

Stage Terminology

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| 1. character / role | -the imaginary person the actor pretends to be |
| 2. actor / performer | -the “real” person on stage |
| 3. set | -actual furniture or lack of on stage |
| 4. cue | -a signal to begin |
| 5. sight cue | -a visual signal to begin |
| 6. sound cue | -an auditory signal to begin |
| 7. stage properties or props | -an item used on stage |
| 8. hand prop | -an easily handled item used on stage |
| 9. set prop | -large prop, not easily moved |
| 10. exposition | -information explaining events |
| 11. setting | -time and place the story takes place |
| 12. gesture | -movement expressing emotions |
| 13. dialogue | -spoken words with another actor on stage |
| 14. soliloquy | -an actor speaking to oneself on stage, usually stating emotions and/or thoughts |
| 15. monologue | -scene for one actor |
| 16. duet | -scene for two actors |
| 17. improvisation or improv | -a scene performed with little or no rehearsal |
| 18. pantomime | -a scene performed with no dialogue or sound |
| 19. stage business | -any specific action other than movement performed on the stage such as picking up a book or turning on a TV. |
| 20. stage right | -movement on the actor’s right when facing the audience |
| 21. stage left | -movement on the actor’s left when facing the audience |
| 22. downstage | -moving towards the audience |
| 23. upstage | -moving away from the audience, or the improperly taking attention from an actor who should be the focus of interest. |
| 24. actor position | -how the actor is facing |
| 25. full front | -facing fully towards the audience |
| 26. full back | -actor’s back is to the audience |

27. cheating out -opening up so audience can see more of actor
28. ad lib -to make up stage business or conversation
29. bit part -an acting role with very few lines.
30. blocking - arranging movement of the actors on stage by directors, or getting behind furniture, or other actors so that you cannot be seen by the audience
31. cross -the movement by an actor from one location to another on stage.
32. building a scene -using dramatic devices such as increased tempo, volume, and emphasis to bring a scene to a climax.
33. holding for laughs -waiting for the audience to quiet down after a funny line
34. milk -to draw the maximum response from the audience from comic lines
35. overlap -to speak when someone else is speaking
36. places the positions of the actors at the opening of an act or scene
37. principals -the main characters in a play
38. showmanship -a sense of theatre and the ability to present oneself effectively to the audience; stage charisma
39. stealing a scene -attracting attention from the person to whom the center of interest legitimately belongs.
40. subtext -character interpretations which are not in a script but are supplied by the actor
41. walk-on -a small acting part which has no lines.
42. blackout -absence of stage lighting
43. aside -lines spoken directly to the audience and assumed to be unheard by the other characters
44. beat -a deliberate pause for effect, or measure of time when holding for a cue
45. break a leg -a superstitious alternative to wishing someone good luck which is considered bad luck to say.
46. cast -member of the acting company on any given show
47. curtain call -at the end of the performance, cast collects on stage for bows and applause
48. green room -space for actors to use while waiting in rehearsals or

performances

Stage Occupations	
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Executive Director	-responsible for all financial and administrative operations of a theatre company
Artistic Director (AD)	-responsible for the selection and casting of a season of plays for the company
Stage Manager (SM)	-the person who calls the cues during performance, is the director's assistant during the rehearsal process, the liaison between cast and management
Assistant Stage Manager (ASM)	-assists a Stage Manager.
Technical Director (TD)	-responsible for the construction and installation of the scenery, sometimes has overall responsibility for the construction and installation of all aspects of production.
Set Designer	-creates the plans, paintings, models and drawings that describe the setting (the physical environment) for the theatre event
Costume Designer	-creates the drawings, fabric swatches, and lists that describe the clothing which will be worn by the performers
Lighting Designer	-creates the plans, lists, and program of lighting changes (cues) that determines which stage lights will be on at what moment
Props Supervisor	-person responsible for the construction and organization of the properties used for the show