

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

## INTENDED AUDIENCE

This guide is meant to provide access providers with a basic theatre knowledge and understanding so that they feel comfortable being invited into the overall process and rehearsal room before technical rehearsals or performances. It is recommended to hire an Access Coordinator as a part of the production team to be in charge of hiring accessibility service providers early and ensuring that accessibility is built into the design of the production and not as an afterthought. It would then be recommended to treat access providers as a part of the design team.

Due to the ever-changing nature of theatre and how to best provide a process that is safe and professional for all involved this document will be updated as necessary. If language or processes outlined in this document are in need of immediate change please email Casey Peek, [cpeek@chicagoculturalaccess.org](mailto:cpeek@chicagoculturalaccess.org).

Access Providers, in this document, refer to those who are providing an accessible service such as, but not limited to: ASL interpretation, Audio Description, Captioning, or advising on how to make a production more accessible to those with disabilities or who require accommodations to feel welcome at your performance venue.

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## RESOURCES ON PROVIDING ACCESS SERVICES

Each City and State have their own resources on best practices for providing accessible programming. It is recommended that you do research on local access networks and your regional ADA Center.

### National Resources:

- The Department of VSA and Accessibility at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Accessibility resources can be found at <https://education.kennedy-center.org/education/accessibility/lead/resources.html>.
- The ADA National Network, [adata.org](http://adata.org), provides information, guidance and training on how to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in order to support the mission of the ADA to “assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”
  - There are 10 regional ADA Centers distributed throughout the United States to provide local assistance and foster implementation of the ADA. Go to <https://adata.org/find-your-region> to find your regional ADA Center.
- Many cities have local access networks that are connected to provide local assistance, workshops, and share knowledge. For Chicago, the Chicago Cultural Access Consortium (CCAC) offers professional development workshops and other resources. Visit <https://www.chicagoculturalaccess.org/>.

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Welcome! We are so excited to welcome you into this rehearsal and performance process. Because access providers may navigate theatrical events without the full knowledge of the production process this guide will help you feel comfortable and knowledgeable of what is happening throughout the process.

The guide will focus on the process from the first rehearsal through the opening of the production. It will provide brief descriptions of the following areas:

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While every process, director, stage manager, and company have slight variations as to how they rehearse and the way the information is communicated there are basic principles, outlined in this guide, that are a part of most theatrical processes.

This guide is intended to help folks who may be unfamiliar with the full rehearsal process and breaks things down in such a way that assumes little to no prior experience with the rehearsal process.

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## FIRST REHEARSAL AND DESIGNER PRESENTATIONS

- The first rehearsal is typically an introduction to everyone working on the production.
- A typical layout of the day would be introductions, a read through of the play, and designer presentations.
- Designer presentations typically consist of each area (sound, lighting, costumes, and scenic designers) presenting their initial thoughts or ideas to the group. This can sometimes be in the form of images, physical items, or on the computer.
  - Some examples would be a costume designer showing renderings, or images of the costumes. These sometimes include samples of the fabric they are envisioning.



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## FIRST REHEARSAL AND DESIGNER PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED

- Another example might be a set designer bringing in a set model. These are 3-D crafted images of what the set will look like on stage. They are often to scale, meaning the reduction in size corresponds to the actual size of the space.



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## FIRST REHEARSAL AND DESIGNER PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED

- Most first rehearsals are going to be the group sitting at tables facing each other around the room.



- The stage manager will announce to the room when the rehearsal is beginning and call breaks. They run the schedule.
- The director will likely make an introduction to the play. They are the one who will be directing the actors and working with designers to determine the story.

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## DAILY CALLS

- The daily call is the schedule for the day of the rehearsal or performance. The stage manager sends out this call, typically around 12 hours before the rehearsal.
- The call tells you the date of the rehearsal or performance, the location, what is going to be done, and who needs to be there and at what time.
- The call may also feature important notes for everyone to be aware of or information about what is available at the space.
- Calls will also mention if any of the rehearsals are “closed”, meaning that whatever is being worked on is either sensitive content or being disclosed only to those in the room. A “closed” rehearsal means that only those that are called, the director, and stage manager should be in the space during that block.
  - Access providers and designers may feel as though their attendance to a closed rehearsal is important to the production. If you are unsure if you may attend or would like to be present at a closed rehearsal contact the stage manager of the production.
- The call may look different, depending on the particular style of the stage manager.
- An example can be seen on the next page.

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## DAILY CALLS CONTINUED

### BATTLEAXE BETTY

Daily Call #1

Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2016		
Location: American Theatre Company, 1909 W Bryon		
General Announcements		
<p>- This is the detailed breakdown for the afternoon and evening rehearsals. Those called are required but everybody is invited to attend if they would like.</p> <p>-We have gathered a room of people with unique circumstances of many kinds. If there are errors made in caring for each other, concerns can be reported to a Deputy. Corbette is the daytime Deputy. Lindsay is the evening Deputy.</p> <p>-There is coffee and purified water available at the space.</p> <p>-Please wear and/or bring comfortable clothes and shoes that you can move in.</p> <p>-Please plan on street parking</p>		
Time	Work	Called
10:00AM	Combat and Scenework	Jay, Gaby, Becca, Terri, Aidan, Havalah, Corbette, Almany, Jack, Syd, Peter
2:00PM	End of Day	
6:00PM	Choreography and Scenework	Malic, Sammi, Lindsay, Matt, Richard, DK, David, Christopher, Patti, Vera Marie, Kaitlyn, Jack, Trevor
10:00PM	End of Day	



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## REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORTS

- There are two types of reports that are sent during the life of a production. A rehearsal report gives information on what has happened in any given rehearsal. Performance reports are sent when the show is in performance.
- Rehearsal reports are sent out either the evening of the rehearsal or performance or the next morning. Sometimes they are in the body of an email, attachments, or visible via an online link.
- Typically a rehearsal or performance report has different sections for general notes and area-specific notes.
- Like the daily call, these reports vary slightly in appearance between different stage managers.
- One example can be seen on the next page.
  - An example of a front of house note may be that an actor is entering through a main entrance or that there will be a gunshot or strobe effect used during the show.
  - An example of an accessibility note may be that a line changed or music with lyrics has been added and captioning needs to be made aware or that an actor is speaking a portion of text in another language and ASL and Captions needs made aware.

