

FRONT OF HOUSE BOOK

This book covers duties, and notes specific to front of house at different venues.

The general front of house duties vary a little per venue, and we have covered the ones we most usually tour to; but the core task is to create a professional, welcoming presence for audience members and to be a point of contact if they have any questions or need anything.

If we are going to a new venue, not already in this book, then please check in with what will be required at that venue.

PRESENTATION

Depending on the venue/ production you may be asked to either be dressed smartly (smart dress, or blouse and skirt / trousers for women, or smart shirt and trousers for men) or dress in theme for the show (supplied by theatre company)

Good personal hygiene is required.

In case of emergency like a powercut, or moving around when house lights are dimmed, all Front of House staff should carry a torch.

When audience are coming in, and you are interacting with them, a positive, enthusiastic attitude is required. You are likely be asked questions about the show, the layout of the building, to show them where to sit, when the interval is, the history/ previous work of the theatre company, etc, therefore excellent familiarisation with these points is needed.

You will be interacting with people of all ages, different backgrounds, belief systems and cultures, people with disabilities, and communication styles; therefore a calm, non-judgemental and inclusive approach is required in all instances.

Our Front of House staff will not be expected to serve alcohol.

Brixham Theatre, as also having a very specific front of house policy of its own, require all our people who assist with Front Of House at Brixham Theatre, to attend a prior training session (date at mutual convenience of majority) at Brixham Theatre, with Pauline, their manager.

TASKS

Tasks which Front of House helpers may be asked to assist with
(This will vary per venue)

- Welcoming audience members to the venue
- Checking pre-sold tickets
- Selling tickets on the door (involves cash handling)
- Showing audience members to their seats
- Answering questions about the show
- Answering questions about the history of the theatre company
- Answering questions like “when is the interval”, “where are the toilets”
- Ensuring that audience members do not leave bags or items in aisles
- Being aware of fire evacuation details for the building.
- Serving teas, coffees, and squash in the interval

- Challenging audience behaviour which may impact upon the enjoyment of the show for others (eg phonecalls, cameras with flash, chatting excessively in performances)
- Leading the audience evacuation in case of fire or other emergency.
- Selling programmes and merchandise
- Communicating with the stage manager over any contacts needed with the production team backstage
- Encouraging the leaving of feedback notes for the show.

ADDITIONAL GROUND RULES

-All phones must be put away, unless they have specific use, eg set up for ticket scanning.

- Any calls taken/ made must be for emergencies only
- Attention must be on audience and customers not on phones (audience come first)
- Swearing or bad language is not acceptable.
- If dealing with a complaint or aggression, remain calm, if you need to call someone to assist, then do so – whether that is another front of house staff member, or (when they are available) a member of the production team. Failing that, please collect an email address and details of the complaint for future contact.

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FACILITIES

-Front of house staff will have access to backstage toilets and green room for cast/ crew refreshments.

AHEAD OF THE SHOW

If this is your first time doing front of house at Brixham Theatre, you will be required to have attended a training session at Brixham Theatre.

Please (if at all possible) attend a full dress/ tech rehearsal of the show, so that you are familiar with the show, timings, content etc, to answer any audience questions.

Ensure, on the Facebook group for Front of House team, that you have checked notes around accessibility, content notes, and any specific notes or updates pertaining to the performance.

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at the venue, check in with the production team and stage manager. You will have a safe place to leave personal items backstage. Please arrive at least half an hour before the specific time that “doors open” (eg, for a show starting at 7.30pm, audience may be coming in from 6.30pm, so you would need to arrive by 6pm).

Check any information that you do not currently have for that event, which you will need to make the audience's experience a great one. (use the task list above as a check list)

If this is a venue where you will be handling cash, please ensure that you have collected the cash float from backstage.

If relevant, check in with the venue staff with whom you will be liaising

If serving teas and coffees in the interval, check that you know

where everything is and that it is ready.

DOORS OPEN!!!

Depending on the venue, you may be checking tickets, taking cash sales on the door, selling programmes and merchandise, and / or simply showing audience to their seats.

In venues where you are checking or selling tickets, please refer to the Front of House book, which will have a page dedicated to this performance. This will show examples of printed tickets which audience may bring, or they may show you a screenshot on their phone (either is acceptable).

If we have issued complimentary vouchers and you are brought one of these, there are examples pasted in the front of the book, and each one has a hand-written security number which will correspond with a number written in the book.

In the book, please write each cash sale and amount; including for any programmes, merchandise or refreshment.

Brixham Theatre may ask you to scan the QR codes on tickets, in which case you will be issued a phone or other device to scan with.

In a venue where people have booked specific seats, you are likely to be asked to show people to their seats.

In venues with unreserved seating, people can sit where they would like, but someone may have contacted ahead of the show and asked for specific seats to be reserved (eg for disability reasons etc) and in that case you will be expected to show them to those reserved seats.

People may have questions about the show:

Common questions will be confirming the run time, the interval, location of toilets, how to get tea/ coffee.

