

# Instructional Terminology

Stagecraft - 50.0599.00

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## A

**Acoustics** – The physical properties of a performance space which affect how sound travels and is perceived

**Acrylic** – A water-soluble paint that is fast-drying

**Amplification** – Increasing the amplitude or energy of a sound source

**Amplifier** – The device in a sound system which increases signal strength of a sound source

**Audio Connectors** - Cables and adapters used in setting up a sound system

## B

**Back stitch** – A strong, permanent stitch created by overlapping stitches

**Barn doors** – Accessories for floodlight style lights with large folding panels, allowing a floodlight (i.e. PAR, Fresnel) to be shuttered

**Bass** - The low frequencies of a sound source

**Batten** – The metal pipe above the stage to which the scenery, curtains, or lights are attached

**Blade** - Cutting surfaces of a tool

**Bobbin** - The cylinder on which the lower thread used in sewing machines is wound

**Borders**- The long short horizontal curtains the width of the stage used to mask the top of the stage

**Bow Knot** - Overhand and bow knots are used to tie soft goods (Legs, Borders, Full Blacks) to a batten

**Bowline** – A type of bow knot, sometimes called a rescue knot, a safe knot for tying around an object which will not slip

## C

**Cables** - An insulated group of wires for carrying electricity

**Chain Motors**- A type of motorized rigging used to lift a large items typically found in arena rigging

**Channel control** – The section of a mixer that controls the level and output paths of a specific channel input

**Cheeseborough** – Pipe clamp for attaching two pieces to each other, often fixed or on a swivel

**Clove Hitch**- The type of knot that is used to tie a rope around a batten. The more tension, the stronger the knot. This knot needs a half hitch to secure it.

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This Instructional Terminology is aligned to both the Program Blueprint for Instruction & Assessment as well as the Instructional Framework. It corresponds with the technical standards adopted January 2018. Use of content-specific terminology is provided to help identify consistent definitions.

**Compressor** – A device that reduces the volume of the loudest sounds and amplifies the volume of the softest sounds to reduce the volume range of a sound source

**Condenser microphone** – A microphone which uses a suspended membrane to capture sound waves and requires phantom power to create a stronger signal than a dynamic mic

**Conductor** – Something with the capacity to transmit electrical current

**Control Protocols** – What happens when commands for a particular address conflict with each other:

- HTP/Highest takes priority – The highest value takes priority over other information and will show a change onstage
- LTP/Last takes priority – The last channel affected by the console will show a change onstage

**Costume Rendering** – A sketch of a costume design that shows detail such as color, detailing, footwear, headwear, hair, makeup, and other accessories to be worn or carried by the actor

**Counterweight system**- A rigging system composed of a batten or pipe over this stage space, suspended by cables connected to the arbor containing weights. This system allows scenery or equipment to be raised or lowered over the stage space.

**Crepe hair** - False hair used in theatrical makeup

**Crossfade** – A transition between two sound files or sound sources fading one out while bringing in the other

**Cue** – An event onstage or indicated in the script which signals the sound board operator to play a sound, turn a mic on or off, or complete other functions

**Cues** - A way of storing information on a programmable console. Cues store intensity, channel, and time parameters, and are used for playback during a production.

**Cyclorama**- a large white curtain or wall typically used at the far upstage position on a stage for lighting

## D

**Decibel** - (dB) Unit used to measure the pressure level or volume of sound waves

**Dimensional lumber** – Wood specified in inches, cut to a standard width and depth (i.e. 2x4)

**Dimmer** – Physical hardware used to control the intensity of a lighting fixture onstage

**Disconnect** – To remove any electrical potential from equipment, such as unplugging or turning off switches/breakers

**DMX512** - Standard protocol for lighting, consisting of one way information sent from a console to dimmer rack, and often on to automated fixtures or devices

**Double Purchase** –A counterweight system where 1 pound of weight over the stage requires 2 pounds of weight on the arbor. Battens move 2 feet for every 1 foot the arbor moves

**Drop/backdrop** – Large canvas that is painted and hung as scenery. Very flexible ways to use in both size and rigging effects, such as full (entire stage), cut (for effects like trees/leaves), and roll (unwrapped for effect)

## E

**Elevations** – Also known as orthographic projections; the top, side, rear and front view of an object in two-dimension form on paper for a carpenter to use as a building reference.

