

# Now you can TAKE PART IN TASKMASTER

The TV show has been turned into an immersive experience – and we got the VIP grand tour from Alex Horne himself

**W**e are standing in front of the *Taskmaster* house – except it's not the real *Taskmaster* house. Sure, the life-size model cow (the actual one from the show) is here, but this is a warehouse in south east London, not the English countryside.

It's a sunny September afternoon, and *heat* is at Dock X in Canada Water to visit the set of *Taskmaster: The Live Experience*, a brand-new

interactive adventure that's part escape room, part immersive theatre show. It's based on the hit comedy challenge show, which has gained a cult following ever since it first aired in 2015, putting a rolling cast of comedians through the ringer in the funniest ways possible.

Each series, five stars – comics on the regular series, celebrities on the seasonal specials – take part in a series of wacky, trivial challenges. Across 18 seasons, the challenges

have ranged from painting a picture of a horse while riding a horse, to moving a boulder as far as possible in an hour, but all have been united in their silliness.

## TASKMASTER-MIND

Over in Canada Water, the show's team are aiming to recreate the magic we see on television for a live audience. Greg Davies might be the TV series' titular taskmaster, but his on-screen lackey and show

creator Alex Horne is the mastermind behind the whole thing.

Taking *heat* on a tour of the set, he explains that a live experience was on his mind years before the show even made the move from Dave to Channel 4 in 2019. Alex had seen how much former contestants like Katherine Ryan, Lee Mack, and Daisy May Cooper enjoyed themselves, and wanted to give viewers a chance to play *Taskmaster*, too.

'I think we got to a point

about a year ago where we just said, "Well, it's now or never," Alex tells us. It's a week before the first previews kick off, and things are very much still in production at the live experience HQ, with sets being constructed, painted, and decorated in meticulous detail wherever you turn.

In groups ranging from five to 14, players will be guided through the house, where everything from the tiles to the angle of the ceiling has been faithfully recreated. Inside, they'll take on a series of brand-new tasks inspired



by the show. So that the live experience doesn't descend into the kind of unscorable chaos that can happen in the studio, these tasks are more objective than many of the

The contestants will be scored along the way, with the five players at the top of the leaderboard going on to a grand final where they'll play for a

bed doing, but we've been sworn to secrecy about what actually goes down in those rooms. What we can say is they're a perfect mix of mental and physical challenges, with the same homemade feel that adds to the show's charm. Alex says they wanted everything to have that same satisfying 'clunk', and it does.

Making sure things stay under wraps has been a high priority for Alex and the team. Players won't be

allowed to take photos and have been asked not to share spoilers online. 'We know what Reddit is like,' Alex says. Along the way, they'll be reminding attendees not to steal from the set too. 'We're trusting that humans are alright,' he says, with a laugh.

*Taskmaster* contestants often praise the TV show for its fun environment, and Alex hopes the live experience will replicate that. He does hope people will get competitive when

they play – although perhaps not as competitive as Josh Widdicombe, who infamously got a tattoo for a challenge in series one.

'We never want the show to reward the best physical specimen or the cleverest person,' Alex says. 'We've tried to make it the opposite... It's not necessarily random, but anyone could win.' ■

*Tickets for Taskmaster: The Live Experience are on sale now at [taskmasterliveexperience.com](https://taskmasterliveexperience.com)*

**'We're trusting that humans are alright'**

on-screen challenges. Don't worry, though – the obligatory shortcuts and tricks are still hidden in each room. 'We're encouraging sneakiness, but not sabotage,' Alex explains.

chance to sit on the *Taskmaster* throne.

#### TOP SECRET

*heat* is given a sneak peek at the tasks the players will