

RAINBOW YOUTH THEATRE - THEATRE ETIQUETTE – How To Be A Great Actor

As a community theatre, we encourage actors and actresses of all abilities and ages and backgrounds to take part in our plays, musicals and revues. Not all of our actors come to us with a strong familiarity with putting on a production; indeed for many, this is the first time that they've set foot on a stage. We researched how to interact with your fellow actors, behave in and around the stage, and what to do if all else fails. Thanks to CommunityTheater.org and [Actors' Equity](http://Actors'Equity) for ideas from their lists of actor's etiquette: [The Actor's Guide to Backstage Etiquette](#); [Actors' Equity Actors' Etiquette](#). So, here are some tips, in no particular order:

Rehearsals

1. Be 10 minutes early for every rehearsal. When the rehearsal time says 6 that means it will start at 6. Arrive early to put your stuff away and chat with the other actors and then be ready to give your full attention to the production crew at 6.
2. We have a limited amount of time to rehearse for a large production and so it is critical that everyone arrives ready to focus and give their full attention to the rehearsal process. That means absolutely no talking while the director is talking and no talking amongst yourselves while a scene is being rehearsed. Once you are no longer required in the rehearsal area you can leave the hall and chat outside waiting to be called back in. Please bring something to occupy you during down times a book, knitting etc. We will try our best to not have you sitting around for long periods of time with nothing to do but it will invariably happen so be prepared.
3. Come prepared to dance or move freely at every rehearsal. This means clothing that you can move in and shoes that you can dance in.
4. Accept all notes from the director graciously and say, "Thank you." Never disagree with the director in front of the cast and if you don't understand the note, ask the director for some one-on-one time to discuss.
5. Never give other actors notes and don't accept them from other actors. If someone does offer you notes, say "Thank you but we should take that through the director." The only members of the production who should be giving notes are the director and the stage manager. It's their job to make sure things look and sound the way they and the producers want, not yours.
6. Please let the producers know if you are going to miss a rehearsal. If you know in advance that you have a conflict please give it to us in writing or by email. We can never remember when people give us their schedule while we are cleaning up after rehearsals. If you are sick then do not come to rehearsal. We are working closely together and do not want illnesses to spread.
7. Your phone needs to be turned off or left off your body...always.
8. Our rehearsal time is short and so please do your homework: review your lines, songs and dances at home. When the Director says that she wants to be off book then she does actually mean that she wants to be off book.
9. Don't cut your hair off, get any tattoos or piercings, or otherwise change your appearance without asking the Director.
10. Please call the producers with any questions, concerns or thoughts. This is a collaborative effort between all of us and so we are here to answer anything.

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During the Show

11. Whether it's a rehearsal or production night, don't miss a call time. If you're going to be late or miss a rehearsal, let the stage manager or producer know as soon as possible so that there is plenty of time to make allowances.
12. Pay attention to the stage manager and assistant stage managers who will be telling you important stuff to keep the show running smoothly. Always thank the stage manager when she gives a call ("15 minutes!" "Thank you 15!") so the stage manager knows that you heard the call and are ready to go.
13. When you step off the stage, you must vanish. Walk quietly backstage, in access corridors, up and down stairs, and everywhere in the theatre. No talking or whispering off stage. No loud noise in the dressing room. Nothing ruins a scene more than the thumps of someone running to make a cue or someone talking in the wings.
14. Once the house is open, stay off the stage and out of the theatre. And even if your Aunt Matilda flew for 10 hours to see you on stage you can never, ever peek out of the curtain. Don't hang out in the wings to watch the show. The only people in the wings should be the backstage crew and the actors waiting for their cue.
15. While waiting in the wings for your cue, be aware of sight lines. If you can see the audience, they can see you.
16. Be extremely respectful of your costume. Always hang it up or put it away neatly; never ever leave it on the floor. Never modify your costume without checking first with the costume people. If your costume needs cleaning bring it to the attention of one of the costume people.
17. Never touch someone else's prop, even if you think it's out of place. It may have been moved there on purpose in order to help the flow of the show. Bring it to the attention of the stage manager if you think it's in the wrong location
18. Always check your props when you arrive at the theatre, and then before curtain. Things happen, props get bumped or moved or crushed. It's also comforting to know that everything is where you expect it to be before the curtain goes up. Never take your props out of the rehearsal or theatre space without permission.
19. Keep the dressing room neat and clean. You're going to be living here for a while and there's nothing more terrifying than losing a piece of your costume amid the mess, moments before you go on.
20. Be respectful of the sets. They are often fragile, and so need to be treated with care. Also, be respectful of the venue, in part because it is the right thing to do, and also because we hope to use it again!
21. No mobile phones permitted, especially in the wings! When you're waiting to enter or supporting the on-stage cast from the wings, the show deserves all of your attention. Put the phone away and save the texting and tweeting for after rehearsal or after the night's show.
22. Tech rehearsals can be tough and very boring for the actors. Hang in while the crews fine-tune cues and equipment and remember that they control all the lights! Give them the respect they deserve while doing their jobs: pay attention, stay quiet, and be available as they jump from scene to scene. You have done your rehearsing; now it is their time to rehearse and make you and the show look great, so be quiet, polite, and patient.
23. Always be respectful of everyone you work with: the staff, the crew, the directors, the designers, the other actors, and yourself!
24. Remember that you are working in a tight environment and so personal hygiene is critical. Please shower and use deodorant during the time period of all rehearsals and the show.