Here's the info packet about my speeches. This information is
essential for planning my visit and speech. Please forward
it to anyone who is interested in organizing a speech for me.

Please discuss with me what the topic of this speech should be.
We need to decide it together.

My talks are not technical. The topics of free software, copyright vs
community, and digital inclusion deal with ethical/political issues
that concern all users of computers. The topics of GPL version 3 and
software patents are mainly of of interest to people that work with
software.

My usual speech about the Free Software Movement and GNU takes a
little over 1.5 hours in English, plus time for questions, photos,
distribution of FSF things, and so on. It is best to allow plenty of
time for questions, because people usually want to ask a lot of
questions. In total, it is best to allow 2.5 hours.
"GNU" is pronounced as one syllable with a hard g,
like "grew" but with n instead of r.
The topics I speak about are
    Free Software and Your Freedom
    (alternate titles:
     The Free Software Movement and the GNU/Linux Operating System,
     Free Software in Ethics and in Practice)
    Copyright vs Community in the Age of Computer Networks
    The Danger of Software Patents
    The GNU General Public License
      What we've changed in version 3, and why
    A Free Digital Society
    (alternate title, What Makes Digital Inclusion Good or Bad?)
These topics take about an hour and a quarter in English,
plus time for questions, photos, signatures, etc. I suggest
allowing at least two hours.
Each topic takes substantially longer in other languages.
I can also possibly speak about some other topic if you suggest one.

Abstract:
For a speech about Free Software, you can use this abstract:
    The Free Software Movement campaigns for computer users' freedom
    to cooperate and control their own computing. The Free Software
    Movement developed the GNU operating system, typically used together
    with the kernel Linux, specifically to make these freedoms possible.
or
    Richard Stallman will speak about the goals and philosophy of the
    Free Software Movement, and the status and history of the GNU
    operating system, which in combination with the kernel Linux is
    now used by tens of millions of users world-wide.
For Copyright vs Community, you can use this abstract:

Copyright developed in the age of the printing press, and was designed to fit with the system of centralized copying imposed by the printing press. But the copyright system does not fit well with computer networks, and only draconian punishments can enforce it. The global corporations that profit from copyright are lobbying for draconian punishments, and to increase their copyright powers, while suppressing public access to technology. But if we seriously hope to serve the only legitimate purpose of copyright--to promote progress, for the benefit of the public--then we must make changes in the other direction.

For The Danger of Software Patents, you can use this abstract:

Richard Stallman will explain how software patents obstruct software development. Software patents are patents that cover software ideas. They restrict the development of software, so that every design decision brings a risk of getting sued. Patents in other fields restrict factories, but software patents restrict every computer user. Economic research shows that they even retard progress.

For The GNU General Public License

Richard Stallman wrote the first GNU General Public License in 1989, and version 3 which was completed in 2007. He will discuss the philosophy of the GNU GPL, the changes made in version 3, and the reasons for those changes.

For A Free Digital Society

Activities directed at ``including'' more people in the use of digital technology are predicated on the assumption that such inclusion is invariably a good thing. It appears so, when judged solely by immediate practical convenience. However, if we also judge in terms of human rights, whether digital inclusion is good or bad depends on what kind of digital world we are to be included in. If we wish to work towards digital inclusion as a goal, it behooves us to make sure it is the good kind.

Brief bio:
Richard Stallman launched the free software movement in 1983 and started the development of the GNU operating system (see www.gnu.org) in 1984. GNU is free software: everyone has the freedom to copy it and redistribute it, with or without changes. The GNU/Linux system, basically the GNU operating system with Linux added, is used on tens of millions of computers today. Stallman has received the ACM Grace Hopper Award, a MacArthur Foundation fellowship, the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award, and the the Takeda Award for Social/Economic Betterment, as well as several honorary doctorates. (A longer version is available if you want it.)

Photo:
There is a black-and-white photograph of me as a
5820K Encapsulated Postscript file (http://www.stallman.org/rms-bw.eps)
3762K JPEG file (http://www.stallman.org/rms-bw.jpeg), and

5815K TIFF file (http://www.stallman.org/rms-bw.tiff).
Other photos can be found on stallman.org.

Asking for the text:
I don't write my speeches in advance--that would take too much time.
However, transcripts of my past speeches are available. If you can
make a transcript of my speech after I give it, that would be quite
useful.

Breaks:
I absolutely refuse to have a break in the middle of my speech.
Once I start, I will go straight through.

Participation in a larger event:
I am selective about the events I participate in. If you are inviting
me to speak at a larger event, please inform me now of the overall
nature of the event, so I can make an informed decision about whether
to participate.
I usually decline to participate in "open source" or "Linux" events.
See http://www.gnu.org/gnu/gnu-linux-faq.html for why it is incorrect
to refer to the operating system as "Linux".
"Open source" is the slogan of a position that was formulated as a
reaction against the free software movement. Those who support its
views have a right to promote them, but I disagree with them and I
want to promote the ideals of free software. See
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-software-for-freedom.html for more
explanation of the difference. However, I will agree to participate
in events labeled "Free Software and Open Source", provided that my
speech is not the principal draw of the event.

