

Congratulations on being selected to audition at the StrawHat Auditions.

Here are final instructions prior to the StrawHat Audition weekend.

Read this carefully – print it out – and you'll have far fewer questions when you arrive.

Please note: we have added an mirror website as a backup. If for some reason you cannot reach www.strawhat-auditions.com, please use <http://www.strawhat-auditions.biz>.

I. When to show up

As specified in your audition confirmation, you should plan to arrive at Pace University about 45 minutes to an hour prior to your appointment time. This will give you time to catch your breath and get acclimated to the building. You will sign in at the reception desk and receive a security wristband along with an information packet about the audition procedure and the theatres and casting directors in attendance this year. Our staff will direct you to the backstage area where you will sign in with Stage Management at least 20 minutes prior to your audition time. We run very close to schedule and we will not come looking for you if you're not where you are expected to be.

II. What to bring

Given the above – a watch would be a good idea. Other important items:

- Your audition music – in the correct key and with cuts clearly marked (we recommend making a photocopy that you can cut & paste to your needs). The sheet music should be in a binder or some other form so that it will stand up on the piano.
- Your selection book of other material, in case you are asked for something else at callbacks.
- A notebook or binder containing the pdf description pages provided by each theatre and posted on our web site: this information has been provided so that you have on hand some of the pertinent details about companies prior to callbacks.
- 12 – 20 copies of your picture and resume, stapled back to back in the manner specified for your application. Many theatres ask for hard copies.
- Dance clothes and shoes. Jazz shoes or dance sneakers for men: character shoes are preferred for women, but not required. If you tap, bring tap shoes as well.
- A hairbrush or comb and whatever else helps you keep yourself looking your best.

III. What to Wear

You would not believe how poorly some people dress for auditions. This is a job interview in which you are attempting to prove that looking at you on stage will be a pleasurable experience for a paying audience. We recommend the following:

- Brush and style your hair. Men: do not look like you just rolled out of bed. Women: if your hair has a tendency to fall in your face, pull it back on the sides or back-comb it and use a styling spray. If we can't see your face we can't see you act.
- Do not wear black. The travelers on the stage are black and the drop behind is also black. You will look like a floating head in a big, dark space. Flattering colors are advised.
- Do not wear jeans. It doesn't look "artsy" – it looks lazy. Jeans are only acceptable if they are clean, untorn, and hemmed so they are tidy and not dragging the ground behind your shoes.
- Speaking of Shoes for Women: a flattering heel that looks well with your dress or skirt, that does not make awful clunking sounds when you walk on stage. Character heels look cheesy in real life. Sheer hose, not dance tights (until dance call).

- Speaking of Shoes for Men: a dress shoe or loafers are recommended. Sneakers and flip-flops look unprofessional. For dance call, jazz shoes or split-sole dance sneakers.
- Women: Unless you're in an absolutely fabulous pantsuit, a dress or skirt is recommended. In Musical Theatre, chances are you'll be showing your legs.
- Men: Shirts should be tucked in and belts should be worn. If you're doing the preppy/hip v-neck sweater with the shirt-tails showing look, make sure it looks like a *choice*, not that you couldn't be bothered. If you wear a suit jacket or sport jacket, make sure it fits properly. Neckties are totally optional – again, it's a choice that says something about who you are and how you see yourself.
- Men: If you wear a full beard, OK. If you don't, then shave.
- Women: Very understated cosmetics are recommended. You don't want to look overly glamorous, and you don't want to look like you couldn't be bothered to clean up.
- FOR DANCE CALL: It has been requested/suggested by attending choreographers that people come to dance call in dance wear: no baggy sweats, please. We are aware that you want to be warm, but cannot evaluate your line, your form, your over-all technique if we can't see your body in motion (that's why leotards were invented in the first place). Leotard, tights, and character shoes preferred for women; jazz pants and fitted t-shirt for men. Wear your warm layers for the teaching section – show yourself at the actual call.
- LOOK AT YOURSELF: Do your clothes fit properly? Are they too baggy? Did you put on the "Freshman Fifteen" and now you're straining your waistband? Are your shirtsleeves hanging over your thumbs? Does that spandex top leave nothing to the imagination? Look professional. If you're not sure, ask an advisor. Shop.

IV. What to expect

Pace University is a large facility and StrawHat uses space on different floors. StrawHat information is posted throughout the building on *bright orange* signs. If you do not see *bright orange* signs you are likely in a part of the building where you do not belong.

- **Lobby Level/Check In** is down the stairs to the left from the street entrance. You'll get your information packet and wristband at the StrawHat table. There are restrooms and a drinking fountain in the stairway area of the lobby.
- **B Level** is up the stairs to the right from the street entrance. You will see a Pace Security desk here, and will not be allowed past this point without your StrawHat wristband. Turn right past the security desk to find the **elevators**. Elevators will take you to the **3rd Floor Callback Rooms**. There are bathrooms and vending machines on this level. **Follow signs** on this level to reach the **Backstage Holding Area** and the hallway where **Callback Sheets** are posted. **Follow signs** on this level to reach the **Layton Studio** for callbacks with the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse and to locate the **MPR**. The MPR will function as a green room and may serve as a meeting place in the evenings for theatres that chose not to reserve a callback room.
- **3rd Floor Rooms** Most companies holding callbacks on site have a private classroom on the 3rd floor to function as a callback room. Your Actor Information Packet has a map with the room assignments indicated. StrawHat Rooms will each have a *bright orange* sign posted. Remember – to leave the upper floors of the building, take the elevator to B Level.

