

BACKstage

Technical Theatre for High Schools

Costume and Wardrobe Terminology

Accessory: Object not essential in itself but adding to the appearance or effectiveness of the costume

Alter: Modify a pattern or garment to suit individual sizing or design preference

Alteration: Changes made to the fit of a garment or mockup

Applique: Pieces of fabric or trim attached to a background fabric in a decorative design

Armseye: Opening in the body of a garment to accommodate an arm. Synonym: Arm Hole

Basting: Large or long temporary stitch holding a hem or seam in place. Synonym: Tacking

Bias: Stretchiest part on the fabric that runs diagonally to the straight grain of the fabric.

Blind Hem Stitch: Hand or machine stitch that is not meant to be seen on the right side of the garment.

Blocking: Technique for stretching, easing, and redistributing stitches in a finished piece of knitting, crochet, or felt.

Bobbin: 1) Cylinder on which thread is wound; 2) Part of the sewing machine that holds the lower thread.

Bodice: Part of a garment which covers the upper part of the body.

Bolt: Fabric sold or stored on a tubular roll or a rectangular form.

Boning: Stays inserted into stitched channels inside a garment creating stiffness.

Changing Booth: Space for quick changes of costume, usually temporary in nature. Synonym: Quick Change Booth

Closure: Anything that is used to close up a costume, such as hooks & bars, zippers, buttons or snaps.

Corset: Woman's close-fitting boned supporting undergarment that extends from above or beneath the bust to the waist or below the hips.

Costume: Clothing that is worn by anyone on the stage.

Costume Designer: Person who creates the designs for the costumes in a production.

Costume Parade: Review of costumes onstage.

Costume Plot: Paperwork to track the placement and movement of costumes during a production.

Costume Shop: Department responsible for the construction or acquisition and fitting of costumes, also the location where this work takes place.

Costume Shop Manager: Person who is responsible for the costume shop, including budgets and schedules, and supervises all costume employees. Synonym: Head of Shop

Cross-stitch: Hand stitches that cross to form an X.

Cutter: Person that cuts pieces of fabric from a pattern.

Dart: V shaped, tapered adjustment to a pattern to allow for more fullness in the bust area or less fullness.

Drape: Manner in which fabric hangs and falls from the body.

Draper: Person who creates patterns for costumes based on designer's renderings, and performer's measurements.

Dress Form: Body shaped mannequin on which a garment or pattern can be draped or fitted. Synonym: Body Block, Dress Dummy, Mannequin

Dresser: Person who assists the performer with costumes.

Fashion Fabric: Outer fabric in a garment.

Fitting: Process of customizing and adjusting the garment to the shape and size of the performer.

Fusible Web: Characteristic of being able to be ironed on due to a heat-activated adhesive. Synonym: Fusible, Iron-On, Stitch Witchery®, Wonder-Under®

Gaiter: Worn over the shoe and/or leg.

Gather: Collecting a piece of fabric into a series of folds to create fullness.

Head Block: Form to hold a hat during construction. Synonym: Hat Block

Head of Wardrobe: Person who supervises the dressers, and wardrobe maintenance. Synonym: Wardrobe Head, Wardrobe Master, Wardrobe Mistress

Hem: Fabric turned up on lower edge of a garment or sleeve to provide a finished edge.

Hook & Eye Closure: Pairing of metal hook and a loop made of fabric or metal. Synonym: Hook & Eye

Hook & Loop: Fabric-like fastener that is designed to interlock. Synonym: Velcro®

Inseam: Seam inside the leg of pants that runs from the crotch to the hem.

Linen: Yarn or fabric made from flax fibers.

Lining: Pieced fabric that is used as the inside surface of a garment.

Mic Pack: Pouch for wireless microphone battery and transmitter. Synonym: Belt Pack

Milliner: Member of the costume crew whose responsibility is constructing hats and other headgear. Synonym: Hat Maker

Needle: A small sharp pointed implement used for sewing with an eye or hole at one end.

Overlock: Machine stitching done over a seam to prevent unraveling. Synonym: Merrow®, Overcasting, Overstitching, Serge

Painter/Dyer: Member of the costume crew whose responsibility is dying and painting raw fabric for the construction of costumes, and finished costumes that need further decoration or distressing.

Pinking Shears: Scissor-like tool with sawtooth cutting-edge blades

Presser: Member of the costume crew whose job it is to iron and press costumes as they are being constructed.

Pulled Costume: Garment that is selected from inventory

Quick Change: Rapid costume switch during a performance. Synonym: QC

Rehearsal Clothes: Garments used by the performers that have similar characteristics as the costumes that they will be wearing in the production. Synonym: Practice Clothes, Tech Rehearsal Clothes

Ruff: Large round collar of pleated muslin or linen worn by men and women of the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Seam: Line of junction formed by joining two pieces of material.

Serger: Sewing machine that stitches the seam, encases the raw edge with thread, and cuts off excess fabric at the same time. Synonym: Merrowing Machine

Shopper: Person who, under the direction of designer and/or shop manager, purchases all necessary supplies to construct the costumes.

Sizing: Starch or glue applied to stiffen and/or fill the fabric.

Snood: Hair accessory designed to hold the hair in a cloth or yarn bag.

Stay: Stiff item inserted into garment to hold a flat shape. Synonym: Bone

Steam Iron: Iron that heats water into steam.

Steamer: Appliance that delivers steam to a hand wand. Synonym: Hand Steamer

Swatch: A sample strip cut from a piece of fabric.

Tailor: Person responsible for final fitting and construction of men's garments and/or fitted suits.

Tape Measure: Flexible tape for taking body measurements. Synonym: Tape

Velcro®: Trade name (VELCRO®). Synonym: Hook & Loop

Wardrobe: Department responsible for the organization and maintenance of finished costumes during the run of the show.

Wardrobe Maintenance: Cleaning and repair of costumes during the run of a production.

Wardrobe Supervisor: Person who oversees the costumes during the run of a production.

Wig Master: Person who acquires and styles wigs and hairpieces and often is in charge of maintaining them through the run of a production.

Work Space: Any area where work such as stitching, dying, wig making, millinery or crafts can be completed. Synonym: Shop

Yardage: Quantity of materials measured in running yards.

Zipper: Fastener consisting of two rows of teeth on strips drawn together by a sliding piece.