Erecting a larger event:
If you are thinking of erecting a larger event around my speech, which
includes inviting other speakers to speak before or after me, please
talk with me about the plans for that larger event _before_ inviting
other speakers. I want to make sure the event entirely supports the
goals and principles I work for, and I want to review the publicity
plans for the event.

Multiple events:
If you would like me to give speeches in other cities, other
institutions, or other events which you are not organizing directly,
please put rms-a...@gnu.org in touch directly with their organizers.
We need to show them this info packet, and we need to discuss various
issues with them just as we discuss the issues of your event with you.
Communication through a middleman is asking for confusion, so please
don't ask us to do that.

Venues and planning:
All my talks are aimed at the general computer-using public. They are

not technical. With good, broad publicity, many people will come --
usually hundreds.
So don't aim small. Please plan each speech in a large room, then
plan the publicity to bring people in to fill it. Please do not
suggest scheduling a "small speech", because that makes no sense as a
goal. I would always rather reach as many people as I feasibly can.
If the speech is at a university, please do the publicity all around
the university. Don't limit it to your department! We also want
people from off-campus to come, so please inform local IT businesses,
user groups, and other relevant organizations.
We will also want to inform the region's daily newspapers so they can
put the speech in their calendar sections, and anything else we can
think of. Each additional interested person who comes means an increase
in the results achieved by the speech.
Make sure you inform the public that my talk is not technical, so
anyone interested in ethics and use of computers might wish to come.

Facilities:
A microphone is desirable if the room is large. No other facilities
are needed. I do not have slides or any sort of presentation
materials.
A supply of tea with milk and sugar would be nice. If it is tea I
really like, I like it without milk and sugar. With milk and sugar,
any kind of tea is fine. I always bring tea bags with me, so if we
use my tea bags, I will certainly like that tea without milk or sugar.
If I am quite sleepy, I would like two cans or small bottles of
non-diet Pepsi. (I dislike the taste of coke, and of all diet soda;
also, there is an international boycott of the Coca Cola company for
killing union organizers in Colombia and Guatemala; see
killercoke.org.) However, if I am not very sleepy, I won't want
Pepsi, because it is better if I don't drink so much sugar.

Languages:
I can speak in English, French, and Spanish.
If the audience won't be comfortable with a language I can speak, it
is important to have translation. However, consecutive translation
is not feasible, because it would more than double the length of the
speech. Please do not ask me to do that--I will refuse.
I have found it works to do simultaneous translation without special
systems: I speak into the ear of the interpreter, and the interpreter
speaks to the microphone. This avoids the need for special
transmitters and headsets. However, it does require an interpreter
capable of doing simultaneous translation for more than an hour.
Do not propose doing this with a person whose translation skills
are not adequate for this.
Another method is to set up a microphone and speaker system for the
interpreter in a far corner of the room, or a balcony. If the
speakers are set up suitably, people there can hear the interpreter
well, while people in the front of the room can hear me well.

I can try to give a shortened free software speech (about 30 minutes
of material). With consecutive translation it will take an hour or
more. I will be forced to omit many important points in the usual
speech. I do not like to omit so much.
If we have simultaneous translation, please make a recording
of the translation. It will be very useful, and it is easy to do.
Any sound recorder, next to the interpreter, will do it.

Restricting admission:
If you plan to restrict admission to my speech, or charge a fee for
admission, please discuss this with me *personally in advance* to get
my approval for the plan. If you have imposed charges without my
direct personal approval, I may refuse to do the speech.
I'm not categorically against limiting admission or fees, but
excluding people means the speech does less good, so I want to make
sure that the limitations are as small as necessary. For instance,
you can allow students and low-paid people and political activists to
get in free, even if professionals have to pay. We will discuss what
to do.
Another method, which works very well in some places, is to allow
people to attend gratis but charge for a certificate of attendance.
If the certificate is given by an educational institution, many will
find it useful for career advancement, while the others could enter
gratis. Whether this would be effective in your country is something
you would need to judge.

Sponsors:
If corporations sponsor my talk, I am willing to include a small
tasteful note of thanks in announcements and brochures, but no more
than that. There should be no descriptions of their products or
services, and no banners with their names. If a would-be sponsor
insists on more than that, we have to do without that sponsor.
If my speech is part of a pre-existing larger event that I have agreed
to participate in, I can't impose such conditions for the whole event.
However, if banners will be on display next to me while I am speaking,
that is rather obnoxious; if they advertise organizations that I
disapprove of on ethical grounds (which is not unlikely) I would want
to take them down, cover them up, or turn them off during my speech.

Directing publicity:
My main speech topics are not technical. They are about political
issues regarding the use of software, and anyone concerned about
ethical issues with effects on our daily lives should be concerned
about them. Thus, when planning to publicize my talk, don't direct
the publicity primarily at computing organizations and computer
science departments. That would only reach a fraction of the people
who might be interested. Please also contact political science
departments, economics departments, philosophy departments, music
departments, and student groups interested in freedom and human rights

issues. Let's aim to make the speech reach as many interested people
as possible.