## F

**Fence** – The back or side of the cutting surface that holds materials in the blade or guides the path of the wood

**Flame Retardant** – A type of treatment that, when applied to materials, slows or prevents a fire

**Foot pedal** - A device used to control the sewing instrument needle up and down.

## G

**Gain** – Controls sound signal strength. Often referred to as a trim or pre-amp, boosting an incoming signal for processing through a mixer.

**Gel frames** – Metal frame for holding color media that fits in the front of a light and is secured by a clip

**Gobo**– An accessory for ellipsoidal lights that is commonly made of metal or glass, used to create patterns which project onstage (From the term GoesBeforeOptics)

**Grain line** - The direction of fabric fibers

**Ground plan/Floor plan**- A diagram to scale of a set/stage

**Guards** – Safety devices to provide protection for the user from moving parts of power tools

## H

**Half Hitch**- The locking knot used to secure other knots prone to slipping, such as a clove hitch.

**Hand Wheel/balance wheel** – Wheel used to manually advance the needle up and down on a sewing machine

**Heat Gun** – A hand-held tool that generates extreme heat, often used for melting plastic or molding soft materials

**Hydraulics** – A system for moving items using pressurized liquid

## I

**Input** – The jack through which audio energy goes into a board or computer for processing

**Insulator** – Something that will not transmit electrical current

**Iris** – An accessory for ellipsoidal lights reducing the diameter of the beam

## L

**Latex** – A water-soluble type of paint that is non-flammable and commonly used in homes, businesses, and scenery

**Lavalier** – A small, hands-free microphone usually attached to an actor's clothing or face and wired to a transmitter pack clipped on the actor's belt

**LED** – Class of fixtures using LED lights instead of conventional tungsten lamps. Often requires far less electrical power, and offers color options and other effects

**Legs** - Narrow curtains, often black, used to mask the sides of the stage

**Light Plot** – A diagram showing the lighting hang over a stage, often consisting of instrument type, gel selection, gobo or accessories, and patching information

**Lighting Connectors** – A term for specialty plugs designed for traditional stage lighting instruments

**Line shafts** – A part of a motorized rigging system that rotates on a motor to control batten movement

**Liquid Latex** – Liquid used for special effects makeup

**Lockout/tagout** – A safety procedure used to ensure electrical potential (power) is shut off and cannot be turned on again

## M

**Magic Sheet** – A paper plot showing where lights are focused onto a stage, often including color (focused plot)

**Microphones** - Device that captures and converts live sound waves from a performer or instrument and converts them into an electronic signal

**Mixer** – Audio console allowing for multiple inputs, EQ adjustment, multiple volume adjustment, and often other parameters

**Mounting/locks** - Bolts, specialized jacks or feet to hold the tool in a stationary and safe position for use

## O

**Ohm's Law** – A law used to calculate the relative relationship of power, voltage, current and resistance

**Oil-based** – A type of paint used for long-lasting, intensely saturated colors that requires solvents for cleaning brushes

**Output** – The connection between the sound board or computer and the speakers

**Output control** – The 'master' section of an audio console that controls the levels for all outputs i.e. main, auxiliary, matrix, etc.

## P

**Packaged Hoist** – Similar to a chain motor, a type of rigging used for lifting large scenic elements, typically in arena rigging

**Painter's Elevations** – Larger-scale elevations of the set that show detail such as color and texture. Used as a guide for the paint crew, costume designer, and lighting designer.

**Park** – A locking command on a console allowing a channel to stay active, but not program into any cues. For example, a work light might be parked, while cues are being programmed.

**Patch** – The assignment and relationship of console channels to DMX512 addresses, allowing for the control of both dimmers and automated devices

**Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)** – Clothing or equipment worn to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection

**Phantom power** – 48V power running backwards to a console to a microphone for powering condenser mics, direct input boxes, etc.

