

MILES MODELS, LLC

Can a Model Have More Than One Modeling Agency?

Thinking of signing with multiple modeling agencies but not sure how to go about it? Here are a few commonly asked questions about taking on additional representation.

Why Would You Want More Than One Agent?

Simply put, the more agencies you have, the more exposure you will get. That means more auditions, more bookings, and more money! Another reason to sign with multiple agencies is if you want to explore other markets. Your current agent might not have experience outside of their “home” region and, therefore, lacks the resources or information to get you the bookings you need. This is where a second agent in another city, state, or even country can be useful.

Keep in mind that adding a big-name agency to your roster is not always the best reason for taking on additional representation. The problem with large agencies is that the models who work the most and who bring in the most money will always get top priority. That means it might take a long time for the agency to really understand you and represent you in the way that you would like. Additionally, many of the top agencies have exclusive contracts that stipulate that their models cannot work for any other agency in the United States or elsewhere.

That limits your options significantly and will most likely mean you will have to leave your current agency.

Can A Model Have Multiple Agents Representing Them?

Whether you can have multiple agencies representing you at one time depends on industry standards. It is not uncommon for commercial models based in larger markets such as New York and Los Angeles to have more than one commercial agency representing them. They may also have a personal manager. What's the difference? The agency will be responsible for booking auditions and jobs, and the manager will advise the model as to whether or not to accept certain bookings and manage the overall career path of the model (Having a manager in addition to an agency is more common among actors and talent than it is for models).

High fashion or editorial models almost never have more than one agency representing them in a particular market. However, it is desirable for editorial models to have an agency in each of the major markets such as New York, Paris, Milan, Tokyo, and London.

Do I Have to Have More Than One Agent?

Definitely not. If you are happy with your agent and if they are submitting you with plenty of auditions and go-sees, then you needn't sign with additional agencies. Sometimes all you need is a good working relationship with someone who understands you and is doing everything possible to further your career. If things are going well, it's perfectly fine to stay where you are.

Do I Need to Ask Permission From my Current Agency Before I Sign with Someone Else?

As long as your contract is non-exclusive, or allows you to sign with other agencies outside a certain geographical area, then you do not have to ask permission. You are free to sign with as many agencies as you'd like. If you are unsure about the exclusivity part of your contract, always ask your agent to clarify the details before signing with someone else. If you go against the contract and sign anyway, you could be dropped from your contract.

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That said, you should still be open and honest with your current agency, especially if you want to continue having a positive working relationship. The more your agency understands your career goals, the more they will be able to help you reach them. Moreover, it is the professional thing to do.

What Are the Downsides of Having Multiple Agents?

Having multiple agents in one market makes life a little more complicated. Because models are rarely allowed to sign contracts with multiple agencies in the same city (they will more than likely book you for the same jobs, which is confusing when it comes to figuring out commission), you'll have to sign with agencies that specialize in different areas. That means, travel, travel, and more travel. Even if the agencies are in the same state, all of those travel expenses really add up. And while you can claim things like mileage, parking, and toll fees on your tax return, you will still be paying upfront for 100% of these costs. Contrary to popular belief, agencies don't pay for their models' ongoing expenses. Also, having multiple agents means having a busy schedule. It can be tricky to juggle all of those auditions, go-sees, and bookings with your everyday life (work, family, school), especially if you have to drive or fly. You will need to be on top of everything at all times to ensure your commitments do not interfere with each other.