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## REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORTS CONTINUED

Date: Tuesday, June 18, 2019	Rehearsal #: 2
Schedule: 6:08pm Actors ran lines 6:30pm Continue staging 7:23pm Break 7:33pm Continue staging 8:19pm Work fight choreography 8:55pm Run/pace through 9:15pm End of Day	Location: Yondorf Hall at 758 W. North Avenue Present: Casey Peek, Laura Alcalá Baker, Leslie Perez, Erica Hernandez, Gaby Labotka
<p>Rehearsal Notes:            Laura is bringing in foot grips for Leslie's shoes, a cup of pens, stapler, and some other desk materials            Leslie will bring in a reusable cup with a straw            Casey will bring in a box of generic tissues, hanging file folders for the filing cabinet, and create file pages for Belinda and Project Potential contract with four places to sign.</p>	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
<p>Stage Management:</p> <p>We will need to spike the location of the rolling chair for when Adeline pulls the chair out for the slap.</p>	
<p>Front of House:</p>	
<b>PRODUCTION</b>	
<p>Evan--we like the rolling chair with the arms but it doesn't adjust well--can this either be fixed or can we get a chair that adjusts height much easier?            Erica's hair will be in a ponytail and Leslie's will be half back until the hypnosis starts.            Leslie will take off her shoes for the hypnotism portion of the script.</p>	
<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>	

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## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

- Depending on the size of the theatre and requirements of the show some of the production team members listed below may not be necessary. Many, but not all, positions have assistants.
- **Director** - Oversees and orchestrates the mounting of a theatre production by unifying various aspects of the production
- **Playwright** - The author(s) of the play or theatrical work
- **Dramaturg** - Advisor who researches the history of the piece, time-period or shares the information to help inform decisions made by those in the production
- **Scenic Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of scenery and some properties
- **Lighting Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of the lighting
- **Costume Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of the costumes
- **Hair and Make-Up Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of wigs, hairdos, and make up
- **Sound Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of any sound, music, or mixing
- **Properties Designer** - Designs and helps to implement the creation of properties
- **Composer** - Creator of any original music in the show
- **Music Director** - works to implement the composers vision, may create arrangements of the work to better fit the production
- **Choreographer** - Creates dance and movement done onstage that is not related to moments of violence or intimacy
- **Fight Choreographer** - Creates moments of violence that happen onstage such as slaps, kicks, sword fights, etc.
- **Intimacy Director** - Choreographs moments of staged intimacy in order to create safe, repeatable, and effective storytelling. More information at [www.teamidi.org](http://www.teamidi.org)
- **Production Manager** - Oversees all technical aspects of the production and ensures that designers are staying within budget, timeframes, and ideas
- **Stage Manager** - Oversees all rehearsals and performances. Ensures a safe space
- **Technical Director** - Ensures the building of the set

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## THE PRODUCTION TEAM CONTINUED

- **Audio Engineer** - Runs mixers or the audio board to ensure everything runs smoothly
- **Master Electrician** - Ensures the hanging of all lights to create the lighting design
- **Board Operator** - Works in the booth and operates the board, typically for light cues, during the production. The board operator sometimes may be the same person who programs cues into the board, but this is not always the case.
- **Flyman** - Ensures the safe and correct usage of the fly system. Operates this system during performances
- **Stitcher** - Works with the Wardrobe department to build costume pieces
- **Front of House Manager** - Runs the front of house during all productions. Ensures patron experience and safety
- **Box Office Manager** - Runs the box office. Handles all ticketing and customer service needs before patrons pick up their tickets
- **Deputy** - Actor who is the go to for any grievances or issues for other actors
- **Stage and Wardrobe Crew** - Crew of workers who move scenery, handle properties, handle costumes, dress actors and do other jobs involved in running the backstage of a theatrical production. These workers may be in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, or IATSE which is the union for stage crew

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## PRODUCTION MEETINGS

- Production Meetings are when the full artistic team gets together to discuss the production. This will include designers, the director, stage management, and the production manager. This is when design decisions are made and timelines are discussed.
- Production Managers lead production meetings.
- Production Meetings will happen before and after the rehearsal process begins. The number of production meetings will vary from show to show but expect at least one meeting before rehearsals begin and two to three once the production is in rehearsal.
- Production meetings are also held after every technical performance, dress rehearsal, and preview.
  - This is the time for the artistic team to discuss in detail what is and isn't working, create timelines for finishing projects, and discuss any other details that need figured out before the show opens.

## THE REHEARSAL PROCESS

- Most rehearsal processes are eight weeks including time for technical rehearsals and dress rehearsals.
- The order and what is included in the process varies greatly based on the type of performance, theatre, and schedules.
- Most rehearsals are going to start with tablework. This consists of the director, actors, and stage manager around a table discussing the script, intentions, and goals of their performance. Typically this process last 2-3 days.
- After tablework the actors will “get on their feet” or begin working on the blocking, or movements, of their characters.
  - Blocking is either more fluid where actors try different movements about the space and then the actors and the director decide on what to keep in the show or can be structured where the director tells the actors where to move to and when.
- Blocking rehearsals are often the largest chunk of the rehearsal process.

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## THE REHEARSAL PROCESS CONTINUED

- Designer Runs are invited rehearsals for designers and service providers to attend and see the production run in the rehearsal room from beginning to end. These runs are helpful to see the flow of the piece, blocking, mood, possible cue locations, and get an idea of the run time of the show.
- The director will typically assign a date for the actors to be “off-book”. This means the actors are no longer holding the scripts in their hands and reading from the page.
  - Stage Managers or Assistant Stage Managers often will take line notes once actors are off-book. These are notes given to the actor to let them know when they are not saying the words on the page.
  - Once actors are off-book they may call “Line” in the rehearsal room. This is to indicate to the stage manager or assistant stage manager that they need their next line given to them. The act of a stage manager or ASM following along in the script to feed actors their lines is called being on-book.

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## TECH

- “Tech” is shorthand for technical rehearsal.
- The structure of tech varies from show to show and between different theatres.
- There are different levels of tech.
  - Paper tech: Sometimes, prior to getting into the theatre, each of the designers (lighting, sound, scenic, and costumes) will meet with the stage manager to discuss lighting and sound cues, costume changes and movement of the scenery. This process is called paper tech because all of the technical aspects are written down on paper. The stage manager will place all of this information into the prompt book.
  - Dry tech: This is a technical rehearsal without the performers. During dry tech all cues will be written into the stage manager’s prompt book (if not done during paper tech or cue lists were not sent beforehand). Each designer and/or department head runs their segment of the production to test things are working before actors arrive. This allows time to build cues, check sound, test scenic transitions, etc.
    - Dry tech is typically done as a cue to cue, meaning that the play will begin with pre-show conditions and then everything will be moved through jumping from one cue to another allowing time for designers to add, edit, or delete cues. Transitions are also ran during this time.
  - Tech, sometimes referred to as “wet tech”: The tech rehearsals include the performers and all technical elements. Costumes may or may not be worn during tech.
    - Tech sometimes consists of running the entire production in its entirety, stopping when needed to address a technical issue or cue or as a cue to cue. In a cue to cue with the actors, a scene will start when the first few lines and then skip to the lines and staged blocking for the next cue.
    - Final show props are often introduced in tech.

