

COSTUME TERMINOLOGY

WORKERS

Costume Designer – Follows the Director's concept, and designs costumes based on a combination of concept and research. May make **costume renderings**, fabric purchases, pull from **stock**, etc. Attends all **fittings** and **dress rehearsals**.

Assistant Designer – Acts as the designer in many matters when the designer is not present. Usually designs a sub-section of the show, and essentially apprentices to the costume designer.

Design Assistant – Assists the designer, and when the designer is absent makes small design decisions like buttons, trims, etc. when directing **stitchers** and lab workers doing tasks.

Costume Studio/Shop Manager – In larger costume shops/studios the person who oversees all the personnel and activities of the workroom. Especially important in a repertory company where many different designers come through the same studio.

First Hand – The senior **stitcher** who helps explain needed sewing techniques to the stitchers.

Stitcher/Seamstress/Seamster – Worker who primarily sews.

Cutter – Person who drafts patterns primarily using the flat pattern method

Draper – Person who makes patterns primarily draping fabric on a dress form

Cutter/Draper – Person who does both the two above

Tailor – Person who makes tailored garments, primarily men's suits.

Costume Crafts Technician/Costume Properties Technician – Generalist costume studio worker who does nearly all the odd specialty tasks involving costume accessories outside the main sewing/patterning areas. Jobs may include, but are not limited to, the sub specialties below:

Milliner – Makes Hats

Armorer – Makes Armor

Dyer – Dyes fabric and costumes, & sometimes also **Distressing**.

Wardrobe Mistress/Master – Chief of the crew of Dressers running the show during rehearsals and performances. Responsible for repairs and laundry.

Dresser – Individual member of a costume crew, sometimes in larger theatres assigned to a particular actor or group of actors. Responsible for quick changes and costume check-in.

FABRIC

Grain - The warp and weft of a woven fabric.

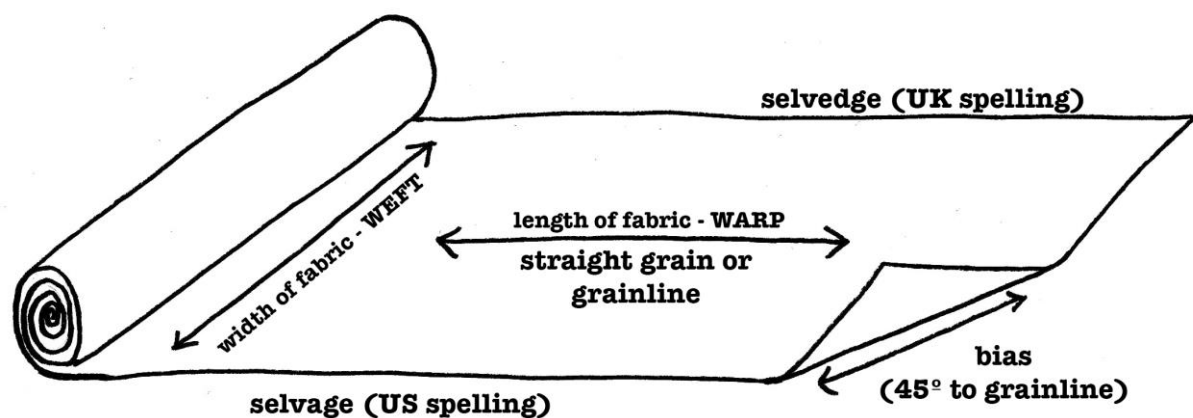
Grainline - The Lengthwise grain (warp) of a woven fabric.

Selvage – Woven edge on the sides of a woven fabric, parallel to the grainline

Warp - The Lengthwise grain of a woven fabric.

Weft/Woof – The crosswise grain of a woven fabric.

Straight of Grain - The Lengthwise grain (warp) of a woven fabric.



Bias – angle cut 45 degrees from the grain, to make fabric stretchy.

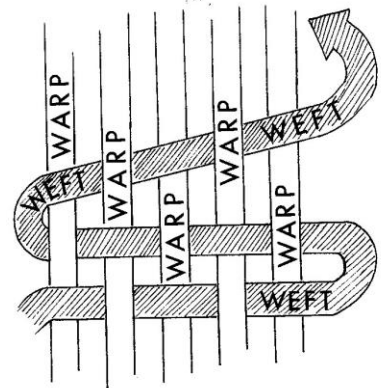
Sleaze – Degree of stretch on the bias

Nap – fuzzy surface on velvet, corduroy, or fake fur which affects apparent color depending on the direction.

