



AUDITION GUIDELINES FOR PLAYS

WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM US

If you have been called in for a meeting, you should expect us to send you clear instructions and all relevant material. The casting director (CD) should give you details about:

- Who you will be seeing
- The date, time and venue
- What you need to prepare, including the character, accent and any further material or relevant information, for instance if we need to hear you sing, play an instrument or do anything physical
- We will also be clear if you will be reading with other actors or in a workshop-type setting

The script is usually sent by email and often in PDF format to make it easily accessible. If you do not have access to a computer, you can request that a hard copy be posted but please be aware that the casting timeline might not allow for snail mail. Alternatively, your agent may be able to print it off for you to collect.

You should be given adequate prep time in relation to the amount of material that you are sent. Sometimes this is no more than 48 hours, although most CDs will endeavour to give you longer, as circumstances allow. Occasionally, for reasons outside the CD's control, the lead-in time is unavoidably short.

If you feel that you genuinely do not have enough time to work on the material, let your agent know and we might be able to find another day or time to meet you. However, if there is no alternative day available, it may be impossible to accommodate you.

You can expect that someone in the room will read in with you, if needed for the scene. There is no need to create a monologue by running sections together. It should also be unnecessary for you to print off copies of scenes or sections for us to read – you shouldn't need to alter the material we have sent and we'll have copies in the room.

Sometimes you will be asked to prepare more than we are able to explore in the audition. This might be because of time constraints or because the director has learned enough from your performance not to hear anything else. While we try to limit the amount of material to prepare and don't want to waste your time by asking you to work on something that we end up not needing, unfortunately there are times when this is difficult to avoid.

If you have physical access issues or need special assistance, please let the CD know in advance so that the appropriate arrangements can be made in good time.

If you are dyslexic or are vision impaired, please let us know and we will try to provide you with a script which is in an appropriate format. If in the room you are asked to read a scene that you haven't prepared which will, therefore, be difficult for you, let us know; we will totally understand and do our best to accommodate you.



We always aim to see you on time but sometimes delays are unavoidable.

Self-tapes

- These are a rarity in theatre casting, but they can give us a sense of an actor's appropriateness for a particular role if they can't make the audition they've been offered. We also recognise that they can allow access to the audition process to those who do not live near the audition venue, reducing the actor's costs and time. However, a tape is almost never an adequate substitute in theatre and will nearly always need to be followed by a face to face meeting if the director is interested. Please see the self-tape guidelines on the CDG website if you are unclear about the best way of doing it.

Recalls

- For most plays it is rare for actors to be recalled more than once but, of course, there are exceptions.
- If you are auditioning for a large repertory company like the RSC you may have to go in for several meetings, for instance if the various directors who are casting that season's productions aren't able to meet everyone on the same day or if they would like to see you again for a different role. The casting director will always try to keep the number of meetings to a minimum.
- If you require reimbursement for recall travel expenses, please proceed as per the Equity guidelines.

Nudity/simulated sex (at the recall stage only, as per the Equity/Theatres' National Committee Regulations)

- No one will be asked to undress in whole or in part unless it is incontrovertibly relevant to the piece. The actor must be informed in advance if this is required and a mutually agreed observer must be present. No simulated sex act should be requested at any audition.

Feedback

- CDs do their best to let actors know if they have not been successful but lack of time and resources can mean that we are unable to give everyone feedback. However, if you would like to know how your audition went, please ask your agent to give us a call.

Filming of auditions or recalls

- This is rare in theatre casting but sometimes unavoidable if a member of the creative team who has casting approval is not able to attend. The reason should always be explained to you and the filmed material will only be used to make decisions about that specific job. It must not be used for any other purpose, or disseminated, published or made available to other parties without your express permission.

Data protection

- You can expect us to comply with data protection law and keep your confidential information safe.
- You should not be asked for personal information, including your actual age, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy, marital/civil partnership status or sexual orientation, in a meeting.

Offers

- While CDs and directors want to make and pass on quick decisions, it is often a complicated process and for many reasons that will not always be feasible. We may need to put some actors on hold



while the casting jigsaw takes shape or until we know that we won't be taking things any further, at which point the actor or their agent will be notified. If you get a conflicting offer or there is another time pressure for a decision, then do ask your agent to call the CD.

- Once we have made an offer, a swift response is appreciated as your decision will have repercussions on other areas of casting and actors who are on hold.
- If you accept an offer, please wait for the official casting announcement before disclosing the information publicly on social media.

Casting directors have a duty of care to actors - safety and wellbeing are paramount. CDs will refrain from facilitating and actively discourage one-to-one meetings in private non-professional environments, ensure that the audition room is a safe space where auditionees are able to give of their best and feel comfortable with what they are being asked to do, and that any inappropriate behaviour from anyone is challenged and, if necessary, reported.

WHAT WE SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOU

All material that has been sent out must be treated confidentially and not shared.

We expect you to turn up well prepared and on time for your audition. If you are delayed for any reason, please get a message to the CD.

You will probably be sent the whole play (rather than sides) and you must read it in its entirety. Very often a director will ask what you think of the play, so you need to be ready to discuss it.

If you are asked to prepare specific scenes, please ensure those are the ones you look at; if you are invited to choose your own scenes, think carefully about which sections will be of most benefit to us as well as to you. Please ensure you are clear on what you need to prepare and if you are not, seek clarification in advance. If you do not follow the instructions, you will put yourself at a disadvantage.

If you are confident that you can learn the material and that is the best way for you to present yourself, then of course, we'll be happy for you to do so. However, an audition is not a memory test and you will not be expected to be off-book for a first meeting - many CDs and their directors actively prefer that you do not try and learn the dialogue so that you can concentrate on giving a good audition, rather than simply remembering the lines. You must though be very familiar with the material so your head isn't buried in the text. Nevertheless, there are different views on this so if in doubt, ask your agent to check with the CD. Please be aware that sometimes the reason for the lack of notice for an audition is because another actor has only just let us know that they can't make it or don't want to come in. Should you choose to cancel or move your audition, it will be greatly appreciated - both by the CD and the actor that takes your slot - if you let us know with as much notice as possible.



Do not come for an audition if you are not interested in the project or are not going to be available for the job simply because you want to meet the director or casting director. It will not endear you to them or make them more likely to get you in for a different job.

If for any reason you would like to record your audition, you must seek permission before doing so.

SOME GENERAL WORDS OF ADVICE:

- Remember that the casting director and director are on your side and want you to do well. An audition should be a positive experience for everyone involved.
- Aim to be a little early – it will allow you to be more prepared and relaxed for the meeting.
- Don't approximate the lines or interpolate verbal tics and springboards like 'y'know', 'like', 'well', 'I mean' which are not in the text, especially if it's not a contemporary piece or if the writer is in the room.
- Dress appropriately for the meeting, following any guidance if given, and giving some thought to the character you're reading for – but don't go over the top.
- Pitch your voice to the size of the room. We'll need to hear that you have the ability to be heard from the back of a theatre, but don't deafen us in a small space.
- Avoid manhandling whoever is reading with you, or if a certain physicality is absolutely required, discuss it with the reader in advance.
- Don't overburden yourself with props or feel the need to mime extensively – do what is helpful to you to bring the scene or character to life, but we're unlikely to be testing your miming skills and it could just be distracting.
- Listen carefully to any notes. Directors will be looking to see how you respond and what you will be like to work with, not just exploring your acting.
- If you're unsure of something in the room – who you're reading with, whether to sit or stand, clarification on a particular word or line – you should feel free to ask. We want you to do well, and not everything is a test.