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## DRESS REHEARSAL

- Dress rehearsals are often a part of the tech process and sometimes are referred to separately and sometimes not.
- Dress rehearsals introduce all costume pieces as well as any wigs, hair styles, and makeup.
- Sometimes cue changes happen after the designated tech rehearsal because lighting or staging may need to be changed to adjust to costumes.
- Dress rehearsals are typically run under show conditions meaning that tech tables are put away and the stage manager is in their booth, or where they will call the show.
  - Actors will be given a call time to arrive and get into costume, hair and makeup at the beginning of the dress rehearsal.

## PREVIEWS AND PERFORMANCES

- Previews are a set of public performances of a theatrical presentation that precede its official opening. The purpose of previews is to allow the director and designers to identify problems and opportunities for improvement that weren't found during rehearsals and to make adjustments before critics are invited to attend. This means that the show may be held to fix problems .
- Performances are considered part of the “run” of the show. Often performances are four to six times per week.
- A performance run varies in length but are often around 8 weeks.
- Occasionally a show is extended. This means that additional performances were added to the end of the run due to the success of the show.
  - Often, extensions are listed in the original contract with a specific date that everyone will be told if the extension is happening or not.
  - If not in the original contract, an extension contract will be issued to everyone who is able to take part in the extension.



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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A more detailed glossary can be found at <https://aact.org/terms>.

Term	Definition
ACT	1) One of the principal structural divisions of a dramatic work, usually, in a play, from one to five in number.
ACTING AREA	That area within the performance space within which the actor may move in full view of the audience. Also, a specific portion of such an area actually used for acting during all or part of a performance.
AISLE	A passage through the seating area.
APPRENTICE	A person who serves without pay in an acting company in order to learn about acting or other aspects of theatrical work.
APRON	Section of the stage floor which projects towards or into the auditorium. In proscenium theatres, the part of the stage in front of the proscenium arch.
ARENA	Form of stage where the audience is seated on at least two (normally three, or all four) sides of the whole acting area.
ARRANGE	To adapt a score for orchestral use.
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE	A person from the professional theatre, employed for a specified period to train others (usually university students) in acting or other theatre arts.
ASIDE	A speech or monologue, usually fairly short, to convey a character's thoughts or other information to the audience, while in the presence of other characters, some or all of whom are supposed not to overhear. A stage convention and frequently a stage direction.
ASM	Assistant Stage Manager
AUDITORIUM	The part of the theatre accommodating the audience during the performance. Sometimes known as the "house."

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BACKSTAGE	Collectively, the parts of the theatre that lie behind the proscenium arch (or behind the back wall of the stage setting), including the stage, the workshops, the dressing rooms, and the areas and spaces beside, above, or under the stage. Sometimes used only to refer to the dressing rooms and green rooms, or even just the off-stage areas.
BLACK BOX	An unadorned performance space, typically a large room with four walls and no assigned seating or playing areas. Walls are typically painted black.
BLACK OUT	1) To darken a stage suddenly, enhancing the effect of stage action and permitting a swift change of scenery. 2) Complete absence of stage lighting. Exit signs and other emergency lighting must remain on at all times.
BLACKS	1) Black clothing worn by stage management and crew during productions. 2) Any black drapes or tabs, permanently or temporarily rigged. Used for masking technical areas.
BLOCK	1) A number of theatre seats, taken together. 2) The director's work of positioning actors onstage and setting their entrances, exits, and other movement, as in "to block a scene." Blocking provides the framework for the movement in a scene, and is recorded in the prompt book by the stage manager.
BOARD or CONSOLE	The main control for the stage lighting. The lighting operator for a show is said to be "on the board".
BOOK	1) Script. One is said to be "off book" when a script is no longer permitted onstage during rehearsal. 2) The spoken lines in a musical, as distinguished from the music and lyrics.
BOOM	1) A light tree or vertical scaffolding pole on which horizontal boom arms can be mounted, carrying instruments. Often used behind wings for side-lighting etc. Booms have a base plate or stand at the bottom and are tied off to the grid or fly floor at the top. Booms can also be fixed to the rear of the proscenium arch or hanging from the ends of lighting bars. 2) An arm mounted on a microphone stand.
BOOTH	A place, usually enclosed and at the back of the auditorium, from which an electrician can operate lighting and sound equipment. This is where the stage manager is during the production.

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BOX OFFICE	An office in a theatre, commonly in the outer lobby, where tickets are sold.
BREAK A LEG	A superstitious and widely accepted alternative to "Good Luck" (which is considered bad luck in the theatre).
BRING UP THE LIGHTS	To increase the illumination.
BUILD	1) During lighting plotting, to construct a state from blackout, or to add to an existing state. 2) An increase in light or sound level. 3) The act of constructing a set or a costume.
BUMP	To change the intensity of a lighting instrument or group of instruments instantaneously, usually for a short duration of time, and often to the beat of music as if to create a pulsing effect. Also, to turn up the lights, as in "Let's bump up the lights."
BUTTON	In staging musicals, the "button" is a final stage picture usually before a blackout or fadeout. It is a visual clue to the audience that works much like an exclamation point at the end of a sentence.
CALL	1) A notification of a working session, such as a rehearsal call. 2) The period of time to which the above call refers--for example, "Your call for tomorrow night's show is 7:00 p.m." 3) A stage manager's announcement to summon actors to the stage. A request for an actor to come to the stage because an entrance is imminent is a courtesy call and should not be relied on by actors - e.g. "This is your call for the finale Mr. Smith and Miss Jones") 4) An acknowledgement of applause (e.g. Curtain Call) 5) A technical staff person with the script (book) is said to be "calling the cues," especially in terms of stage lighting cues.
CAPACITY	The total number of seats available for the audience, as in seating capacity.
CAST LIST	A list of actors with their roles.
CATWALK	An access walkway to equipment.
CENTER LINE	Imaginary line running down the stage through the exact center of the proscenium opening. Often marked as CL on stage plans. Normally marked on the stage floor and used as a reference when marking out or assembling a set.

