

FAQs Rehearsals and Performances

Being cast in a Playbox Theatre production is the start of a wonderful adventure. You will have such an exciting time creating new work, and meeting talented young actors from across all Playbox Theatre's centres. Being in a production is a large and intensive commitment...not just for the performer, but for the family as well...so you need to make sure you're able to fulfil what's required, before deciding to audition. The director will be under considerable pressure during the rehearsal period, so it is vital that all cast members, and their families, fulfil their side of the arrangement.

1/ How will I be told about rehearsals?

Rehearsals are always listed at the time of audition, so that you can check your availability before you come along. Once you're cast, we will email you a rehearsal schedule, which you and your family will need to read very carefully. Rehearsal schedules will also be posted on the Playbox website, so you can double check things!

2/ Where do rehearsals happen?

Unless it is a special project at a different venue, rehearsals will take place at Playbox's theatre, The Dream Factory, in Warwick. You will often start 'blocking' rehearsals in a studio, before transferring into the main theatre as time moves towards the opening of a production.

3/ When do rehearsals happen?

Rehearsals always happen out of school time and each rehearsal period will be slightly different...depending upon how many rehearsals a particular project needs. Generally, rehearsals happen at weekends – Saturday afternoon/evening and Sunday during the daytime. Rehearsals also take place during the holidays during the daytime. Shortly before a production opens, there will be Technical and Dress rehearsals...these will often happen in the evening, and there are likely to be a couple of consecutive evenings and these may well be school nights. Tech and dress rehearsals tend to be 5-9pm. You will need to pace yourself well, so

that you can cope with the demands and pressures of both school and your commitment to Playbox...and your parents need to keep on top of this too!

4/ What time do I need to be at rehearsals?

All rehearsal call times will be detailed on your call sheet. Often they will take place 3-7pm on Saturdays and 10am-4pm on Sundays. If it's during the holidays, rehearsals are likely to be 10am-4pm too...but do bear in mind that specific times for each project will really vary – some directors prefer to start rehearsals at 9am, so be prepared for an early start! You should aim to be at your rehearsal venue 10 mins before the rehearsal actually starts, so that everything can begin on-time without any pressure or stress.

5/ Will I definitely need to come to all rehearsals?

You will definitely need to attend every single rehearsal you are called for...and this is non-negotiable! At the time of audition, you should make sure that, in theory, you are available for every rehearsal and every performance date. Once the show is cast, a 'broken down' schedule will be issued, where you'll see exactly which rehearsals you are needed for. You will not be allowed to miss any part of any rehearsal...and absence is likely to result in the loss of your role from the production. Understanding the full commitment in advance is vital for you and your family.

6/ What do I wear for rehearsals?

Great question...and it's amazing how often people wear inappropriate clothes to rehearsals, which can make it really tricky for the actor. You should always wear really comfortable clothes that you can move freely, and practically, in...and soft shoes. Skirts and tight clothing is really unsuitable. Rehearsals are often highly physical and you'll get very hot...you should never think about your own appearance when coming to a rehearsal, but rather what is going to help you to deliver the best possible work while you're there! If you are cast in a period drama, your director may ask you to wear a practice skirt, or character shoes. If there are particular items you'll need to wear to rehearse in, you'll be told well in advance.

7/ What should I bring to rehearsals?

This is a really good question and we would encourage you to get into great habits now...that will serve you well for the rest of your acting career! You should always take a PENCIL (not a pen!) so that you can make copious notes...but can always rub them out and rewrite them, as things tend to change such a lot during a rehearsal period. You should also take a note book, to write down anything special that you'll need to remember, and so you can make detailed notes of physical sequences. Of course...if you have a script, NEVER forget to take this...and make sure that you write absolutely everything down on your script – don't expect that you'll remember things from one week to the next...your script should contain notes of everything that you do, and not just everything that you say.

8/ What can I *not* bring to rehearsals?

