

"STAGE ONE" YOUTH THEATRE COMPANY

BASIC BACK STAGE ETIQUETTE FOR ALL ACTORS AND TECHNICIANS

When to show up.

Be punctual we need to be able to start when you're called.

The Stage Manager will love you for it and so will your Director.

Absences

As soon as you know you cannot attend rehearsal or will be late – you must contact the director or designated person to let them know your situation, even though you are amateurs you are expected to bring professional ethics and work habits to the company.

Help your director and stage manager in their efforts to create an ensemble.

That means we all work together with mutual respect and support for one another.

Experienced actors and technicians know very well audiences will sense your energy.

Again, you're all amateurs but this is how professionals work. Be positive, open minded, and flexible.

No food or drink back stage.

This can create endless problems. Spilling could completely ruin furniture or painted scenery. Costumes can become stained or things will get knocked over in the dark. Only water bottles will be permitted.

Don't hang out in the wings watching the show.

Backstage space is pretty cramped, and the last thing the crew needs is to have to work around an extra body. Things can happen pretty quickly backstage, and you could find yourself causing a disaster by blocking someone's view when a visual cue is needed, or being in the way during a quick entrance, exit or scene change. Stay in the dressing room until you are called

Don't talk with anyone backstage unless it is essential to the show

This is a hard rule to follow. We have all done it. It is vital you do not distract your fellow actors or technicians. A whispered conversation in the wings can be very annoying to actors on stage, actors about to make an entrance and can even be heard in the house. The crew are waiting for a cue, just like you. If you distract them they may miss a cue. If you have something that you must communicate to a crew member because it affects your performance or the show, then do so, but make sure you're not interrupting something else that may be going on. If your crew uses headsets, always make the assumption that they're listening to something when you approach them and you won't go wrong.

Stay put until you're called for your cue.

The nerves get to you while waiting for your cue.

The crew can't call you if they can't find you. And while you may know perfectly well where you are, they don't. If the actors on stage skip ten pages, you're going to be needed on stage sooner than you thought, so don't count on going somewhere and making sure you're back "in time for your cue." If you need to be someplace to run lines, make sure the crew know and be there when they come to get you.

Arriving in the wings before you're cued. The number of times I've seen crew frantically trying to track down a missing actor who is subsequently found nonchalantly waiting in the wings on the opposite side of the stage.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure your mobile phone is switched off during the performance as they will interfere with the radio mics.

Don't play with or move the stage and hand props, and don't sit on the furniture backstage

What's the big deal with in moving a prop to a corner so you can perch there, or even just sitting on the chairs used for the dance sequence? The rule is "don't touch."

Props should only be handled in the context of the performance – you'd be surprised how easy it can be to break or damage a prop that looked sturdy enough when you picked it up. Never move a prop –stage managers and prop crew have specific spots for certain props, making it easier to find things in dim backstage lighting. If a prop or set piece backstage is a safety hazard, talk to the stage manager about it.

If you inadvertently take a prop that should remain in the wings to the green room with you, try to get it back up the prop table as soon as possible, or preferably by handing it of to a crew member who comes to the dressing room to call someone. Don't just lay it down somewhere, promising to put it back later.

Check your props before each performance, any that are pre-set for you to use on stage will be the responsibility of the stage crew, don't be afraid to ask the crew if the prop is set.

No friends or family backstage or in the dressing rooms.

They might really want to see the place where you dress and what the backstage and set looks like. Just let them know it's one of the rules and you have no choice.

Don't peek through the curtains.

Honestly... don't ever do this... never..ever..ever.

This goes along with not hanging out in the wings, you're in the way of the crew. Actors should only set foot on stage before the curtain opens to make a quick check of their props, and then they need to scam

Needless to say, looking out through the curtains or playing with soft leg curtains during a performance is strictly prohibited – under any and all circumstances.

No Prima Donnas when it comes to costumes.

All actors want to look good on stage. The director and wardrobe mistress, quite honestly, are more concerned about how appropriate costumes are for the concept they are creating. They are not designing costumes so you look really good for your friends and family. If there is a problem with the way it fits or inhibits movement, just let the wardrobe mistress know. She will do everything in her power to work with you.

Receiving Notes and Asking Questions

The director will give you notes either during or at the close of a rehearsal. It is vital you simply write it down and apply it to the next rehearsal or the next performance.

If you don't understand just raise your hand. The notes you are given are not to tell you how bad you are – quite the contrary – they are to help you become even better. Believe me, your director wants you to look as good as you can.

Costumes and Dressing Room

Your space in the Dressing Room must be kept orderly. Do not toss costumes to the floor or draped on a chair or bench. You will be told specifically how to handle costumes and to fail will mean looking bad on stage.

Headsets, Radio Mics

When wearing radio equipment it is vital that you are very careful with the pack and mic they are expensive and will not take rough treatment.

Never eat or have makeup applied when wearing them.