The speech topics of software patents and GPLv3 are of interest
specifically to the IT field, so those you can publicize among IT
contacts.

Avoiding errors in publicity:
The GNU Project constantly struggles against two widespread mistakes
that undermine the effectiveness of our work: calling our work "open
source", and calling the GNU operating system "Linux". Another very
bad mistake is using the term "intellectual property".
The Free Software Movement and the Open Source Movement are like two
political parties in our community. I founded the Free Software
Movement in 1984 along with the GNU Project; we call our work "free
software" because it is software that respects the users freedom. The
Open Source Movement was founded, in 1998, specifically to reject our
idealistic philosophy--they studiously avoid talking about freedom.
See http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-software-for-freedom.html for
more explanation of the difference between the two movements.
So please make sure that all the publicity about the event (web site,
email announcements, conference programs, direct mail, signs, etc),
uses the term "free software", not "open source", when you refer to
work that includes mine. This includes to the title and descriptions
of my speech, of the session it is in, of the track it is part of, and
of the event itself.
Of course, some of these names and descriptions may not refer to this
work at all; for example, if a track or the whole event covers a much
broader topic in which free software is just a small part, its name
may not refer to free software. That is normal and appropriate. The
point is not to ask you to refer to this work more often than you
normally would, but that you should describe it accurately whenever
you do refer to it.
If other speakers in the same session, track, or event want their work
to be categorized as "open source", that is a legitimate request for
them to make. In that case, please give "free software" equal mention
with "open source".
If you think it is useful to tell people how free software relates to
open source, you can say that "since 1998, another group has used the
term `open source' to describe a related activity." That will tell
people that my work has a relationship with "open source", which they
may have heard of, without implying it is right to describe my work as
"open source."
The other widespread confusion is the idea of a "Linux operating
system". The system in question, the system that Debian and Red Hat
distribute, the system that tens of millions of people use, is
basically the GNU operating system, with Linux added as the kernel.
When people call the whole system "Linux", they deny us the credit for
our work, and this is not right. (See
http://www.gnu.org/gnu/linux-and-gnu.html for more explanation.)

So please call this combined operating system "GNU/Linux" in all
the publicity, in the titles and description of the session, track,
event, etc., if and when you have reason to refer to it.
For similar reasons, please don't use a penguin as a symbol for my
work, or on the posters or notices for my speech. The penguin stands
for "Linux"; the symbol of GNU is a gnu. So if you want to use a
graphical image to symbolize GNU or my work, please use a gnu.
If you have handled these issues well, nobody who looks at your
material will get the impression that I work on "open source", or that
I support "open source", or that my work is "part of Linux", or that I
participated in the "development of Linux", or that GNU is the name of
"a collection of tools".
As for the term "intellectual property", that spreads confusion and
hostile bias. See http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/words-to-avoid.html
for explanation. I hope you will decide to reject that expression, as
I do; but in any case, don't use it in connection with my speech.
Please do not mention non-free GNU/Linux distros (for instance,
Ubuntu) in the publicity for the event.
If you have doubts about a poster or announcement, please ask my
assistant to check it for you, not me. Send it to rms-a...@gnu.org.

Selling Free Software, Free Society:
Please sell copies of my book of essays, Free Software, Free Society,
if you can. In the US, Canada, Spain, Italy and Japan, you can obtain
published copies of this book in English, Spanish, Italian, and
Japanese. You don't need to put up any money to do this. Please talk
with rms-a...@gnu.org about how to do it. In the US and Canada, the
FSF will ship you these books.
Outside those four countries, please print copies of the book to sell
at the event, if you can. The English version is available in
http://shop.fsf.org/product/free-software-free-society-2/ (278 pages).
There is also my semiautobiography, Free As In Freedom, in
http://shop.fsf.org/product/free-as-in-freedom-2/ (245 pages).
He Spanish version of Free Software, Free Society (318 pages) is in
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/fsfs/free_software.es.pdf.
If you use ordinary copying, and avoid fancy covers and bindings, we
can sell them for two or three times the cost of copying, and they
will still be cheap enough that many people will buy them. From the
proceeds you will first retain the cost of printing; we can divide the
gains between your organization and the FSF.
If you see any obstacle, whatever it is, don't just give up. Talk
with rms-a...@gnu.org about it! Most of the problems that might
seem difficult to you, we are already accustomed to solving. Give us
a chance to overcome the obstacle!

At the speech:
Please put out a pad of paper for people to write down their names and
email addresses if they want to be on the FSF's mailing list.

Changes of plans:
Don't assume that I can still come if you change the date, or even the hour. My schedule is tight, and any change may make the plan impossible. Please consult with me before making any change, and I will see what I can do.
My assistant cannot approve such changes; you must ask me directly, and get approval from me directly. I will certainly be flexible if there is no obstacle.

