



Auditions and Casting FAQs

All members of Playbox Theatre have the opportunity to perform, if they want to, in a number of ways. These include our annual *Starry Nights* production, which is open to members of all ages, without audition...there are also informal 'sharings' that take place within workshops and occasionally at the end of season. However, part of the work Playbox Theatre does is to create regular, major productions to the highest possible standard. To participate in these, young people are required to audition and to make a significant commitment, if successful in casting. The auditions are competitive and below are some answers to a few of the most asked questions – we've divided them into two sections, AUDITIONS & CASTING.

Auditions

1/ How do I find out about auditions?

All details about upcoming auditions can be found in the Members' Area of our website. We will also send you emails about relevant casting calls, so it is really important that you mark emails from Playbox as 'Not Junk', or you may miss out on really important dates that you'd love to be involved in!

2/ Where do auditions happen?

Auditions take place at our theatre, The Dream Factory, in Warwick. There is parking on site, but very limited places, so make sure that your families have considered alternative parking options and allow lots of time to park and sign in...it gets very busy!

3/ Do I need to tell you that I'm coming to an audition?

Yes. Please register to audition on the Member Essentials Area of our website, unless otherwise stated in the Casting Call email about the audition. Please arrive in plenty of time (with plenty of time to find somewhere to park, as The Dream Factory fills up very quickly), then line up at the box office, follow instructions, then wait to be called into the space where the audition is taking place.

4/ How do I sign in at auditions?

On arrival, join the queue at the box office in the foyer. You'll be given a numbered sticker, which you need to wear during the audition (so we can easily make notes about you), and we will also take your photograph for reference before you go into your audition.

5/ What will I need to do at an audition?

This depends! Most auditions are improvisation and workshop based and you will take part in tasks similar to those that you will participate in during a normal Playbox Theatre workshop, and so won't require you to prepare anything...just come with a great attitude and ready to work hard! People at auditions are scored in a number of ways...often this will include your voice, your physical work, your attitude, ability to take direction, ability to listen and be patient...as well as ability to work as part of a team. All of these are vital to being a part of a Playbox production.

6/ Do I need to prepare?

If you *do* need to prepare something special e.g. a song, Shakespeare speech etc, this information will be provided in the Casting Call email. If you are asked to prepare in advance, make sure that you do this really thoroughly, as there will be lots of competition.

7/ What do I wear to an audition?

It is so important that you are suitably dressed for an audition. This means comfortable, practical clothing and shoes. The auditions will often be physical, so please change out of your school uniform and into something that you are more relaxed in and is suited to physical work. Skirts are really not suitable.

8/ Do you need to be a member of Playbox to audition?

Absolutely! Only registered members of Playbox Theatre are eligible to audition for our productions and we double check this when casting is taking place.

9/ Do I need to have been at Playbox a long time before attending an audition?

No! You can start auditioning for productions the moment you are a fully paid-up member of the company. We do explore people's audition histories in detail when we are casting, so if you are very new, and there is a lot of competition in your 'casting bracket' then it might take several auditions before you are cast...but the sooner you leap in and start trying, the sooner that role will come along!

10/ How many people tend to audition for Playbox productions?

Lots! For most productions, you will find that there are large numbers of young people attending auditions. The Christmas Show tends to be the most over-populated of all! Sometimes, if the project is very small-scale, or a particularly unusual piece, numbers auditioning will be much smaller...but you should anticipate the theatre being very busy and full of nervous energy!

11/ Do I have to pay to come to an audition?

No. There are no fees to audition for our productions...although your families might like to buy a cup of tea from the café while they wait for you!

12/ If I can't make the audition, can I be seen at another time or still considered for a role?

Unfortunately, this is rarely possible. We try to advertise auditions as far in advance as we can, to give people the chance to make arrangements to be available for the audition. If you can't make it, there is little chance that we will be able to consider you, as priority will be given to those attending the event. You are always welcome to email our Info Desk, just in case we decide to run a second audition, or in case we can see someone individually...although we must stress that this is very rare and should not be expected.

13/ What do parents do during the auditions?

