

Steps for the International Blues Challenge

1 — Register for the Quebec to Memphis Contest on the Montreal Blues Society website:

<https://www.bluesmontreal.com/> (Usually announced around August.)

- Check that your passport is valid.
Important: Your passport must remain valid for **at least six months after your trip**. If it expires sooner, you may be denied entry at customs.
- Review the rules: [Rules for IBC Challengers](#)

2 — Once you win the local contest — Congratulations! You're going to Memphis!!!

Artists must register themselves on the Blues Foundation website: <https://blues.org/international-blues-challenge/> following the instructions provided in the email from the IBC organizer.

There is a registration deadline! (Usually in November.)

3 — Book your hotel in Memphis

(The one recommended on the Blues Foundation website is the best for networking — all artists, musicians, festival bookers, and record label reps stay there. Lots of opportunities to meet people.) Always have business cards with you!

4 — Book your flights and/or reserve a car if needed

(Excellent service from [Enterprise](#)) Also check your travel insurance.

5 — If you have companions (other than musicians):

Order passes, about **\$125 USD each**. They give access to all bars during the entire IBC to see all competitions. [International Blues Challenge](#)

6 — In collaboration with the Montreal Blues Society:

- Contact **David McCabe** to organize a fundraiser (GoFundMe).
- And a fundraising show — contact **Irene Ippersiel** or **Brian Slack**.

Idea: you can sell special Memphis-themed merchandise, offer private shows...

7 — Write a letter stating that you won the Quebec to Memphis contest

Include a summary of upcoming expenses for Memphis and reach out to your contacts — businesses you know — to request grants or sponsorships.

Also ask your city or regional county (MRC); they may have cultural programs and available funds.

8 — For customs, fill out form CBP6059B:

<https://www.cbp.gov/travel/clearing-cbp/traveler-entry-form>

(This is used to declare your instruments to certify you had them before leaving Canada, so you don't pay customs fees or taxes on return.)

You can also take photos of your instruments before leaving — it's additional proof.

If you bring CDs — if asked — declare to customs that they are promotional and not for sale.

Have the email from the Blues Foundation stating that you are going for a non-paid competition ready to show customs if needed.

9 — If possible, share updates about your journey on your social media.

10 — During your performances in Memphis:

Don't forget to mention that you represent the Montreal Blues Society and Quebec, and thank the Blues Foundation.

11 — Don't forget to thank everyone who helped and supported you during this wonderful experience.

12 — Keep all your receipts for taxes.

Have a great stay in Memphis!!! Enjoy that great experience!