Scheduling other meetings:
I have agreed to give a speech for you, and if the press wants to talk with me, I will do that for the sake of the cause. However, if you would like me to give additional speeches or go to additional meetings, please ask me first. Please ask me about *each* activity you would like me to perform.
Many people assume that because I am traveling, I am having a vacation--that I have no other work to do, so I can spend the whole day speaking or meeting with people. Some hosts even feel that they ought to try to fill up my time as a matter of good hospitality.
Alas, it's not that way for me.
The fact is, I have no vacations. (Don't feel sorry for me; idleness is not something I wish for.) I have to spend 6 to 8 hours *every day* doing my usual work, which is responding to email about the GNU Project and the Free Software Movement. Work comes in every day for me, and if I skip it one day, I have to catch up another day. During the week I usually fall behind; on weekends I try to catch up.
Traveling takes up time, so I will be extra busy during my visit. And it might be nice if I could do at least an hour or two of sightseeing during the visit. So please ask me *in advance* about *each* additional speech, meeting, or other activity that would take time. I don't mind being asked, and I may say yes, but I also may say no.
Remember that an additional speech, even if it is just a one-hour speech, probably takes up two hours counting questions, autographs, etc. And then there is the travel time.

Interviews:
I am glad to give interviews to the press about the GNU system, but before I do, I want to be sure they will not repeat the two common mistakes (calling the whole system "Linux" and associating GNU or me with "open source"). Please explain this, and ask the journalist if he will agree to call the system "GNU/Linux" in the article, and to make it clear that our work is "free software" not "open source".
Recommend reading http://www.gnu.org/gnu/linux-and-gnu.html and http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-software-for-freedom.html for explanations of these issues. If the journalist agrees, then I agree to an interview. Please have this discussion by email, and save the messages in both directions.
Sometimes a journalist gives a response which sounds vaguely affirmative or sympathetic but its words do not really say "yes".

Examples are "I will do this as much as I can" and "I understand the distinction." Such an answer is actually just "maybe", so when you receive one, please ask for clarification. If he says that the editor has the final decision, please respond with "Would you please consult the editor now, and tell us a firm decision?"

Recorded interviews for broadcast:
It is ok to do these either before or after my speech, and they usually need to be done one at a time, so I am willing to do them that way.

Interviews not for broadcast:
Please do not propose to hold these interviews before the conference. That order wastes my time. So please propose to hold them AFTER the conference.
Also please ask journalists to *see my speech* before the interview. My speeches are not technical; they focus on precisely the sort of philosophical questions that a journalist would probably want to cover. If the journalist has not attended my speech, he will probably start by asking me to answer the same questions that I answer in the speech. That is a waste of time for me.
If you schedule a press conference or group interview, please *plan the time of my speech to allow the interview after it*. It may be a good idea to find out from journalists what times are good for them, then schedule the conference, then schedule the speech before it. This way, they will all be able to get the full picture.
It is also ok to have the interviews the day after the speech. That is another way to have them after the speech rather than before. If the journalists simply cannot do the interview after the speech, then I will do it before the speech if possible. But please insist that they watch or listen to a recording on audio-video.gnu.org of another speech.
It is also a good idea for the journalist to read
http://www.gnu.org/gnu/the-gnu-project.html as well as
http://www.gnu.org/gnu/gnu-linux-faq.html
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/categories.html
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/words-to-avoid.html
http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/compromise.html
http://stallman.org/articles/internet-sharing-license.en.html
http://stallman.org/articles/ebooks.pdf before the interview. Those articles provide important background. This is especially important for anyone who cannot come to my speech first.
Please ask each journalist to agree to make a recording of the interview. Written notes tend to simplify, and often lead to incorrect quotes.
I am willing to meet with any number of journalists, but if there are many, I can't meet all of them individually (it would take too much time). So what I will do is give private interviews to 2 or maybe 3

of them, whichever ones you think are most important, and see the rest
of them as a group (i.e. in a press conference).
You and your associates can judge better than I do which journalists
and which publications I should focus on. So I would like you to
advise me about that. Please try to judge both the importance of the
publication and the merits (intelligence, attention to accuracy,
openness of mind, and absence of bias) of the journalist, if you can.

Recording my speech:
Please do record the speech if you can. We are always looking for
good recordings of my speeches, both audio and video, to put on line.
The GNU Project keeps an on-line audio and video collection of speech
recordings in audio-video.gnu.org. If you are making an audio or
video recording of my speech, please write to audio...@gnu.org in
advance for advice on how to make a recording that is good for further
use, and subsequently to arrange to install your recording on our
site.
When you are making a recording, please *make sure* to tell me when
the tape needs to be changed. I will pause. Please help me help you
make the recording complete.

Recording formats:
Please make sure that your recording is not compressed with a
substantially lossy codec (unless it is an Ogg codec). If we have to
transcode the file, starting from a lower-quality base will reduce the
quality of the result.
It is best to provide audio recordings in the original recorded sample
rate, up to 44100Hz. Monophonic is generally adequate for speech
recordings and saves a lot of space over stereo.
For video recordings, please save the master recording, which will
probably be in miniDV format.
Please don't transcode recordings from one format to another before
sending to us, unless they have such a high bit rate that files are
impractically large. If you do need to encode or transcode, please
convert audio to 64Kbps mono Ogg Vorbis (or you could try Ogg Speex),
and convert video to Matroska VP8 or to Ogg Theora with video quality
set to 5 or more. If you need advice for how to do this, please ask
audio...@gnu.org.

