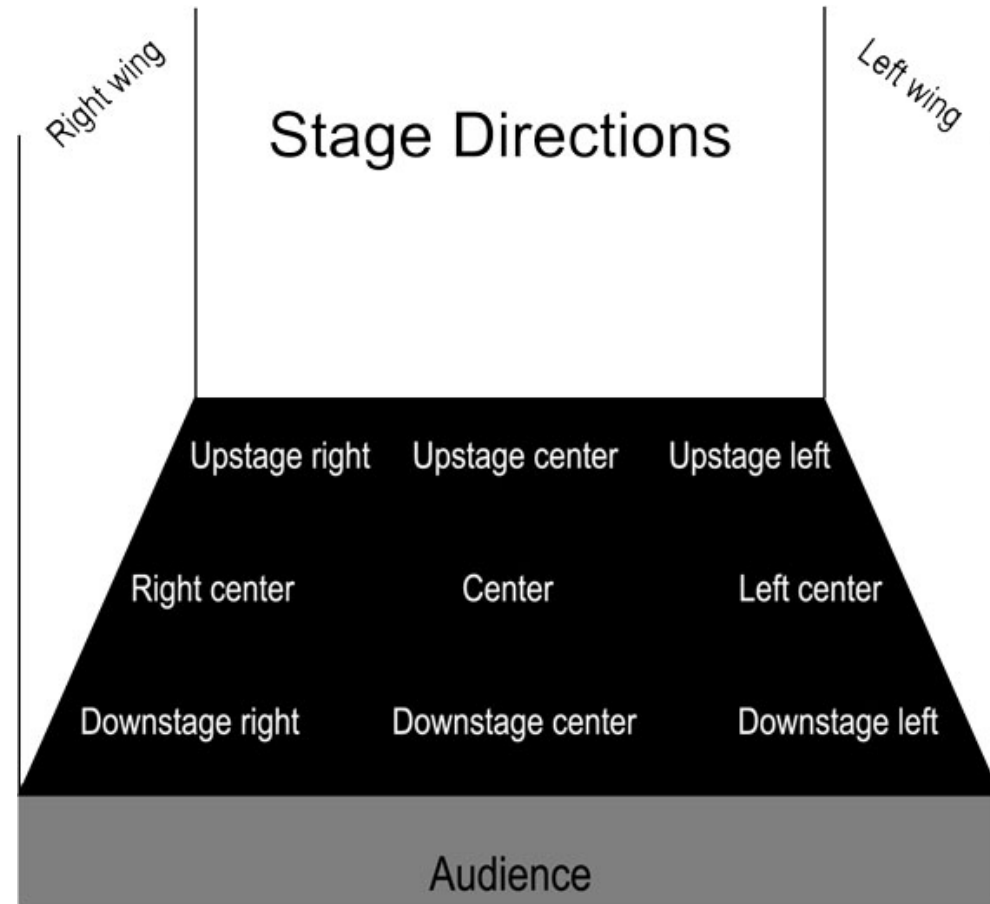


UNDERSTANDING STAGE DIRECTIONS

The diagram opposite gives you a reference to understand the Director's instructions.

On stage your viewpoint is reversed from that of the audience, and you must learn to take this viewpoint.

As an actor your viewpoint is facing the audience. This is the most important thing that you can remember when taking and following stage direction.



UNDERSTANDING STAGE DIRECTIONS

Below is a list of some of the more common abbreviations used:

- Stage Left (SL)
- Upstage (US)
- Stage Right (SR)
- Downstage (DS)
- Cross (X)
- Center Stage (CS)
- Off Stage (OS)
- Down Center (DC)
- Up Center (UC)

Combinations of these abbreviations are also very useful to know. Here are just a few:

- Downstage Right (DSR)
- Downstage Left (DSL)
- Downstage Center (DSC)
- Upstage Right (USR)
- Upstage Left (USL)
- Upstage Center (USC)

Blocking is one of the major components of the rehearsal process. It is the time when the positioning and movement of the actors is decided by the Director.

Essentially, it is the manner by which the "choreography" of each scene is put down on paper...**eventually to be put to memory by the actors.** It is in this that each Director is able to bring to life their vision of how each scene should unfold.

Usually, each scene is approached as a unit. During the course of the scene, **actors take notes about their own physical movement as well as their relationship in space to their fellow actors, the furniture props, their personal props, entrances and exits, their position on the stage, etc.** These instructions are what they pencil into their scripts for study and reference purposes.

It is vital to the success of a show that any changes in movement made by the Director during the rehearsal process be accurately recorded by the actors in their own scripts. Directors do change their minds, and it is the actors responsibility to make the changes. It is the job of the actor to portray their character in the best way they can according to the Director's wishes.

Keep an eye out for blocking changes during "**Notes**" given by the Director during the rehearsal period.