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CHANNEL	1) A complete control path for signals in lighting or sound equipment. 2) In stereo recordings, the two outputs are referred to as left channel and right channel.
CIRCUIT	1) The means by which an instrument is connected to a dimmer or patch panel. Numbered for reference. 2) A complete electrical "loop" around which current can flow.
CIRCUIT BREAKER	An electro-mechanical "fuse" that can be reset, rather than having to be replaced. Available in the same ratings as fuses.
CLOSE	1) To conclude or end a production. A show closes at the end of its last performance. 2) To perform in the last number on a program, as in "They closed the show with a salute to the Armed Forces."
COMPANY	1) The cast, crew and other staff associated with a show. 2) The theatre organization, a theatre company. 3) A group of actors appearing together in one or more dramatic performances.
COMPLIMENTARY	A seat or ticket that is provided free, as to a reviewer, parents of a cast member, a contributor or other supporter. Often abbreviated as comp.
CONTACT SHEET	A list of the contact information of everyone involved in the production. Meant to be used for show use only and not to be shared outside of the production. Often includes people's pronouns.
COSTUME FITTING	The trying on of a costume for fit and appearance, in the presence of a costumer.
COSTUME PARADE	Cast members appear in costume, on stage and under state lighting, so that the costume designer can see how they look. At the same time, the director and lighting designer usually are present for their input as well.
COSTUME PLOT	A list of characters, showing the costumes to be worn in a production, scene by scene.
CREPE HAIR or CREPE WOOL	An artificial, braided hair, commonly made of wool or vegetable fiber, in various colors, used in creating facial hair. It can be cut, combed and glued bit by bit to the face to form a beard, mustache, sideburns, and eyebrows.
CREW	The stage crew, the team of workers who handle technical chores during a performance.

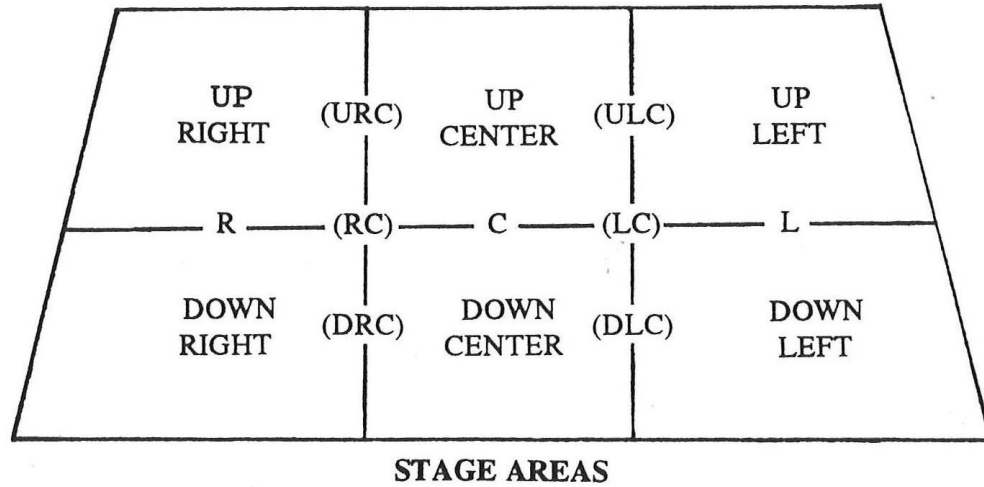
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CROSS	To move across the stage from one position to another, especially when passing in front of another actor. Sometimes, a stage direction, as in "When Ellen enters, cross left."
CUE	1) The last words of one actor's spoken dialogue, which the next actor to speak needs as a signal to begin. When actors leave dead space before beginning their lines of dialogue, a director may ask them to "Pick up your cues." 2) The spoken or written command given to technical staff to carry out a particular operation during a performance. A cue may indicate a change in lighting levels, run a sound effect, or close the main drape. Normally given by stage management, but may be taken directly from the action (i.e. a Visual Cue).
CUE LIGHT	System for giving technical staff silent cues by light. Red light means stand-by or warn, green light means go. Ensures greater precision when visibility or audibility of actors is limited. Sometimes used for cueing actors onto the set. For technical cues, lights are normally now used just as a backup to cues given over the headset system.
CUE TO CUE	Cutting out action and dialogue between cues during a technical rehearsal, to save time.
CUEING	A standard sequence for giving verbal cues : "Stand-by Sound Cue 19" (Stand-by first) "Sound Cue 19 Go" (Go last).
CURTAIN	A movable drape or screen of cloth used to conceal all or part of the stage. Sometimes short for the 'main curtain,' which rises or parts at the beginning of a performance, and falls or closes, at the end. In this sense, it is different from the act or scene curtain. By extension, the start of a performance ("What time is curtain on Sunday?")
CURTAIN CALL	The appearance of the actors at the end of a performance, to accept the applause of the audience.
CURTAIN MUSIC	Music played just before the beginning or resumption of an act.
CURTAIN SPEECH	A speech at the beginning or end of a performance, usually a short acknowledgment delivered in front of the closed main drape by the author, manager, or an actor. Prior to curtain, it may be used to welcome the audience, specify emergency exits, rules on photos and electronic devices, and to promote the producing theatre's programs.
CURTAIN TIME	The time when a performance is scheduled to begin. Often shortened to "curtain," as in "What time is curtain?"

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CYCLORAMA	Usually just "cyc" (rhymes with 'bike'). A plain cloth or plastered wall filling the rear of the stage. The term is often loosely applied to a blue skydrop, or any flattage at the rear of the stage. May be curved at the ends--and indeed the original sense of the word was a curving or u-shaped curtain. Typical made of canvas or heavyweight cotton duck, suspended from the grid, and reaching to the floor. The term "cyclorama" is also used to refer to the lighting instrument that covers the actual "cyc" with light. Newer models of these instruments include LED styles that require far less energy, and produce far less heat. Some are multifunction devices: dimmer, infinite-shades color changer, light source projector, strobe effect and optics with precision adjustment.
DARK	Said of a theatre that is closed, or with no performances scheduled. Some theatres go dark temporarily during production periods, when the next show is in preparation on stage. Thus, "Shows run Thursday through Sunday, and we're dark Monday through Wednesday."
DECK	Stage floor.
DEPUTY	Serve as a reporting channel for an individual participant or an acting company when confidentiality is required or requested, and may also serve (alongside the stage manager) as a first contact when a concern cannot be resolved by an individual. From the <a href="#">Chicago Theatre Standards</a> .
DESIGN	1) A plan, such as a drawing, for the construction or manufacture of a theatre, scenery, costumes, or set design. 2) Also, to create such a plan; thus costume designer.
DIMMER	Electrical or electronic device that controls the amount of electricity passed to a lamp, and therefore the intensity of the lamp.
DIMMER RACK	A number of individual dimmer circuits mounted in a cabinet.
DOUBLE-CAST	To cast two actors in each part, either to provide an understudy, or to permit their appearance in alternate performances. Thus, double-casting.