Putting my speech on the net:
If you would like to put my speech on the Internet, or distribute it
in digital form, I insist on using the formats of the free software
community: Ogg Vorbis or Ogg Speex format for audio, and Matroska VP8
(Webm) or Ogg Theora for video. Please do not distribute my speech in
any other format.
Please do not ever broadcast or publish my speeches in formats that
are not good for free software. I will not speak to make a recording
or broadcast that requires non-free software to be heard or viewed.
Don't use RealPlayer format, or Quicktime, or Windows Media Player

format, or a patented format such as MPEG2, MPEG4, or MP3.
This requirement is very important, because if it is not followed,
viewing my speech will require people to do the exact opposite of what
I ask them to do. The medium's message would contradict my message.
Because this is so important, please make sure everyone who might be
involved in broadcasting the event, or who might be directly or
indirectly involved in planning such a broadcast, knows this
requirement in advance of the event.
You can get advice and help in distributing Ogg files from Mallory
Knodel <mal...@mayfirst.org>.

Streaming the speech:
Streaming is a kind of Internet distribution, so everything in the
previous section applies. In particular, you must use only Ogg format
or Matroska VP8 (Webm).
If you want to stream my speech but you have not done streaming in Ogg
or VP8 before, don't leave the matter till the last minute. By then,
it will be too late. Please try a test session two weeks before the
speech. That way, if you encounter any problem, there will be time to
resolve it before the speech.
If you have previously done streaming using some streaming service and
you can't immediately name the format it uses, chances are it is
unacceptable and I won't let you use it for my speech. So please
check, two weeks in advance, what format it uses. If you find it uses
some bad format, you will have time to arrange for ethical streaming.
You can get advice and help in Ogg streaming from Mallory Knodel
<mal...@mayfirst.org>. Please ask two weeks before the event; they
can do it faster faster, but why make their work hectic unnecessarily?
See https://support.mayfirst.org/wiki/live-video-streaming-support for
more info.

Remote speeches by video connection:
I can do a speech remotely through a videoconferencing system. This
can be done by Internet or by ISDN. For good quality by Internet, we
need a maximum of 100msec response time for ping between your site and
where I am, and 100kbytes/sec transfer rate.
Using two or three ISDN lines gives good quality but the calls cost
money. If I am at home, there is a facility I can use at no charge;
you would have to pay for the ISDN calls and for the facilities at
your end. If I am somewhere else (which is true more than half the
time), then we will need to find a videoconferencing facility for me
to use; most likely you will need to pay for that.

Warning about giveways:
You may find companies offering you CD-ROMs, books, fliers or
publicity materials to give away or sell at my speech. Please check
them before you accept them, to make sure that they don't promote the
very thing that we are working to replace.
For instance, the CDs may contain non-free software. Most distros of

GNU/Linux contain or suggest non-free software in addition to the free
software. (And most of them call the system "Linux".) Please check
with me before you allow a CD of GNU/Linux to be distributed at the
event.
Books about use of the GNU/Linux system and about GNU programs are
fine if they themselves are also free. But many of them are non-free
(see http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-doc.html). To see if a book
is free, check the license on the back of the title page. If it uses
the GNU Free Documentation License, or the Open Publication License
version 1 without options A and B, then it is free. If it isn't one
of those, please show me the license and I will tell you if it is a
free license.
If companies send you publicity materials, please check with me before
giving them out at my speech.

Flights:
The FSF does not pay for my travel, and I can't afford to. I will
need you to arrange to cover the cost of my traveling to and from your
city (unless I've told you someone else will do it).
I am traveling most of the time, and most of my trips include several
stops. Chances are your city is neither the first nor the last stop
in the trip. Please don't make assumptions about the itinerary;
instead, please ask me for whatever information you need.
Many organizations ask to buy the tickets and send them to me. I do
not object to that method in principle, but it typically assumes the
trip goes to just one city. That approach is hard to use for a
multi-destination trip, unless you want to pay for the whole trip. So
normally I buy the tickets myself and get reimbursed by the various
places I am visiting. For a multi-destination trip, we will need to
agree on what parts of the travel expenses you should cover.
Some organizations feel that hospitality calls for providing me with a
business class ticket. That is indeed more comfortable, but an
economy class seat is good enough. Meanwhile, speaking is my main
source of income, and the extra price of a business class ticket would
be a lot more useful for me if I can spend it on something else. So
if you were thinking of spending extra for business class, how about
if you pay the extra to me as a speaker's fee instead?
We should plan for me to arrive (at the site itself, not just at the
airport) at least 24 hours before the speech; that way, even if the
flight is cancelled, there is a good chance I can still arrive in time
for the speech by taking the same flight the next day.

Lost tickets:
If you are not paying me a speaking fee, but you are paying for the
airline tickets, I must insist that you cover the costs if I have to
replace a lost ticket, the fee for changing the ticket if I miss a
flight, or any other surprise expenses associated with my travel to
and from your location.
This might seem unfair--if a ticket is lost, it could be my fault.

