at the same time ;)

Please make sure not to put a leaflet in letterboxes with a 'No Junk Mail' or similar sticker.

Leafletting on the Streets

Handing out leaflets directly outside the circus can often elicit unhelpful antagonism from the circus operators. However, often circuses will set up near shopping centres, or other public locations. Distributing leaflets in spots with high foot traffic near the circus can be an excellent way to raise local awareness about why not to support the visiting animal circus.

Leaflets at Schools

If you're a student, or have children at school, you might like to take leaflets to school to share with classmates. If you can educate children about why exotic animal circuses are cruel, then you've done your job well!

Community Notice Boards

Keep an eye out for community notice boards close to the circus. This is the perfect spot to pop up a leaflet or two for people to read.

Local Businesses

Often circuses will ask local businesses to put up a poster promoting the circus. Usually these local businesses simply don't know about the miserable lives that exotic animals have in circuses. If you offer them a leaflet and explain why they may want to take down the circus's poster, you might find they are very receptive to your message.

Better yet, see if you can find some local businesses who will stock these leaflets on their counter. If you can get in early, before the circus has put up their posters, then you might even convince some businesses to say 'no' when the circus comes asking if they can put up their promotional poster.

Problems With Demonstrations at the Circus

Despite best efforts to be friendly, upbeat and positive, circus demonstrations can often become confrontational. Circus operators can be very passionately opposed to demonstrators, and it's not uncommon for their response to be aggressive, antagonistic and occasionally include threats of violence.

Irrespective of who is being aggressive, an antagonistic environment can paint the whole action in a negative light. Even with demonstrators putting on a friendly face, the negative atmosphere created by aggressive circus owners can leave circus-goers feeling uncomfortable and less receptive to our important message. There would be nothing worse than for circus-goers to be left with the misguided impression that demonstrators are trying to ruin a fun family day out.

Media stories also often put a negative spin on demonstrators, siding with the circus. On the other hand, writing a letter to your local paper gives you the opportunity to put your concerns forward, without any distractions from your message.

We want to reach people and make them aware of circus cruelty before they choose to attend. Those arriving at the circus have already decided to attend the show and are unlikely to change their minds. With this leaflet and the strategies above you are equipped with all you need to reach would-be-circus-goers and win their support before they've even decided to attend.



ANIMAL
SUFFERING
IS NO JOKE

**Animals
Australia**
the voice for animals



Exotic Animal Circuses

where entertainment stops and animal suffering begins



"The whole idea that we should enjoy the humiliating spectacle of an elephant or lion made to perform circus tricks shows a lack of respect for the animals as individuals." -

Professor Peter Singer, Australian Philosopher

The first ever scientific review on the welfare of exotic animals in circuses confirms that *"the species of non-domesticated animals commonly kept in circuses appear the least suited to a circus life."*

(G Iossa, CD Soulsbury and S Harris, Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?, University of Bristol, UK, 2009)



A Circus can be on the road for 11 months of the year, with animals repeatedly travelling in small barren cages under extreme weather conditions.

Animals in circuses are denied the ability to express strongly motivated natural behaviours. This often leads to stereotypic behaviour such as pacing or swaying – an indication of frustration and boredom.

Keeping animals in circuses serves no educational or conservational purpose. The lifelong suffering therefore continues only for the sake of a few minutes of human entertainment.

Governments in over 30 countries have already banned the use of exotic or all animals in circuses based on evidence of animal suffering.

**Be a friend to animals – don't support exotic animal circuses!
Discover the many animal-free circuses instead.**

Please visit **AnimalsAustralia.org** to find out more.

Front image courtesy of www.lpda.pt