IV. Your Introduction, or Slate

Practice your introduction as you practice your pieces. We are videotaping the auditions and we need a clear slate at the top and end of your audition. Your audition will be available for

purchase for your personal use, as well as being provided as a casting resource to several member theatres (details to come). Center stage has a spike mark to show you the “hot spot” for the lights. You will enter when cued by stage management and stand on that mark. Your slate should be something like this:

“Hello, I’m George Spelvin, my time is 10:24.

I’ll be doing ‘Yankee Doodle’ and ‘Hamlet.’

Timing begins on the first note of the piano, or your first word, in the case of non-singing auditions. At the end of your audition, you will slate a second time:

“Thank you, George Spelvin – 10:24.”

A couple of notes:

- You are not *glued* to the spike mark, but be aware that the stage is not uniformly lit (so don’t be acting in the dark!).
- There is a chair and a stool upstage. If you use them, *you must strike them back to the upstage position* at the end of your audition.
- As you exits the stage, the next performer is already on their way in, so be aware.
- You will have exactly **ninety seconds** to present two pieces, so time yourself as you practice. Stage Management has a stop watch and *will* cut you off if you go over time. We try to be gracious about it, and you should, too. Remember – everyone is watching.

Singing Auditions:

Singers should begin with their musical selection followed by their monologue. A professional piano accompanist is provided. At this point, you should have already visited our article regarding over-used audition pieces.

Monologue Only:

Be aware that most participating companies perform at least one musical in their season, and therefore only a limited number – usually one third of those attending -- will audition or hire non-singers. At this point, you should have already visited our article regarding over-used audition pieces.

Dancers:

Dancers should be dressed and warmed up to hit the stage at precisely 1:00 p.m. You will be taught a musical theatre and a tap combination at 1:00 p.m. which you will present to casting reps beginning at 2:00. Dancers must be prepared to sing their **best 16 bars of up-tempo** after presenting the dance combination. Your music should be prepared for our accompanist as directed in *Section II: What to Bring*. You will **slate** before you sing, as described above. Dancers should also be prepared with a short contemporary monologue, should it be requested at callbacks.

Stand-By Appointments:

Stand-bys step in at short notice to take the place of a cancellation or “no show.” Stand-bys who check in for their appointed audition day will be guaranteed an audition and their pictures and resumes will appear in that day’s audition directory. Only those applicants who are selected and invited will be allowed to come in on stand-by. StrawHat does not accept walk-ins.

Callbacks:

Callback lists are posted at the end of each hour. Some theatres prefer to contact performers directly at a later date, but most hold their preliminary callbacks at StrawHat. You should plan to remain for the rest of the day of your audition, since callbacks will continue into the evening hours. If you are called back, you may also be asked to attend a group dance call at the end of the day, in addition to the theatres’ individual callbacks. Dancers who are called back may be asked to attend the evening dance call as well.

The Dance Call:

TEACHING THE DANCE

At 6:00 p.m. those asked to attend dance call should be dressed and ready to assemble on the stage to learn the combinations. You will be shown a “Singers Who Move” version of a musical theatre dance routine as well as a “Singers Who Dance” version. *YOU* determine which one you wish to learn.

Once the “Movers” version is taught, those people break out to the lobby to practice while the “Dancers” version is taught. *THEN*, everyone who wants to learn a short tap combination will learn that.

PRESENTING THE DANCE

You will present in groups of 5 or 6, in order of your audition time. “Singers Who Move” present first, followed by “Singers Who Dance.” You will have an index card with your audition time on it pinned to your front. Each group will do the routine twice. You will **slate** one at a time (“*George Spelvin, 10:24*”) at the start and at the end, as directed. Then you exit the stage as directed and if you are doing the tap combination you return to the backstage hallway to put on your tap shoes and line up again.

Note: Show yourself to your best ability – choreographers want to see you looking good as you move. If you are asked to dance but insist you’re not a dancer, try anyway, because they definitely won’t hire you if they asked and you don’t make the effort. Don’t psych yourself out – we try to make it as fun as possible. Oh – and if you’re aspiring to work in Musical Theatre but you aren’t taking dance classes yet, you’d better start.

Other Matters:

- Please attend all of your callbacks. It is in your best interest to talk to anyone who wishes to meet with you: you never know what might come of a good interview down the road, but nothing will come of turning down an opportunity before it’s even offered. If you are genuinely uninterested in an organization based on the information provided by Strawhat or on that company’s web site, our Check-In Desk has a form you can fill out to decline in a gracious manner.
- If you are asked to leave a headshot & resume for a theatre, bring it to the Check-In Desk. We have a message center for that purpose. Do not leave materials in empty callback rooms as they will be discarded. Do not leave head shots at the StrawHat message center unless specifically asked to do so.
- Put your name and cellphone number on all of your personal items (including dance shoes) and keep track of your belongings. THERE IS NO LOST AND FOUND.
- No food onstage, backstage, or in the auditorium. If you bring food into the building, clean up after yourself. Food, beverages, and water bottles left unattended will be discarded by StrawHat staff.
- No smoking anywhere in the building. Period.

The StrawHat Staff will do our best to make this experience as positive and satisfying for you as possible: you want work, the producers need performers, and we love the theatre! Let’s work together to make this a great event for everyone this – and every – year. Thanks , and break a leg!