NEWS LESSON

Why Are Concert Tickets So Expensive?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What makes a concert worth saving up for?
2. Would you rather sit close once or go to several cheaper gigs?
3. Can watching a live performance on a screen still feel special?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**familiar**	☐	A	a strong feeling that you must do something
2	**technicians**	☐	B	an official group that makes sure rules are followed
3	**resale**	☐	C	to hurt or make something worse
4	**reunion**	☐	D	a very big place where many people watch sport or music
5	**stadium**	☐	E	selling something that you bought before
6	**pressure**	☐	F	people who work with the machines and lights at a show
7	**authority**	☐	G	when a band comes back together after a long time
8	**damage**	☐	H	something you know well because you have seen it many times

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

Concert tickets cost much more than they used to. Why are prices so high, and who can afford to go?

1 Imagine waiting online for hours to buy tickets for your favourite singer. When you finally reach the front of the queue, the cheapest tickets are gone. The ones left cost much more than you expected. This experience has become familiar to many music fans, especially young people who do not have a lot of money to spend.

2 Big concerts are expensive to organise. Artists need to pay musicians, technicians, security staff and many other workers. There is equipment to move between cities and large venues to prepare. Moving the team and its equipment between cities costs money, and so do hotels. Musicians earn money from streaming, but some depend heavily on concerts and tours for their income.

3 The way tickets are sold can make the problem worse. Some concerts have several price levels. When cheaper tickets sell out, only more expensive ones remain. This caused anger during the sale for Oasis's reunion concerts. Fans waited in long online queues without realising that standing tickets were being sold at different fixed prices. The UK's competition authority later made Ticketmaster agree to explain prices more clearly.

4 There are other problems for fans. Resale websites sometimes show tickets at much higher prices than the original cost. Extra fees can also increase the total, so fans often pay much more than the price they first saw. Travel, food and a place to stay can add even more, separate from the ticket itself. People feel pressure to pay because their favourite artist may not come back for years. Social media adds to the feeling that everyone else is going to the event. Missing out can be difficult, even when paying would damage someone's budget.

5 Some people argue that artists should charge whatever fans are willing to pay. Others believe that live music should not become a luxury only wealthy people can afford. Smaller local concerts can still offer great experiences and better value for money, but seeing a famous artist in a stadium is different. The question is whether rising prices will change who can take part in those shared moments. Music brings people together, but expensive tickets can keep many fans outside the gates.

Sources: The Arizona State Press and LBC. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Ticketmaster agreed to explain prices more clearly after action by the UK's competition authority. T F NG
2. Resale websites always sell tickets at the original price. T F NG
3. Ticket prices have risen faster in Britain than elsewhere. T F NG
4. Some concerts have several different price levels. T F NG
5. Oasis fans knew before the sale that standing tickets had different prices. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

audience	budget	equipment	fees	income	refund	venue

1. Some artists earn most of their _____ from touring.
2. Extra _____ can make the total price much higher than you first saw.
3. A big band needs a lot of special _____, such as lights and speakers.
4. Fans must plan their _____ carefully, because a ticket, a hotel and travel all cost money.
5. The concert will take place in a large _____ in the city centre.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Imagine _____ online for hours to buy tickets. (WAIT)
2. Artists need _____ musicians, technicians and security staff. (PAY)
3. This _____ anger during the sale for Oasis's reunion concerts. (CAUSE)
4. The UK's competition authority later _____ Ticketmaster agree to explain prices. (MAKE)
5. Concert tickets cost much more than they _____ to. (USE)

7 Language focus: collocations

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some words just go together. We say a long queue and take part, but not a tall queue or join part.

attend	heavy	high	increase	long	spend	take

1. Fans often _____ a lot of money on tickets, travel and hotels.
2. Many fans cannot _____ part in shared moments if prices keep rising.
3. Fans wait in _____ online queues before they can buy a ticket.
4. Concerts by very famous artists often have _____ prices.
5. Extra fees often _____ the total price that fans first saw.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. What would make concert tickets feel fairly priced?
2. Should the best view always go to whoever can pay most?
3. Which part of a concert would you miss most if you stayed home?

9 Role-play: is the ticket worth it?

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the friend who wants to go

Your favourite singer is on tour and tickets are very expensive. You want to buy two. Explain why it matters to you. Ask your friend to come, and answer their worries.

Student B · the friend who is not sure

You like the singer, but the ticket, the travel and a hotel cost a lot. Ask questions about the total price. Suggest another plan, then decide together.

Useful phrases

I'd love to go, but it's a lot of money.
It's a once in a lifetime chance.
How much would it cost in total?
We could save up for it.
What about a smaller gig instead?
I think it's worth it, don't you?

Afterwards, tell the class: did you buy the tickets, and was it a fair decision?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 H · 2 F · 3 E · 4 G · 5 D · 6 A · 7 B · 8 C

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 income · 2 fees · 3 equipment · 4 budget · 5 venue

6 Verb forms

1 waiting · 2 to pay · 3 caused · 4 made · 5 used

7 Language focus

1 spend · 2 take · 3 long · 4 high · 5 increase

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