

# The Stage



**Designing a set, choreographing, dancing, managing, chaperoning, working as a technician, knowing stage layout is so important.**

## Different Stages

- Proscenium Arch
  - Proscenium stages have an architectural frame, known as the proscenium arch, although not always arched in shape. Their stages are deep and sometimes raked, meaning the stage is gently sloped, rising away from the audience. Sometimes the front of the stage extends past the proscenium into the auditorium. This is known as an apron. Theatres containing proscenium stages are known as proscenium arch theatres and often include an orchestra pit for live music and a fly tower for the movement of scenery and lighting. LCB perform on a proscenium stage.
- In the round
  - These have a central performance area enclosed by the audience on all sides. The arrangement is rarely 'round': more usually the seating is in a square or polygonal formation. The actors enter through aisles between the seating. Scenery is minimal and carefully positioned to ensure it does not obstruct the audience's view.
- Traverse
  - A traverse stage is a form of theatrical stage where the audience is on two sides of the stage, facing towards each other. The stage is also commonly known as an alley or corridor stage.
- Thrust
  - As the name suggests, these project or 'thrust' into the auditorium with the audience sitting on three sides. The thrust stage area itself is not always square but may be semi-circular or half a polygon with any number of sides. Such stages are often used to increase intimacy between actors and the audience.
- Site Specific
  - Site-specific theatre is usually performed in a non-traditional theatre space such as a pub, home or warehouse, often reflecting the history, atmosphere or experiences of a particular location.
- Open air
  - These are outdoor theatres that do not have a roof, although sometimes parts of the stage or audience seating will be covered. These stages may make use of the natural light as it changes during the day, particularly sunset.
- Black box or Studio
  - These are flexible performance spaces which when stripped to their basics are a single room painted black, the floor of the stage at the same level as the first audience row. Usually these spaces allow for the temporary setup of seating in a number of different configurations to enable a wide variety of productions to be presented.

## Activity

**Have you seen a performance or actually performed in any of these different spaces?**

**Can you name any theatres you have visited that have these internal layouts?**

**Can you think of the advantages and disadvantages of working or performing in these different theatre spaces and as a member of the audience?**