But my income is not large, and I cannot afford to assume this risk
myself if the event offers me no income. The frustration I feel when
I suffer such a loss is excruciating. It is better for me to decline
to travel to a certain place than to take such a risk.

Bus and train tickets:
If you buy bus or train tickets for me, do not give my name! Big
Brother has no right to know where I travel, or where you travel, or
where anyone travels. If they arbitrarily demand a name, give a name
that does not belong to any person you know of. If they will check my
ID before I board the bus or train, then let's look for another way
for me to travel. (In the US I never use long-distance trains because
of their ID policy.)
Don't give them your name either: please pay for the ticket in cash.

Other expenses:
I expect you to cover expenses such as visa fees, fees for mailing my
passport back and forth, taxis to and from the airport, and so on.

Accommodations:
I am willing to stay in a hotel if there is no other way.
Please book the hotel for me and arrange to pay the hotel directly.
But please DON'T make a hotel reservation until we have fully explored
other options. If there is anyone who wants to offer a spare couch, I
would much rather stay there than in a hotel (provided I have a door I
can close, in order to have some privacy). Staying with someone is
more fun for me than a hotel, and it would also save you money.
My distaste for a hotel is less if it does not know my name, but
staying in a house with people is normally more enjoyable than staying
alone.
Many countries have a law that hotels must report all guests to the
police. In most cases, this orwellian policy applies not only to
foreigners like me, but to citizens as well! The citizens should be
outraged by this, but often they are not.
Please call the hotel and ask whether they will demand to see my
passport, and whether they report all their guests to the police. If
it has this policy, please join me in striking a blow against Big
Brother, by looking for a place I can stay in that doesn't demand to
see my passport, or report my visit to anyone. If the police want
information about free software, they are welcome to come to my
speech.
If you have found a person for me to stay with, please forward this
section and the two following sections to that person.

Temperature:
Above 72 fahrenheit (22 centigrade) I find sleeping quite difficult.
(If the air is dry, I can stand 23 degrees.) A little above that
temperature, a strong electric fan blowing on me enables me to sleep.
More than 3 degrees above that temperature, I need air conditioning to

sleep.

If there is a substantial chance of indoor temperatures too hot for me, please arrange _in advance_ for me to have what I need.

If you are planning for me to stay in a hotel, DO NOT take for granted that the hotel has air conditioning--or that it will be working when I arrive. Some hotels shut off their air conditioning systems for part of the year. They often think it is unnecessary in seasons when the temperature is usually in the mid 20s--and they follow their schedule like stupid robots even if there is a heat wave.

So you must explicitly ask them: "Do you have air conditioning? Will it be functioning for the dates XXX-YYY?"

In some hotels with central air conditioning, it simply does not work very well: it can make a room less hot, but can't make it cool.

Before using a hotel that has central air conditioning, find out what temperature it can actually lower a room to, during the relevant dates.

Or look for a hotel that has a real cooling unit in the room, not a central system. Those tend to work well enough, if they are not broken.

Pets:

I like cats if they are friendly, but they are not good for me; I am somewhat allergic to them. This allergy makes my face itch and my eyes water. So the bed, and the room I will usually be staying in, need to be clean of cat hair. However, it is no problem if there is a cat elsewhere in the house--I might even enjoy it if the cat is friendly.

Dogs that bark angrily and/or jump up on me frighten me, unless they are small and cannot reach much above my knees. But if they only bark or jump when we enter the house, I can cope, as long as you hold the dog away from me at that time. Aside from that issue, I'm ok with dogs.

If you can find a host for me that has a friendly parrot, I will be very very glad. If you can find someone who has a friendly parrot I can visit with, that will be nice too.

DON'T buy a parrot figuring that it will be a fun surprise for me. To acquire a parrot is a major decision: it is likely to outlive you. If you don't know how to treat the parrot, it could be emotionally scarred and spend many decades feeling frightened and unhappy. If you buy a captured wild parrot, you will promote a cruel and devastating practice, and the parrot will be emotionally scarred before you get it. Meeting that sad animal is not an agreeable surprise.

Email:

It is very important for me to be able to transfer email between my laptop and the net, so I can do my ordinary work. While traveling, I often need to do the work and the transfer late at night, or in the morning before a departure. So please set up a way I can connect to the net from the place I am staying.

