Music Theatre terms

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Broadway: commercial theaters with a minimum of 499 seats in NYC

Call time: when you’re expected to report to the theater for a rehearsal or performance

Costume fitting: when measurements are taken for your costume; may be a separate appointment

Dark: when the theater is closed (usually on Mondays).

Dressing room (or green room): where the actors get ready with their costumes and makeup; a safe space to warm up before the performance

Dress rehearsal: one of the last final performances before the show opens, with costumes added

Ensemble: the chorus that sings and acts throughout the show.

Limited engagement: when a show runs for a specific length of time, anywhere from 4 to 12 weeks

Marquis: a poster outside the theater with the show’s name, picture, and headlining actors

Matinee: a performance during the day, usually between 1 and 3 on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

National tour: a production that tours around a number of cities each week, instead of being established in one venue

Off-book: rehearsing without your script, so you must have your lines memorized

Off-Broadway: a theater in NYC with fewer than 499 seats, but more than 99 seats

Off-Off Broadway: a theater in NYC with fewer than 99 seats, and usually not-for-profit

Playbill: the official program given at each performance with the cast credits, pictures, and info about the show

Previews: when the show is running in previews, this means it isn’t the official opening yet, so there’s still time to work out any problems

Prop table: backstage where all of the props and materials for the show are placed

Sitzprobe: one of the first rehearsals with the orchestra or band, meant to review the music together

Stage directions: quick terminology to use on stage when blocking a scene on a stage (see expanded section below)

Standing only: a limited number of tickets sold for the back of the theater, where patrons can stand and watch the show when seating is sold out

Striking the set: taking the set apart after a show ends.

Swing: an understudy who learns many roles (sometimes as many as 10!)

Tech week: the week before opening where lights, sound, and scenery are incorporated in the rehearsals

Understudy: the person who learns the main roles, in case they have to go on in an emergency

**Audition Terms**

*Accompanist:* a piano player hired (either by you or the theater) to accompany you on your sheet music

*Callback:* an additional audition after the first… sometimes you’ll be called back as many as 10 times!

*Cold reading:*part of an audition in which you’re given very short notice to read from a script, either as a monologue or with a scene partner (may be given to you on the spot)

*Dance call:* a dance audition

*Headshot:* a professional picture of yourself printed on quality photo paper, usually 8 x 10, in either color or black and white

*Monitor:* a person who helps run the audition process (signing people up, calling names, etc.)

*Open call:* an open audition, meaning both non-union and union members can attend

*Showreel:* video clips (usually no more than 10 minutes) of you in your favorite performances, sometimes required for an audition

*Sight reading:* part of an audition in which you must read music on the spot, without seeing it or practicing it before

*Typecasting:* when actors are put in a room, and based on appearance (height, age, weight, hair color) are asked to stay and audition or leave. This may either be announced before an audition or happen on the spot.

*Monologue:* a solo acting speech