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DOWNSTAGE CENTER	A stage position or area, center and downstage. Also a stage direction, as "Mary, move down center." Sometimes abbreviated as D.C. or DC.
DOWNSTAGE LEFT	A stage position, left (audience's right) and downstage. Also a stage direction, as in "Mary, move down left." Sometimes abbreviated as D.L. or DL.
DOWNSTAGE LEFT CENTER	A stage position, downstage of left center position. Sometimes abbreviated as D.L.C. or DLC.
DOWNSTAGE RIGHT	A stage position or area, right (audience's left) and downstage. Sometimes abbreviated as D.R. or DR.
DOWNSTAGE RIGHT CENTER	A stage position, downstage of right center position. Sometimes abbreviated as D.R.C. or DRC.
DOWNSTAGE	1) The part of the stage nearest to the audience (so-named from the lowest part of a raked stage). 2) A movement towards the audience (in a proscenium theatre).
DRESS	1) To costume a stage production. 2) To decorate a stage with pictures, drapes, pillows, etc., in order to provide a pleasing arrangement of color, form, and texture.

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DRESS PARADE	Review by director/designer/wardrobe staff of all costumes worn by cast and paraded under stage lighting. Any defects, misfits etc. are noted or corrected before the first Dress Rehearsal.
DRESS REHEARSAL	A full rehearsal, with all technical elements brought together. The performance as it will be on opening night.
DRESSER	Person who helps actors with costume care and costume changes during the performance.
DRESSING	1) Noun. Decorative props (some practical) and furnishings added to a stage setting. 2) The act of decorating the set for performance.
DRESSING ROOM	A room backstage where an actor can dress and put on makeup.
DROP	A piece of scenic canvas, painted or plain, that is flown or fixed to hang in a vertical position. A Backdrop hangs at the rear of a scene. A Front drop hangs well downstage, often to hide a scene change taking place behind. Cut drops have cut-away open areas and are normally used as a series, painted in perspective. A Star drop (usually black) has a large number of small low-voltage lamps sewn or pinned through it which gives a magical starry sky effect. A floor drop may be used to protect the stage while painting, or to mark the playing area.
DRY RUN	A practice run, usually a technical run without actors.
ELECTRICIAN	The person in charge of all the electrical preparations and operations in a production
ELEVATION	A working drawing usually drawn to scale, showing a view of a set or lighting rig. In general, the term "elevation" refers to a Front elevation. A Rear elevation shows backs of scenic elements. A side view of a set is known as a "section".
ENCORE	A call by an audience--by shouting or applause--for the reappearance of performers in order to repeat a portion of a musical or dance number. Also, to call out this word ("Encore!"). The word is French, meaning "again."
ENSEMBLE	1. A cast of characters, except for the principals. 2) The grouping of the whole stage picture, involving actors and set. 3) The chorus in a musical, sometimes including soloists. 4) Said of acting or a cast in which group interaction and support is more important than individual performances.



# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

ENTER	To come onstage. Also a stage direction, as in "Ted enters from the side door."
EPILOGUE	A scene or speech following the end of the main action of a play. In many works, the epilogue explains what happens 'afterward' to the characters.
EQUITY	Actor's Equity Association is the labor union representing actors and stage managers in theatre in the United States.
EXIT	1) Leaving the stage, to go offstage. 2) A door or other opening through which an actor can leave the stage.
EXIT LINE	A line of dialogue spoken by an actor just before, or just as, they leave the stage.
FADE	An increase, diminishment or change in lighting or sound level.
FADE IN	To increase the illumination of the stage gradually through the use of dimmers.
FADE OUT	To decrease the illumination of the stage gradually through the use of dimmers, until the stage is totally dark. Also a noun: fadeout.
FADER	Vertical slider which is used to remotely set the level of a lighting or sound channel.
FALSE PROSCENIUM	A frame formed by scenic canvas or vertical flattage within the proscenium arch. Used to reduce the size of the opening when putting a small set onto a large stage.
FEED	1) A power supply to a piece of equipment or installation is termed a "feed". 2) To help another actor get full effect from significant speech or action through one's own preparatory speech or action. Thus a "feed line."
FEEDBACK	A sharp whistle or rumble heard emanating from a sound system. It is caused by a sound being amplified many times. (e.g. a sound is picked up by a microphone and amplified through the speaker. The microphone picks up this amplified sound and it is sent through the system again). Feedback can be avoided by careful microphone positioning, and can be reduced by use of Equalization to reduce the level of the frequency band causing the feedback.

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

FIRE EXIT	Particular exit(s) from a building designated by local authority fire officer to be the correct means of escape from a part of the building in case of fire. It is the responsibility of all staff and performers to ensure that all fire exits are kept clear, unlocked and accessible at all times.
FIREPROOF CURTAIN	The foremost curtain in the proscenium arch, made of a nonflammable material on a steel frame, used to protect the auditorium if fire breaks out on or behind the stage. Abbreviated as fire curtain.
FLY	To lift or raise a set piece or lighting bar up and out of sight--or, in some cases, a person, as in "Peter Pan." In order for this to work, there needs to be an open area above the stage with enough head room to store items that are "flown." This is known as "Fly space" or the "flies."
FOCUS	1) To adjust a lighting instrument in terms of beam spread or direction. 2) In acting, to turn and face another actor, an object, etc. and give it one's entire attention. 3) In directing or technical work the area or person designed to draw the audience's attention. In a large musical number, for example, the focus is often the lead performer. (Thus, to steal focus, is to do something that diverts audience attention from the intended object of focus.) In a set design, a stairway, doorway, couch, or other object is positioned as the focus of the scene.
FOCUSING	The process of adjusting the direction and beam size of lamps. Does not necessarily result in a "sharply focused" image.
FOH	Front Of House, usually referring to staff such as house manager, box office, etc.
FOLLOW SPOT	A spotlight mounted so that it can turn to follow an actor moving across the stage.
FOURTH WALL	From the observation that the traditional box set has three walls (left, right, back) and an invisible fourth wall--the proscenium through which the audience views the action. Thus "Breaking the Fourth Wall," when a fictional character shows awareness of the play in which they "exist" and the audience watching that play.

