

Rehearsal Etiquette

For many actors, the rehearsal process is one of the best parts of being in a show. Take the time to explore your character, refine your craft, and bond with the rest of the ensemble. In other words, relish it! That said, however, rehearsal is only fun as long as it is constructive, which is why rehearsal etiquette exists. Following these general rules-of-thumb will go a long way towards keeping the rehearsal process running smoothly and efficiently (adapted from numerous sources, including Actors' Equity, Actors' Etiquette).

We will follow the Code of Conduct for Valley Troubadours.

Read Your Email This is on you, and email is our primary mode of communication.

Attendance and Punctuality:

Attendance is not optional. When you miss a rehearsal, the rest of the cast has to work around your absence. When you return, the director has to take extra time to brief you on what you missed, and the cast has to re-adjust to accommodate your presence in the scene. Arrive 10-15 minutes early to give yourself time to relax, focus, and get into character. If for some reason, you must be late or you cannot avoid missing a rehearsal, ***let the Production Manager know well in advance.***

Come Prepared:

Bring a pencil to write notes in your script. Review your lines and music before you come to rehearsal, and memorize your material as early in the rehearsal process as possible. Make sure you are getting enough to eat and getting plenty of rest. Your voice, your body, and your show needs you to be in the best health possible.

Proper Attire:

Shoes must be worn at all times! NO BARE FEET! Remember, modesty!

Safety is extremely important.

We expect everyone to act in a safe manner at all times. No roughhousing. No climbing, except stairs. We do not want you to endanger yourself or anyone else in the cast, crew or audience. Please don't take chances or show off for your friends.

If guns will be used in this show, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER touch one of the guns unless you are specifically assigned by the stage manager or director. No "outside" firearms, weapons, ammunition or explosives of any kind are to be brought at any time to rehearsals.

Rehearsal Process and Leaving and Entering the Rehearsal Space:

When rehearsal is on-going, please be quiet and attentive. If the director has to focus on something or someone other than you, use this down time to review your lines, and be ready to jump back in when needed. If there is a long break between your scenes, you may wait quietly just outside of the rehearsal area. However, please do not enter and exit unnecessarily while other actors are rehearsing, because you may distract them. Wait until a break in the scene.

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There may be longer rehearsals. You are welcome to bring a deck of cards, snacks, quiet things to do with friends when you are not on stage.

- Do not disappear from the rehearsal area once you have checked in. If you need to leave, make sure that you clear it with the Stage Manager or Director.
- Do not leave BMH grounds without your **parent's** approval. We are not the ones who give you approval to walk around the block, just to leave rehearsal.
- If you leave, you must be back on time for your scene.

Notes:

What are “notes”? Directions from the directors often given at the end of rehearsal.

Receiving Them: Be gracious about receiving advice and notes from your director, even when you disagree. The director’s vision is what drives a production, and the way you portray your character is an integral part of that vision. Please understand that the notes session is not personal therapy. The director has a limited amount of time, and she/he needs to make corrections as quickly as possible. If you need clarification or have concerns that affect only you or your character, talk with the director privately.

Giving Them: Do not give other feedback during “notes” session. NEVER give another actor or crew member notes or advice that undermines the director’s authority or vision. Sharing general techniques or tips with other actors is acceptable, although even this can be perceived as overbearing and patronizing. Furthermore, giving contrary instructions or advice, or questioning the director’s decisions or sanity publicly is a major no-no. *Focus your efforts on developing your own character!*

Experiment and Be Supportive:

Experiment with your character in the early phases of the rehearsal process. This is a normal part of character development! Discuss your ideas with your director BEFORE implementing them during a rehearsal. Changes in blocking or characterization can really throw your fellow actors off, and they need to be aware not only that these changes are taking place, but also the motivation behind them.

“Putting yourself out there” is both risky and scary, yet that is what acting is all about. Sometimes, something that a fellow actor does will work well, but other times, that actor may look (and feel) silly. *Be encouraging and supportive, regardless.* The best environment for nurturing this creative process is one where there is trust. Just because we play dramatic characters onstage does NOT mean that we must be dramatic offstage. *Speak positively to each other and about each other.*

Boundaries:

This is an academic, learning environment. Not everyone likes to be touched, and you need to be respectful of each other’s personal space, regardless of the other’s gender or age. Also, a general etiquette note – if someone is getting into character, do not jolt them out of character by calling them by their “real” name, striking up casual conversation, or asking them questions about their “real” lives.

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Respect Badger Meeting House:

Be respectful of the space- clean up after yourselves, leave the space better than when you got there. Throw away trash, return furniture to original locations, and report any spills or damage to the Stage Manager immediately so that s/he can take care of it.

No eating or gum-chewing in costume, and no gum-chewing EVER when you are rehearsing or performing.

Respect Each Other:

By the time this production has ended, over 100 volunteers will have contributed their time to stage this play, many of whom will work hundreds of hours on the show.

Unsung Heroes:

Whenever you have the chance, thank the unsung heroes of every production—the crew, the designers, the production assistant—these folks work incredibly hard behind the scenes, but they rarely get the credit that they deserve. Please let them know that you appreciate them! Remember, you too, can be an unsung hero!!

Trust the Process, Trust the Process, Trust the Process:

Remember this mantra! Sometimes, the blocking that your director has in mind does not translate well when it is actually staged. Sometimes, actors struggle to grasp characterizations, memorize their lines, or remember their blocking. Sometimes, crew members take a while to get the timing down on set movements, lighting cues, or prop placements. In sum – rehearsal is a process, not a finished product. A production changes, evolves, and adapts, and as tedious as the process can be at times, it is an absolute thrill to be a part of this incredible effort. Don't lose sight of this, no matter how exhausted or exasperated you may feel at times. Have faith in the dedication and skills of the entire company... be supportive and trust the process.

We reserve the right to recast characters for behavioral or attendance issues.

Thank you All!

~ Your Production Team