It is much the same as a normal workshop. Parents must not attend auditions with their children...and if you are not ready to attend on your own, then you're not ready for the pressures of rehearsals and performances. Parents can wait in the front of house area whilst you're working or can leave the premises and come back in time for the end (as long as they're back promptly!).

Casting

1/ How long does casting take?

Casting is a very tricky process, which involves all Workshop Directors as well as the production director. It's really important that we get it right and consider each candidate very carefully. Casting will take a minimum of two weeks but can take up to four weeks and we ask for your patience during this time.

2/ How do you make your decisions about casting?

Decisions are made in a number of ways. Ultimately, the production director's decision is final, but along the way, all Workshop Directors will advise and give feedback regarding how someone is doing in their weekly Playbox workshop (sometimes it's hard to see someone's full potential in a short audition). We will take into consideration someone's suitability for a role...but also a number of other factors. We need to get a good blend of both experience, as well as young people who have never performed before. We also need to make sure that there is good representation from across all Playbox centres, as well as a range of ages. On the registration form, we ask people to provide information about the number of previous auditions they've attended, as well as the number of times they have been successful. We want to make sure that no-one is repeatedly overlooked...although it can take several auditions before a suitable casting comes along.

3/ What are my chances of being cast?

This varies and it is a hard question to answer. Our casting process is thorough and fair...although the process is highly competitive, and we have a responsibility to our audiences and our reputation to ensure that our standards are very high. It is impossible to always cast everyone we would like to...and that is why casting can take a long time and involves lengthy discussions relating to every single person who attends. We will not allow someone to repeatedly audition without being successful, although you must realise that this might take several attempts. The theatre industry is very tough, and we spend a lot of time talking to our members about its realities...members often understand this, but it can be very challenging for parents, so being realistic and supporting children through auditions is really important.

4/ I feel as though I keep seeing the same names on the cast lists...why is this?

One of the reasons will be that certain members of Playbox will audition for absolutely *everything* that they are eligible for! If someone auditions all the time and isn't selective about which projects they try to get involved in, then their chances of being regularly cast will increase. Another reason is that it is very important that productions blend *experience* with *inexperience*, in order for cast members to learn from those who are a lot more seasoned in Playbox's way of working – this ensures that cast are learning performance skills quickly and effectively. The final reason is that our productions must always be delivered to the highest possible standard – as is the case in all professional theatres. A major consideration when casting is to select young people who will deliver superb performances. It is a competitive industry and one of the reasons that Playbox excels is because the company's standards are incredibly high.

5/ How will we find out if we've been successful?

We always post the cast list on the Member Essentials area of our website but will also email successful cast to confirm they have been selected. It's very important that you provide the correct email address at the time of audition and write it really clearly, so that you don't miss this really important email!

6/ How will we find out if we've not been successful?

We always try to email members who have not been successful, but sometimes this is not possible, and you may find out before the email reaches you, when the cast list goes up. It's always our aim to contact members before the list goes public, but sometimes this just isn't possible.

7/ What can I do to improve my chances of being cast in a production?

There's lots that you can do! Firstly, audition as often as you can...build that audition history up and don't be too selective...don't think "I'm just going to do the Christmas Show this year"...the chances are, you won't be cast if it's the only thing you've auditioned for, and then you'll be left with nothing! You should also work really hard in your weekly Playbox workshop so that your Centre Director is keen to support you during casting...make sure that you attend your workshop regularly so that we can see the value you place on your training. Talk to your Centre Director about how you can improve your chances, as then we'll know



how keen you are! Also – get to know us! Come and see other productions at The Dream Factory and tell your director that you are...we love seeing members supporting one another and this 'community' it what we strive to create...when we are casting, we're not just looking for exceptional talent, we are also looking for an ensemble of generous, supportive, passionate young artists who will thrive on working together...show us that you're this type!

8/ Where do Playbox productions happen?

Usually, productions take place at The Dream Factory. This is our very own theatre, and all of our members have total ownership of it. Rehearsals and performances take place here and we are so lucky to have it! Occasionally, a project will be created for a different venue, or will go on tour. This will all be detailed in your Casting Call email, so make sure that you read the small print carefully!

For any other questions, please email info@playboxtheatre.com