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

FRENCH SCENE	A "scene" division within a play marked (as in French drama) by the entrance or exit of an actor. In American and English drama, directors often break up a long scene for the purposes of blocking, rehearsal or character work. Using the entrance/exit concept, they dub these "French scenes."
FRONT OF HOUSE	1) Every part of the theatre in front of the proscenium arch. Includes foyer areas open to the general public.
FRONT OF HOUSE CALLS	Announcements made by stage management or FRONT-OF-HOUSE staff calling the audience into the auditorium, or informing them when the performance begins. Calls are normally made at the Half (30 min. before curtain up), the Quarter (20 min before), the Five (10 min), and calls normally accompanied by bar bells at 3, 2 and 1 minutes before the performance begins.
FULL STAGE	A stage used in its entirety for setting and acting.
GAFFER'S TAPE	Often abbreviated as Gaff tape. Sticky cloth tape, not to be confused with duct tape. Most common widths are .5" for marking out areas and 2" (usually black) for everything else. Used for temporarily securing almost anything. Should not be used on coiled cables or equipment. Originally named for the Gaffer (Master Electrician) on a film set.
GEL	Short for gelatin, the material once used for color filters. A sheet of plastic usually composed of a colored resin sandwiched between two clear pieces. The colored filter absorbs all the colors of light except the color of the filter itself, which it allows through. For this reason, denser colors get very hot, and can burn out very quickly. At one time, filters were made from gelatin, from which came the still-used name "gel."
GENERAL ADMISSION	A charge made for admission to a theatrical performance, the price being charged to the general audience, without a discount as there is for children or senior citizens. The term is also used sometimes to denote unreserved seating.
GHOSTLIGHT	A light left burning overnight on stage to keep friendly spirits illuminated and unfriendly spirits at bay. Also believed to keep the theatrical muse in a "dark" theatre, and to stop people tripping over bits of scenery when they come into the theatre in the morning.

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

GOBO	A thin metal plate (also called a pattern) etched to produce a design which can then be projected by a profile spotlight (e.g. foliage, windows). The image can be used soft focus to add texture, rather than a defined image. A number of composite gobos in different colored lamps can, with careful focusing, produce a colored image (e.g. a stained glass window). Greater detail can be achieved using a glass gobo. The original use of the word came from the early days of Hollywood. When the director of photography wanted daylight excluded from some area of the set, he'd say "Go Black Out". People would run around putting black material between the sun and the set. It eventually evolved into other objects that go in front of lights and now most commonly refers to patterns in profiles.
GOING DARK	Said aloud in the theatre to indicate to everyone that the lights are going to go out. This is to warn about the sudden change in atmosphere and so people know to stop moving to avoid injury.
GREEN ROOM	Room close to the stage for the actors to meet and relax before or after going on stage. According to the 1894 edition of Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable the common waiting room for performers is so called "because at one time the walls were colored green to relieve the eyes affected by the glare of the stage lights."
GRID	1) The support structure close to the top of the fly tower on which the pulleys of the flying system are supported. Constructed from metal or wooden beams. 2) Arrangement of scaffolding from which lamps are hung in a performance space with no flying facilities.
GROUND PLAN	Scaled plan showing the exact position (seen from above) of all items standing on the stage floor and indicating the position of items suspended above. Venues have a base plan showing proscenium, walls, seating etc on which individual set and lighting plans can be drawn.
HANG	To suspend any piece of scenery or equipment, such as lights.
HEADS	A shouted warning for staff to be aware of activity above them. Also used when an object is being dropped from above.
HEADSET	1) General term for theatre communication equipment. 2) A headphone and microphone combination used in such communications systems with a belt pack.

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

HOLD	To pause or stop. Stage Manager may yell "Hold, please" when the action needs to stop either for safety or to fix an issue.
HOUSE	1) The auditorium (e.g. "The house is now open, please do not cross the stage") 2) The audience (e.g. "How big is the house tonight?")
HOUSE LIGHTS	The auditorium lighting which is commonly faded out when the performance starts.
IN THE ROUND	A stage setup in which the audience is seated completely around the playing area, as in an arena stage.
INTERMISSION	A period between acts, when the house lights are brought up, and the audience is encouraged to move into the lobby, outside, etc.
KILL	To switch off (a light/sound effect); to strike/remove (a prop).
LIGHTS	May be said aloud in the theatre to indicate lights coming on after a long moment in a blackout or time with no lights on. A warning so no one is shocked by the sudden change in environment.
LAMP	1) General term for unit of lighting equipment including spotlight, flood etc. 'Instrument' is more common in the U.S. (where 'lamp' often refers to what the uninitiated would call the 'bulb')." 2) A light source, but sometimes used to refer specifically to the "bulb" in a stage lighting instrument.
LAVALIER MICROPHONE	Originally, a mic worn around the neck on a string. Now applies to a small "tieclip" microphone.
LEG	Drape set as masking piece at the side of the acting area. Usually set up in pairs across the stage and used in conjunction with borders to frame the audiences' view.
LIGHTING PLOT	A scale drawing detailing the exact location of each instrument used in a production and any other pertinent information (E.g. its dimmer number, focus position and color number). Often drawn from the theatres' groundplan. The Lighting Plot refers to the process of recording information about each lighting state either onto paper or into the memory of a computerized lighting board for subsequent playback.
LINE	A portion of dialogue, usually a sentence, but also a single row in the script (thus the origin of the word). Thus, to be up on one's lines, or to ask, "What's my next line?" or simply "Line?"