Rehearsals need to be very focussed...with no distractions at all! No phones or electronic devices are allowed into the rehearsal room (unless they are silent and stowed in a bag). A director will react very badly if a cast member is seen using a phone during a rehearsal and poor attitude may result in the cast member being asked to leave the production. However, there are often long periods of waiting, when an actor is not needed in the rehearsal, or on stage. During this time you can read, relax in the foyer, talk with other cast members – so it's fine to bring something to do...just be very mindful about what you actually take into the rehearsal studio itself.

9/ What is expected of parents, if I'm cast in a production?

Parents will need to ensure that you are always on time for your rehearsals. Lateness is not acceptable. Your parents will also need to ensure that you are collected on time. Additionally, they will need to support you in between rehearsals – this involves helping you to learn lines, talking through your 'moves' and sourcing your costume. Importantly, your parents will also be expected to volunteer to help backstage at one, or more, of your performances. We need to have a full team of chaperones/parent helpers working backstage, and, legally, a specific number of Warwickshire County Council 'approved' chaperones. At the time of casting, we will ask parents if they would be prepared to become approved – this is not obligatory, but the more 'Approved' Chaperones we have, the easier it is for us to satisfy requirements.

10/ How do parents become backstage helpers?

We will give out 'chaperone' letters at the start of the rehearsal period and ask parents to indicate which date/s they can help us with. We will also ask which parents are prepared to become 'Approved' via Warwickshire County Council. For full information on what is involved in becoming an Approved Chaperone, please email info@playboxtheatre.com and our Head Of Children's Welfare will contact you directly.

11/ What information will I need to give to Playbox, if I'm cast in a production?

We will need your parents to complete a medical form, telling us about any medication or treatment that you need, and also about any medical conditions that you have, so that we can keep you safe and well.

12/ Will it cost me money to be in a production?

There is no charge to be in a Playbox Theatre production, although there may be costs associated with your involvement. You will usually need to provide your own costume, which may have an associated cost – *see Qu.14 for details*. Additionally, we hope that our casts will encourage as many people as possible to book tickets for the show they are in, and we actively encourage cast members to help us publicise the work.

13/ Do I need to sell tickets for shows I'm in?

As mentioned, you are not *required* to sell tickets...this is a job for our marketing team...but we really do encourage all cast members to help support Playbox's marketing efforts. We will ask you to invite as many family and friends as possible...you might want to take leaflets into school, drop leaflets through neighbours' letterboxes, display a photo at your school or in a shop etc. Anything you can do to help promotion is always appreciated!

13a/ How do people buy tickets for a show I'm in?

We hope that lots of people will come and support you when you're performing with Playbox Theatre. Tickets are often on sale even before a production is cast, so family and friends should book early, to avoid disappointment, once you hear you are going to be appearing in a production. The best way to buy tickets is

through our website – you would go to the ‘What’s On’ page and click through to TicketSource, who manage all of our on-line sales. You can also book tickets by calling us at The Dream Factory and booking over the phone, or in person when you are being dropped off at rehearsals.

14/ Will I have to provide my own costume?

It is very likely that you will need to provide your own costume, and sometimes this will involve purchasing fabric and arranging for someone to make your costume for you. Each production is different, and costume designs will vary in their complexity. Sometimes, costumes will be simple items that can be bought from charity or local shops...other times there will be specific items that you’ll be asked to order from a particular website...and, occasionally, the design will be more complicated and you will require specific fabric and a dressmaker to follow a pattern. Guidance will always be given in good time and we will have a volunteer Costume Co-ordinator to support parents along the way. Cast members are responsible for paying for their costumes. Playbox doesn’t often store costumes on site, so you will keep your costume, once the production is over.

15/ What happens if I don’t know anyone in the show?