I do NOT use browsers, I use the SSH protocol. If the network
requires a proxy for SSH, I probably can't use it at all.
If a hotel says "We have internet access for customers", that is so
vague that it cannot be relied on. So please find out exactly what
they have and exactly what it will do. If they have an ethernet, do
they have a firewall? Does it permit SSH connections? What
parameters does the user need to specify in order to talk with it?
Please check those things directly, or ask the people who actually run
the network. If you talk with someone who doesn't understand what
"SSH connection" means, or if he doesn't understand the difference
between "Internet" and "web browsing", that person is not competent to
give reliable information. Don't rely on information from such a
person--talk to someone who knows!
For reasons of principle, I am unwilling to identify myself in order
to connect to the Internet. For instance, if a hotel gives a user
name and password to each room, I won't use that system, since it
would identify me. I would need some other way to connect.
A modem connection is fine if it works, so please verify in advance
that the telephone line you expect me to use has a modular jack and
that it works to call the ISP from that line. Hotels in Europe and
Asia often have peculiar phone systems; the staff may tell you it is
possible to call an ISP from the hotel *but they may be wrong*. For
instance, their phone switchboard may not recognize the tones produced
by modems. The only way to tell for certain is to go to the hotel,
try phoning with a computer from a guest room, and see if it actually
works. Until you have tested it, don't believe it!
My ISP phone numbers are old; I don't know if they will still work.
If you propose I use a modem, please find a number I can call. It is
best if you lend me a permanent account that someone else uses, one
that will continue working afterward, so that I can use it again if I
come back or use it from other places in the region. Hotel phone
rates may be high; I expect you to cover them. However, I normally
connect to the net only for around ten minutes at a time, twice a day,
so the total won't be too big.
If I need to use a dialup connection, please cover the costs of the
telephone calls I will need to transfer my email -- especially in a
hotel. Some hotels charge a lot of money for this.
Wireless modems mostly do not work with my machine, so do not plan on
my using one. I won't refuse to use them if you have an expert who
can make it work, but success is rare. If it involves loading a
nonfree driver, I will refuse.

Paying me a reimbursement or a fee:
Please pay my reimbursement or fee to me personally; do not pay it to
the FSF. The FSF and I have completely separate finances, and the FSF
never pays for my travel. The FSF welcomes donations, but please make
sure that money intended for me is not sent to them, because moving it
afterward would mean accounting headaches as well as extra work.
My assistant is not involved with my finances, so she cannot help you

with that issue. Please send questions about payments to me directly.
If you pay me by check, and you're not in the US, make sure to get a
check that lists a corresponding US bank--otherwise it will cost me a
fee to deposit the check. Please mail the check _in US dollars_ to:
    Richard Stallman
    77 Mass Ave rm 32-381
    Cambridge MA 02139
    Phone number: +1-617-253-8830
Do not mail it to the FSF!
A wire transfer is also a good method of payment. I will send you the
coordinates; ask if you need them. The bank you use will charge a
fee, and my bank charges me $10 for each incoming transfer; please add
those fees to the amount, rather than taking them out of what I
receive.
If you are outside the US, please convert your currency to dollars in
your bank, then use one of the above methods to pay me the dollars.
My bank gives very bad exchange rates; yours is surely better.
Cash is also fine.
If you want an invoice, I will be glad to give you one. Let's work
out what it should say by email before I arrive. Please also check
before the visit whether you need any other forms, such as tax forms.
I would like to be able to take care of any necessary forms while I am
there, rather than wait till afterward.

Hospitality:
Please pass this section to everyone who will be helping me directly
in any fashion during the visit.
It is nice of you to want to be kind to me, but please don't offer
help all the time. In general I am used to managing life on my own;
when I need help, I am not shy about asking. So there is no need to
offer to help me. Moreover, being constantly offered help is actually
quite distracting and tiresome.
So please, unless I am in grave immediate danger, please don't offer
help. The nicest thing you can do is help when I ask, and otherwise
not worry about how I am doing. Meanwhile, you can also ask me for
help when you need it.
One situation where I do not need help, let alone supervision, is in
crossing streets. I grew up in the middle of the world's biggest
city, full of cars, and I have crossed streets without assistance even
in the chaotic traffic of Bangalore and Delhi. Please just leave me
alone when I cross streets.
In some places, my hosts act as if my every wish were their command.
By catering to my every whim, in effect they make me a tyrant over
them, which is not a role I like. I start to worry that I might
subject them to great burdens without even realizing. I start being
afraid to express my appreciation of anything, because they would get
it and give it to me at any cost. If it is night, and the stars are
beautiful, I hesitate to say so, lest my hosts feel obligated to try
to get one for me.

When I'm trying to decide what to do, often I mention things that
MIGHT be nice to do--depending on more details, if it fits the
schedule, if there isn't a better alternative, etc. Some hosts take
such a tentative suggestion as an order, and try moving heaven and
earth to make it happen. This excessive rigidity is not only quite
burdensome for other people, it can even fail in its goal of pleasing
me. If there is a better alternative, I'd rather be flexible and
choose it instead--so please tell me. If my tentative suggestion
imposes a lot of trouble on others, I want to drop it--so please tell
me.

When you need to tell me about a problem in a plan, please do not
start with a long apology. That is unbearably boring, and unnecessary
-- conveying useful information is helpful and good, and why apologize
for that? So please be practical and go straight to the point.

If I am typing on my computer and it is time to do something else,
please tell me. Don't wait for me to "finish working" first, because
you would wait forever. I have to squeeze in answering mail at every
possible opportunity, which includes whenever I have to wait. I wait
by working. If instead of telling me there is no more need for me to
wait, you wait for me to stop waiting for you, we will both wait
forever -- or until I figure out what's happening.

Dinners:

If you are thinking of setting up a lunch or dinner for me with more
than 4 people total, please consider that as a meeting, and discuss it
with me in advance. Such meals draw on my strength, just like
speeches and interviews. They are not relaxation, they are work.