There may also be questions which usually relate to disabilities or other protected characteristics; eg

- Are there flashing lights
- Are assistance dogs allowed in? (yes as long as they are uniformed as assistance dogs, that is absolutely fine)
- Where can people in wheelchairs go?
- What is the suitability of the show?
- Are there any sudden loud sounds/ aggression/ things through audience/ startling moments (in case of these, which are commonly from people with conditions like Austim or PTSD) please make sure that you can describe so that people know what and when to expect – again this is why it is so useful to attend a final dress tech rehearsal, or at least access the documents ahead of time in the FOH group outlining such content for the show.
- Is a hearing loop available?

BEFORE THE SHOW

- Check that audience members have not left any items in the aisles.
- Confirm with backstage that the curtain music is ready to start
- If required by venue layout, dim the house lights.
- Head for FOH designated seats.

(Hopefully, barring emergencies or evacuation, you should now be able to enjoy the show too, until interval)

INTERVAL

This depends on the venue. At some venues, you may be serving teas and coffees, and or selling merchandise, and at others you may not be.

In venues where you are serving refreshments, make sure that the kettle/ hot water is heated before the interval, everyones hands are washed, and that the refreshment space is set out cleanly and invitingly.

Be aware of ingredients of refreshments (because of allergens) and be able to answer any questions on that.

At the end of the interval, collect up cups and glasses for washing, and clear the refreshments area, packing things away, washing up, etc.

AT THE END OF THE SHOW

Ensure auditorium lights are turned on as soon as the curtains close/ cast exit stage.

Thank the departing audience for coming, note any feedback, questions etc.

Help tidy up the auditorium once audience have left.

Bring cash and Front Of House Book backstage to Laura or Lisa.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

we do not allow unaccompanied children under the age of 13 in the audiences. (some venues may have different age limits)

VENUE – BRIXHAM THEATRE

At this venue, a 240 seat proscenium arch theatre, you will be working alongside the venue staff. Because the theatre has equally strict requirements to ensure an excellent audience experience, and for complex fire evacuation procedures, a training session at mutual convenience, is required in advance with Pauline who manages the Front of House at the theatre.

Tasks for this venue will not include selling tickets, or refreshments, though you will be asked to sell our programmes and merchandise.

Dress Code: smart formal

Seating: reserved by numbers

Wheelchair spaces: 4

Tasks at this venue:

- checking tickets
- showing audience to seats
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- covering fire evacuation points
- checking aisles are clear
- in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – BARNFIELD THEATRE

Depending on the space being used, this may be a small space with unreserved seating, or a larger space with reserved seating. You will be working alongside the venue staff.

Tasks for this venue will not include selling tickets, or refreshments, though you will be asked to sell our programmes and merchandise.

Dress Code: smart formal or costume

Seating: varies

Wheelchair spaces: 2 (small space) 4 (large space)

Tasks at this venue:

- showing audience to seats (if large space)
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE

This is a theatre that was once a cinema.

You will be working alongside the venue staff, but leading on the Front of House duties.

Dress Code: smart formal or costume

Seating: unreserved. 300 seats

Wheelchair spaces: 1 (2 at a push)

Tasks at this venue:

- checking tickets, selling tickets
- showing audience to seats / facilities
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- covering fire evacuation points
- checking aisles are clear
- in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – STOKENHAM

This is a village hall theatre

Dress Code: costume

Seating: unreserved. 100 seats

Wheelchair spaces: 3

Tasks at this venue:

- checking & selling tickets
- showing audience to seats / facilities
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- covering fire evacuation points
- checking aisles are clear
- serving refreshments in the interval
- in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – KINGSKERSWELL

This is a village hall theatre

Dress Code: costume

Seating: unreserved. 150 seats

Wheelchair spaces: 3

Tasks at this venue:

- checking & selling tickets
- showing audience to seats / facilities
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- covering fire evacuation points
- checking aisles are clear
- serving refreshments in the interval
- in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

– VENUE – SALTERTON PLAYHOUSE

75 seat small theatre , this venue involves working alongside venue staff.

- Dress Code: costume or smart
- Seating: unreserved. 75 seats
- Wheelchair spaces: 2

Tasks at this venue:

- answering questions about the show
 - selling merchandise
 - in emergency helping with evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

– VENUE – MUSE THEATRE

– 100 seat theatre in school building.

– Dress Code: costume

– Seating: unreserved. 150 seats

– Wheelchair spaces: 4

– Tasks at this venue:

– checking & selling tickets

– showing audience to seats / facilities

– answering questions about the show

– selling merchandise

– covering fire evacuation points

– checking aisles are clear

– serving refreshments in the interval

– in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – BUDLEIGH HALL

This is a village hall theatre

Dress Code: costume

Seating: unreserved. 20 seats

Wheelchair spaces: 2

Tasks at this venue:

- checking & selling tickets
- showing audience to seats / facilities
- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- covering fire evacuation points
- checking aisles are clear
- serving refreshments in the interval
- in emergency leading on evacuation procedures for audience
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.

VENUE – BIRMINGHAM BLACK BOX

This is a theatre in Birmingham city centre

Dress Code: costume

Seating: unreserved. 70 seats

Wheelchair spaces: 6

Tasks at this venue:

- answering questions about the show
- selling merchandise
- checking aisles are clear
- helping tidy the auditorium at the end of the show.