One of the things that’s really important to everyone at Playbox is building a tight, supportive, drive ‘community’. You can guarantee that by the end of your first rehearsal, you will already have made lots of new friends...many people you work on a production with will become friends for life! Our directors fully understand how daunting it can be to step into the rehearsal room for the first time, and we all work hard on that first day to make sure that everyone is happy, settled and really well looked after. If you have any worries, your director will always be happy to help you.

16/ Will I have lines in a production?

Maybe...maybe not! At Playbox, the emphasis is always placed up ‘the ensemble’ – we seek a company of dynamic, talented, passionate young artists who will work together to create a piece of live performance that is exciting and challenging for everyone involved. We do not place value on ‘who has the most lines’, or who has most time on stage...and we ask parents to support this very important attitude towards creating art. If the piece you are in has text, some

characters will have lines, but many won't...this doesn't mean that you are *any* less important...or that you should work any less hard! The more experienced you become through your training and your time on stage, the more likely you are to be given a speaking role...although, as in the industry, there are no guarantees! Some of our productions are entirely physical, so no-one has anything to say at all...and these are some of the most exciting projects you could ever work on!

17/ Will I need to be at all performances?

Absolutely! We can't do without you in rehearsals, and we certainly can't do without you in performances. This is a professional commitment and we do not have the infrastructure to operate an understudy system. Sometimes, we will cast two teams of actors for a production, and we will give your specific performance dates at the time of casting. This is rare, so at the time of audition, you must know that you are available for the whole performance run.

18/ What time will I be called before a performance?

Performance call times will vary and may be decided quite last minute, depending on how much work is still to be done before opening night. If it was a tricky final dress rehearsal, you might be called earlier, so that problems can be solved before doors open. Generally, you will be called 2 hours before opening night, then 1 hour before subsequent performances. Do be aware that this is a guide only, and each production is different. If there is a lot of make-up design in a show, then cast might need to arrive earlier, in order to apply this. If it is a particularly physically demanding production, cast might need an advanced call in order to do a thorough physical warm up. You must *always* be on time for your performance call, so that you can go through notes with the director, get into costume, set props and take part in the company warm up.

19/ I'm only on stage a little bit, what can I do when I'm not on stage?

When you're backstage, in the dressing rooms, you will need to stay really calm and focussed. Most of the time, cast members like to chat together, but you are also welcome to bring a book or something quiet to occupy you. It's really important that you don't bring anything that could distract you or take your focus away from the production. Chaperones will be in each dressing room, making sure that everyone keeps their mind on the work they are doing. There are

tannoys in each dressing room, so you will be able to hear the production as it runs, so that you can ensure you're not late for any cue.

20/ Are there any handy tips to help me make a great impression during rehearsals and performances?

There are lots of things that you can do that will make sure directors and the backstage team will want to work with you again! Here are a few favourites...

- Be punctual...never, ever arrive late for a call (and make sure your parents understand how crucial this is)
- Always come prepared – don't get a reputation for being the one that never has their script, pencil, notebook etc.
- Do your homework in-between rehearsals! This is REALLY important...directors will notice who has put the effort in at home and who has come well-prepared having spent time thinking about the project...this will create a very good impression
- Be an excellent member of our 'ensemble' – keep remembering that one of Playbox Theatre's most important values is that of a company working together in harmony. DO NOT be an actor who is constantly trying to pull attention onto themselves...do not be vain, do not be ungenerous to other company members, do not be selfish. No matter how talented someone is, a director will not want to work with an actor who cannot see the value of the Ensemble.
- Bring a great attitude to rehearsals...be enthusiastic, positive and supportive of the work and of the other cast members.
- NEVER YAWN! Yawning in rehearsals is a big 'no' ...you'll get tired, but please don't yawn...directors hate it and it is very insulting. If you're flagging, go and splash your face with water instead!

**YOU'RE NOW READY TO PERFORM WITH PLAYBOX THEATRE...
ENJOY EVERY SECOND...THERE IS NO EXPERIENCE TO BETTER IT 😊**

**For further information on any of the above, please contact
info@playboxtheatre.com**