I expect to do work during my visit, but there is a limit on the
amount of work I can handle each day. So please ask me in advance
about any large planned meal, and expect me to say no if I have a lot
of other work already. If we are having a meal that I did not agree
to as a large meal, and other people ask if they can join, please tell
them no. In both cases, please tell them that I need a chance to
relax after the other work I will have done.

Please don't be surprised if I pull out my computer at dinner and
begin handling some of my email. I have difficulty hearing when there
is noise; at dinner, when people are speaking to each other, I usually
cannot hear their words. Rather than feel bored, or impose on
everyone by asking them to speak slowly at me, I do some work.

Please don't try to pressure me to "relax" instead, and fall behind on
my work. Surely you do not really want me to have to work double the
next day to catch up (assuming I even COULD catch up). Please do not
interfere as I do what I need to do.

Food:

I do not eat breakfast. Please do not ask me any questions about
what I will do breakfast. Please just do not bring it up.

I enjoy delicious food, and I like most kinds of cooking if they are
done well (the exception being that I cannot eat anything very spicy).

If I am ordering from the menu in a restaurant which has a variety,
there's no need for you to worry about the question of what I like; I
will take care of it.
But if you want to cook for me, or invite me to a restaurant that
specializes in just one thing, or invite me to dinner with a preset
menu, you need to know what I dislike:
  avocado
  eggplant, usually (there are occasional exceptions)
  hot pepper
  olives
  liver (even in trace quantities)
  stomach and intestine; other organ meats
  cooked tuna
  oysters
  egg yolk, if the taste is noticeable, except when boiled completely hard
  many strong cheeses, especially those with green fungus
  desserts that contain fruit or liqueur flavors
  sour fruits, such as grapefruit and many oranges
  beer
  coffee (though weak coffee flavor can be good in desserts)
  the taste of alcohol (so I don't drink anything stronger than wine)
Don't ever try to decide what food I should eat without asking me.
Never assume that I will surely like a certain dish, merely because
most people do. Instead, ask me in advance!
As long as there are many alternatives to choose from, there will be
no problem.

Wine:
Wine is not very important to me--not like food. I like some wines,
depending on the taste, and dislike others, but I don't remember the
names of wines I have liked, so it is useless to ask me.
Therefore, if you're having dinner with me, please don't ask me what
to do about wine. I can't decide intelligently, and it matters more
to others than to me. Have wine or don't, as you prefer; choose it to
please yourself and the others, not for me.
If you get a bottle of wine, I will taste it, and if I like the taste,
I will drink a little, perhaps a glass.

Restaurants:
So I like to go to restaurants that are good at whatever kind of food
they do. I don't arrive with specific preferences for a kind of food
to eat--rather, I want to have whatever is good there: perhaps the
local traditional cuisine, or the food of an immigrant ethnic group
which is present in large numbers, or something unusual and original.
So please don't ask me "Where do you want to eat?" or "What kind of
restaurant do you want to go to?" I can't make an intelligent
decision without knowing the facts, and unless I am already familiar
with the city we're in, I can only get those facts from you.
The only general thing I can tell you is that what I like or dislike

about a meal is the sensation of eating the food. Other things, such
as the decor of a restaurant, or the view from its windows, are
secondary. Let's choose the restaurant based on its food.
A good approach is to ask around *in advance* among your acquaintances
to find people who like good food and are familiar with the area's
restaurants. They will be able to give good recommendations.

Sightseeing:
If I am visiting an interesting city or region, I will probably want
to do a few hours of sightseeing in between the work. But don't try
to plan sightseeing for me without asking me first--I can only spare a
limited time for it, so I am selective about where to go. Please
don't assume I want to see something just because it is customary to
take visitors there. That place may be of no interest with me.
Instead, please tell me about possible places to visit--then I can say
what I would like.
I enjoy natural beauty such as mountains and rocky coasts, ancient
buildings, impressive and unusual modern buildings, and trains. I
like caves, and if there is a chance to go caving I would enjoy that.
(I am just a novice as a caver.) I often find museums interesting,
but it depends on the subject.
I tend to like music that has a feeling of dance in it, but I
sometimes like other kinds too. However, I usually dislike the
various genres that are popular in the US, such as rock, country, rap,
reggae, techno, and composed American "folk". Please tell me what
unusual music and dance forms are present; I can tell you if I am
interested. If there is a chance to see folk dancing, I would
probably enjoy that.
If there is something else interesting and unique, please tell me
about it. Maybe I will be interested.

More arrangements:
Once we have a precise date for the speech, my assistant will contact
you with questions about the arrangements for the trip. Please
respond as soon as possible with the information she asks for.
Please do not ever mail me a file larger than 100k without asking me
first. I almost certainly do not want to receive it in that form. If
you would like feedback or approval for proposed publicity, please
talk with rms-assist about it, not with me. If you want to give me
data about airplane tickets, please send that info as plain ASCII
text, not as images or PDFs. Thank you.
--
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President, Free Software Foundation
51 Franklin St
Boston MA 02110
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