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

LOAD-IN	The process of, or time-period for, moving sets, props, etc, into a theatre before a production.
LOAD-OUT	The process of, or time-period for, moving sets, props, etc, out of a theatre after a production.
MASKING	Neutral material or designed scenery which defines the performance area and conceals the technical areas. (e.g. Masking flat)
MASTER	1) An overall control on a lighting or sound control board. The Grand Master takes precedence over all other controls. 2) An original (e.g. Master tape, master plan) which should be used only to make a copy from which to work. 3) A Department Head (e.g. Master Carpenter, Master Electrician).
MEZZANINE	A seating area just above the orchestra, or the forward part of such an area; the first balcony.
MIXER	A device with a number of input channels where each sound source is provided with its own control channel through which sound signals are routed into two or more outputs. Many mixing desks can also change the quality of the sound.
MODEL	A scale model provided by the set designer to help all the technical departments to coordinate and plan a production. Used as a reference when building, painting, dressing and lighting the set.
MONITOR	1) An onstage speaker which allows a performer to hear the output of the PA system, or other members of a band. 2) A video display screen.
OFF BOOK	An actor or cast who has memorized their lines is said to be "off book." Often given as a reminder in a rehearsal schedule ("We will be off-book July 1.")
OFFSTAGE	1) Towards the nearest side of the stage from the center. (e.g. "Focus that spot offstage a bit, please") 2) The area out of sight of the audience (e.g. "Get that couch offstage!")
ON BOOK	1) To serve as prompter. 2) An actor who has not yet memorized their lines is said to be "on book."
ONSTAGE	1) The stage area visible from the audience. Thus, an onstage chair. 2) A command from a stage manager, as in "Cast onstage!"

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

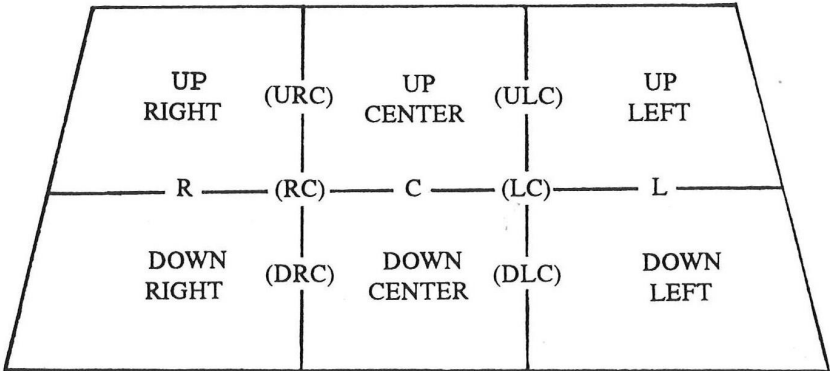
OPEN THE HOUSE	Clearance given to Front of House staff by stage management that the stage is set and the audience can begin to take their seats. When this clearance is given, the backstage call "The House is now open, please do not cross the stage" is made.
ORCHESTRA PIT	A sunken area, directly in front of the forestage, usually partially screened from the audience, where instrumentalists sit to play for on stage performers.
PAPER THE HOUSE	Marketing technique. Giving away tickets to a performance (e.g. Opening Night) to make a show seem to be selling better than it actually is.
PERFORMANCE REPORT	A written report by stage management giving problems, running times, show staff and audience numbers for the previous days' performance(s). Copies are circulated to the technical departments and management staff.
PIT	Short for "orchestra pit." The area housing the orchestra. Originally, a lower section between the front of the stage and the audience, although now describes any area around the stage housing the musicians.
PLACES!	A call to the actors to take their positions on, or just off the stage, as needed for the opening curtain.
PLAN	A scale drawing showing a piece of scenery, lighting layout etc. from above.
PRACTICAL	Noun. Any object which appears to do onstage the same job it would do in life, or any working apparatus (e.g. light switch or desk lamp). An electrified prop.
PRESET	1) Anything in position before the beginning of a scene or act (e.g. Props placed on stage before the performance, lighting state on stage as the audience are entering.) 2) An independently controllable section of a manual lighting board which allows the setting up of a lighting state before it is needed. Each preset has a master fader which selects the maximum level of dimmers controlled by that preset.
PROMPT BOOK	Master copy of the script or score, containing all the actor moves and technical cues, used by stage management to control the performance. Sometimes known as the "book."

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

PROP	Short for "property." Furnishings, set dressings, and all items large and small which cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe. Props handled by actors are known as hand props, props which are kept in an actors costume are known as personal props.
PROPS TABLE	Table in convenient offstage area on which properties are prepared prior to a performance and to which they should be returned after use.
PROSCENIUM	The opening in the wall that stands between stage and auditorium in some theatres; the picture frame through which the audience sees the play. The "fourth wall." Also proscenium arch.
RAKE	The slope of a stage or an auditorium. Thus, a raked stage is one that (normally) slopes upward from downstage to upstage.
RAKED STAGE	A sloping stage which is raised at the back (upstage) end. All theatres used to be built with raked stages as a matter of course. Today, the stage is often left flat and the auditorium is raked to improve the view of the stage from all seats.
READING	1) A rehearsal at which the actors read their parts aloud without stage movement or stage business; often the first rehearsal, to break the ice and to give the company an opportunity to get acquainted with each other as performers. 2) A presentation of a new play for or by the author, using scripts, again with no movement or stage business.
REPERTORY	A form of organization, usually with a permanent company of actors, where each production has a run of limited length. At any time, there is normally one production in performance, another in rehearsal and several others in varying degrees of planning.



# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

<p>RIGGING</p>	<p>Collectively, ropes, wires, blocks, pulleys, pins, counterweights, and other pieces of equipment needed in the manipulation of scenery and stage drapery. A simple counterweight system is based on the principle of establishing a balanced set of weights that allow a stagehand to raise and lower various loads with minimal effort. Complete rigging systems consist of one or more counterweight sets. Each is comprised of a pipe batten suspended from lifting cables which pass over loft block sheaves, then over the head block at one side of the stage and down to the counterweight arbor.</p>
<p>RIGHT CENTER or CENTER RIGHT</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>STAGE AREAS</p> </div> <p>A stage position or area just to the right (the audience's left) of the exact center of the stage.</p>
<p>RISER</p>	<p>1) Any platform on stage. For instance, the series of platforms for choral presentations are called choral risers, the rostrum on which a drum kit and drummer is positioned is the drum riser. 2) The vertical portion of a step which gives a set of treads its height.</p>
<p>RUN</p>	<p>A sequence of performances of the same production, as in "This show will run for years," or "How long a run do you expect?"</p>

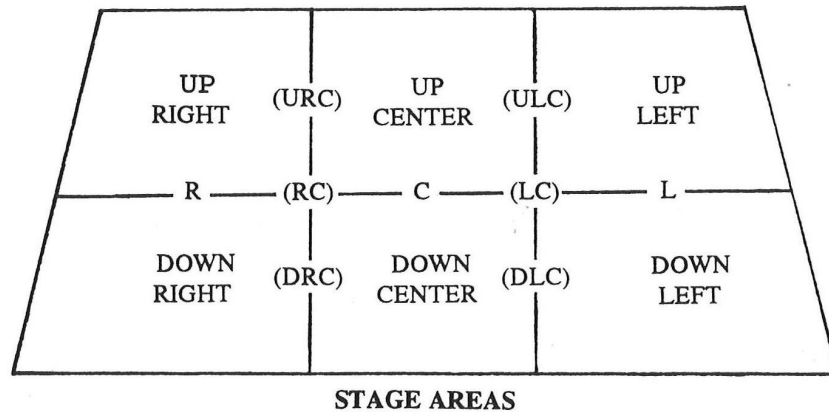
# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