**Playback** – Replaying prepared audio files within a production

**Portfolio** - A visual representation of a technician's work used in the hiring process, often consisting of evidence of designs and work performed in theater specific to their field

**Presser foot** – The part of the sewing machine that holds the fabric down and feeds it under the needle

**Processing** – When audio energy is manipulated, equalized or distorted before being sent out to speakers

**Professionalism** – The recognized and expected conventions of behavior, judgement, and skill within industry

**Properties (Props)**- Objects that are handled by the actors; picked up, put down, carried on/off stage, such as letters, books, dishes, etc.

**Prosthetics** – Special effects worn by an actor created through sculpting, molding, or casting

## R

**Rendering** - A set of drawings from a designer showing the desired look to be achieved

**Resume** - A representation in writing of one's education, professional experience and credentials

**Rotary Tool** – A tool, often hand-held, that spins at high speeds for cutting, polishing, or grinding

**Running stitch** - A consistent sewing line of even stitches

## S

**sACN/Art-Net** - An Ethernet network specific to lighting systems

**Safety cable** – A wire rope used to secure the yoke of a stage light to the batten and prevent it from falling in the event of clamp failure

**Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**: Documents that provide information on the safe use, hazards, and emergency steps to take when using chemicals

**Scale**- A proportional measurement used to indicate larger sizes on smaller media. For example,  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$  on a blueprint or ground plan.

**Scale Rule** - A measurement tool for converting small scale representations to large and vice versa

**Schedules** – A chart of information for a production indicating each individual fixture and possible other information such as type, location, accessories and patch

**Scoop**-A large general lighting instrument that emits soft light

**Scrim** – A woven, porous fabric that appears solid when lit from the front, but transparent when lit from behind

**Seam allowance** - An area between the edge of the fabric and the stitch line. Generally  $\frac{1}{4}''$  or  $\frac{1}{2}''$ .

**Seam Gauge** – A ruler used for marking hems

**Shackles** – A rigging component consisting of a large loop and a threaded locking pin

**Sheet lumber** - Flat goods, including plywood or particle board, with standard measurements of 4' by 8'

**Signal path** – The route the audio energy follows from input device through to output device

**Single Purchase** – Counterweight system where 1 pound of weight over the stage is matched by 1 pound of weight on the arbor. Battens move 1 foot for every 1 foot the arbor moves.

**Slings** – Wire rope, usually in shorter lengths, used for lifting scenery

**Snub Knot** – A temporary knot used for securing out-of-weight line sets

**Speakers** – An output device that converts electrical energy to physical energy, namely sound waves

**Spirit gum** - A sticky quick drying gum, used to attach materials such as crepe hair to the skin in makeup application

**Stippling** - A technique used by marking a surface with small dots

## T

**Take-up lever** – The sewing machine part located above the pressure foot which is used to pull the thread from the spool and feed into the machine

**Thimble** – A cap placed on the end of the finger to protect it when handling pins and needles

**Thimble** – An eyepiece used for the end of wire rope, to provide a location for attaching other hardware (rigging)

**Top hats** – An accessory for ellipsoidal lights which attaches to the end of the barrel to help hide the beam from an audience when a fixture is visible from the house

**Travelers (draw curtains)** – Curtains that are dividend in the middle and travel on a track that open and close from the center

**Turnbuckles** – Hardware consisting of two eyes and a threaded rod which is adjustable, allowing hanging scenery to be raised or lowered to the precise height needed

**Turntable**- A circular revolving stage or stage pieces

## U

**Union** – A professional organization that represents workers regarding pay, working environment, and safety

## W

**Whip stitch** – A hand stitch that joins two pieces of fabric and has an almost invisible edge

**Wire Foam Cutter** – A heated wire cutting tool used for easily cutting Styrofoam and other materials

**Wire rope** – Wire cable, typically around 1/8", used for lifting scenic elements, or attaching battens to rigging. (Also known as aircraft cable)

**Wire rope clamps** – Hardware used in place of a wire rope sleeve consisting of a U-bolt and saddle. Used to add compression around the cable.

**Wire rope sleeves** – A metal compression sleeve used to secure wire rope ends around a thimble