



SUSTAINABLE STAGE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

PRE-PRODUCTION

Set some goals for your own stage management procedures. Maybe you want to eliminate the use of tape, or you want your rehearsal rooms to be zero-waste.

Collaborate with your creative team to set goals for the production. SMs are instrumental in how production goals are set and realised. Ensure that they are realistic, manageable, and won't place too much strain on you or your team. It is okay to start small!

Collaborate with your production designers and producer to record production materials as they are ordered so you can track your goals and streamline their end-of-show life. To do this, use this [Production Materials Inventory](#) spreadsheet.

- Ensure you are across all disposal requirements. As SMs are instrumental in disposal procedures, if a material is going to be too hard to sustainably dispose of, it needs to be flagged earlier rather than later.
- Try to distribute the load and recruit help with disposal.
- Obviously, the fewer disposal requirements the easier bump-out will be, so try to impress this upon designers when they are sourcing.

Where possible, try to preference rehearsal venues that are close to public transport, and have access to kitchenettes to make hot drinks and store/reheat food.

Make sustainability updates and check-ins a standing item on all production meeting agendas. Get each department to share their goals, progress, and obstacles to encourage collaborative problem-solving.

Create an environmentally friendly rehearsal space.

- Don't splurge on reusable coffee cups or water bottles for the team - most people already have them. Strongly encourage the team to bring their own.
- Ensure your venue has access to recycling and rubbish bins (separated recycling bins, and compost as well if possible). Take soft-plastics home with you to drop-off at their nearest supermarket [RedCycle](#) bin, or organise a roster to share this responsibility with your team.
- Ensure heating/cooling is used for the minimum amount of time required, and always keep your cooling at 24 degrees.
- If catering, try to order more vegetarian options.
- Ensure stage lights are off whenever not in use.

- For rehearsal stage mark-ups, use chalk, rope, or even just random objects like shoes, instead of tape. For more tape alternatives see our [Sustainable Materials Guide here](#).

Minimise the use of paper for printing scripts.

- For table readings, try to encourage the use of digital scripts (either on tablets or laptops) if the actors are comfortable with it.
- If your rehearsal script is still a work in progress, print it with page breaks for every scene or act. That way, if major edits occur, the entire script does not have to be reprinted.

PRODUCTION

During bump-in, again try to limit the use of tape for mark-ups, labelling, and cable management. Alternatives can be found in our [Sustainable Materials Guide](#).

Once in the venue, create a power-off check routine with your operator and/or designers. After checks ensure all equipment, especially stage lights, are powered down until the half-hour call. The National Theatre have done this and seen no ill effect on equipment operation - and it is now standard procedure (White Light, 2020).

POST-PRODUCTION

Lighting gels are made from petroleum and not recyclable. Ensure you file them away for future use or find community groups or schools who may be able to reuse your old gels and practicals after the season.

Ensure you recycle all batteries and electrical equipment appropriately at the end of the season. Remember that not all e-waste can generally be disposed of at the same location. See our [Production Disposal Directory](#) for more information.

SOURCES

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