RUNNERS	1) A pair of curtains parting in the center and running horizontally, particularly those used in a downstage position in variety and revue productions. 2) Persons employed as production assistants to do odd jobs and errands during a production period.
SAFETY CURTAIN	A fireproof curtain that can be dropped downstage of the tabs to separate the audience from the stage in the event of fire. A Safety Curtain is required by most licensing authorities for theatres over 500 seats. The regulations also require that it is raised and lowered at least once in view of each audience (usually during the interval). Usually made from sheet metal and electrically operated, used to be made from iron faced with asbestos and lowered using a hydraulic damping system.
SCENE	1) A full-length play normally is divided into acts, and each act is divided into scenes. Typically a new scene depicts a different location or different day or time. The term also is used to describe any portion of a dramatic work taken by itself as a unit of action. 2) Scenery, a stage setting. 3) The location in which a dramatic action is supposed to occur. 4) Location or situation, as in "to set the scene."
SCENE SHIFT	A movement of scenery by stagehands to change a stage setting between scenes.
SCENE SHOP	The area where scenery is built or repaired.
SCRIM	A coarse gauze-like material used as a drop. When lit from the front only, the scrim appears opaque. As light is brought up behind, it becomes more transparent--totally so when front light is cut off. Used unpainted to diffuse a scene played behind it. When painted, a gauze is opaque when lit from the front and becomes transparent when the scene behind it is lighted. Many different types of gauze are available; Sharkstooth gauze is the most effective for transformations, because it is the most opaque. Vision gauze is used for diffusing a scene, to create a dreamlike effect.
SEASON	1) The annual period when the theatre is most active, often from September to June, or June-August for a summer season. 2) A series of productions for the year, as in "the season includes 3 dramas, two comedies, and a musical."

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

SET	1) To prepare the stage for action. (verb) 2) The complete stage setting for a scene or act, usually referring to the combination of flats, platforms, doors, windows, furniture and accessories. (noun) 3) To fix, through rehearsal, the general pattern of lines and movements to be followed by the actors, as in "This section is set, but we need to work on the final moments of act two."
SIGHTLINES	A series of lines drawn on plan and section to indicate the limits of the audience vision from extreme seats, including side seats and front and back rows. Often marked in the wings as a guide to the actors and crew, so as not to be seen by members of the audience.
SOUND CHECK	A thorough test of the sound system before a performance. This will include checking each speaker cabinet individually, and each playback device. In the case of a live concert, this is the session.
SOUND CUE	A cue for the commencement of a sound effect.
SOUND EFFECTS	1) Recorded: Often abbreviated to FX or SFX. There are many sources for recorded sound effects. May form an obvious part of the action (train arriving at the station) or may be in the background throughout a scene (e.g. birds chirping). 2) Live: Gunshots, door slams, and offstage voices (amongst many others) are most effective when done live.
SPECIAL	A lighting instrument used for a very specific purpose, rather than as part of a system such as an area light or color wash.
SPIKE	To mark the position of an item of set/furniture on stage, using chalk, paint, or tape. Sometimes called a spike mark.
STAGE DIRECTIONS	The printed instructions to actors and/or directors found in published plays, as in "John pauses and considers Mary's words, then walks to the window and peers out."

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STAGE LEFT	Actor's left when facing the audience.
STAGE RIGHT	Actor's right when facing the audience.
STRIKE	To take down a set after a production has closed. The use of the word "strike" in the theatrical sense of taking down scenery was recorded more than one hundred years ago--although builders had used the word as early as the 17th century to mean "remove" and sailors to mean "lower" (a mast or sail) in the 14th century. Today, it is usual to strike a set directly after the final performance, and there is good reason for doing so--a full complement of workers, both cast and crew.
STROBE	Short for stroboscope. A device giving a fast series of very short intense light flashes which can have the effect of making action appear intermittent. Because strobe lighting can trigger an epileptic attack the use of a strobe must be communicated to the audience before the performance begins. Regulations exist governing the maximum length of time for which a strobe can be used.
SWING	A member of the company of a musical who understudies one of the leads and is also in the chorus, but doesn't have a character name in the chorus.
THRUST	Form of stage that projects into the auditorium so that the audience are seated on at least two sides of the extended piece.

# A THEATER GUIDE FOR ACCESS PROVIDERS

TRAP	An opening through the stage floor. A grave trap is a lowered rectangular section. A cauldron trap is a simple opening through which items can be passed into a cauldron on stage. A star trap is a set of triangular sprung flaps in the stage floor through which an actor can be propelled from a lift below stage.
TRIM	A pre-plotted height for a piece of scenery or lighting bar-- usually measured against the height of the teaser. Sometimes flying pieces are given a number of extra trims, that may be color coded, in addition to the "in trim" (lower) and "out trim" (higher - out of view).
UNDERSTUDY	To learn the role of another actor so that if necessary one may take his place. Also, an actor who so prepares himself.
UPSTAGE	The part of the stage furthest from the audience.
VERTICAL SIGHT LINES	Imaginary lines drawn from the highest seats of the audience area, often in a balcony, and from the seats in the front row, to the lowest hanging obstructions over the stage, to determine what portions of the performing area will be visible to all of the audience.
VISUAL CUE	A cue taken by a technician from the action on stage rather than being cued by the stage manager.
VOM or VOMITORIUM	A passageway, originally for spectators, used to clear the seating area in quick fashion. Also used to describe a ramped passage that allows actors to run onstage from below (and run back).
WARDROBE	The general name for the costume department, its staff and the accommodation they occupy.
WARDROBE PLOT	Actor-by-actor, scene-by-scene inventory of all the costumes in a production, with a detailed breakdown into every separate item in each costume.
WASH	An even, overall illumination over a large area of the stage.
WINGS	The out of view areas to the sides of the acting area.
WORK LIGHTS	May be referred to as "Works." 1) High wattage lights used in a venue when the stage/auditorium lighting is not on. Used for rehearsals, fit-up, strike, and resetting. 2) Low wattage blue lights used to illuminate offstage obstacles and props tables, etc.