Woven – Fabric made of threads woven in and out in a grid →

Non-Woven – Felted fibers fused together without a grid like grain

Knit - Fibers looped together in a stretchy form



PATTERNS/SEWING

Seam Allowance - The area between the edge and the stitching line on two (or more) pieces of material being stitched together. Typically, 5/8" on Commercial Patterns.

Ease - The amount of room a garment allows the wearer beyond the measurements of their body.

Basting - The action of sewing a temporary stitch which is easily removed once you do the permanent sewing

Fitting - The action or an act of fitting a costume to the wearer's figure, especially for a theatrical or film role; an appointment at which an actor is fitted with a costume.

Bodice - The part of a woman's dress (excluding sleeves) that is above the waist.

Basic Block – Cardboard pattern pieces for a bodice without seam allowances, used in drafting patterns.

Mock-up/Muslin/Toile – An early version of a finished costume made up in cheap material so that the design can be tested and fitted before cutting out in the expensive final fabric.

Interfacing - a moderately stiff material typically used between two layers of fabric in collars and facings.

Lining - an additional layer of different material attached to the inside of a garment to make it hang better.

Flatlining – Sewing the pieces of fashion fabric to identical pieces of stronger fabric before sewing the garment to add strength.

EVENTS

Tech Week – The time (usually about a week) from the Paper Tech, through Dry Tech, Cue to Cue, Tech Rehearsal, Dress Rehearsals, to Opening Night. A crazy time with long hours of work and not enough sleep.

Tech Rehearsal – The first full rehearsal with both actors and all technical elements (Lighting, sound, sets) except costumes & makeup included.

Dress Tech – Same as Above, but also throwing costumes into the mix.

Dress Parade/Costume Parade – An event (usually before or right after dress rehearsal) where actors dressed up in their costumes walk & stand on stage in front of the Costume Designer and (sometimes) Director to check how they look in relation to each other.

Dress Rehearsal – A rehearsal in full costume.

Quick Change - When an actor goes off stage and a very short time later comes back on completely re-dressed through the assistance of dressers.

Strike – Breaking down and/or putting away all the sets, props and costumes of a production when it ends. Typically in costuming this requires washing, dry cleaning, returning borrowed and pulled items, repairs, as well as cleaning the dressing rooms.

MORE

Production Concept – A unifying vision or metaphor for all the artistic elements of a production, typically provided by the Director, which ties the production together visually.

Costume Plot/Wardrobe Plot – A detailed list that shows which characters appear in each scene, and piece by piece what they wear in each scene, covering the whole cast and every garment.

Costume Sketches – Rough drawings made for the director and other designers to discuss ideas in early design or production meetings, prior to making full color renderings.

Costume Renderings – Finished full color drawings and/or paintings of costumes you intend to build or substantially alter to show to the design team in meetings, actors, and to the costume studio staff to use as a guide for building/altering costumes.

Gondola Cart – A rolling costume rack with a platform at top and bottom that can be covered for easy transport.

Pull – The process of digging through stock costumes, props or scenic pieces for items that may be used in a production.

Stock – Items already owned by a theatre which have been saved for re-use.

“Read” – The way something appears, or does not appear, from the point of view of the audience: “The knee is stained, but the stain will never *read* on stage.” or, “That is a cute pink dress, but without trim, it will *read* as too boring. Goose it!”

“Knock Down” – The process or action of making something less bright, contrast-y, or new looking: “That orange trim is too hot looking for an old dress, can you *knock it down*?”

“Goose” – The action of making something more bright, contrast-y, or glittery: “That dress is boring next to the rest of the chorus, *goose it*.” Also sometimes refers to bright glittery trim as a noun: “add some goose to her headdress will you?”

Distressing – Artificially wearing down, aging, tearing, fading, staining or dyeing an item to make it look old, damaged or dirty.

Tech/Breakdown – Alternate names for the above. Tech usually implies a mild distressing to simply make the item look not brand new.