

# THEATER



Complete an internship or an apprenticeship with a local theater. Participate in summer stock. Gain as much experience as possible. Network: Talk with people working in the field to find out about jobs and opportunities. Join professional groups to make contacts. Read newspapers and periodicals related to theater to keep up with new developments. Read the “trades”—magazines and newspapers that report events in the entertainment industry. Read the “Theater” section of daily newspapers to find out about upcoming productions. Join a relevant union or guild to be eligible for work assignments.

Get involved with productions any way you can to get your foot in the door. Be prepared to do various tasks assigned by stage managers or producers. Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.

Be aware of scams. Check out the legitimacy of agencies and companies before paying any fees. Relocate to a metropolitan area where more opportunities exist. A career in the arts takes patience, dedication, and luck! Take advantage of unexpected opportunities!

Have a back-up plan. Understand that actors and directors may face frequent and long periods of unemployment. Develop skills that qualify you for other jobs while you wait for opportunities. Consider pairing theater with another career interest or major to open up more career possibilities. Many actors work in theater management or production. Theater helps students develop verbal and written communication, public speaking, and teamwork skills. These transferable skills are valued by many types of employers. In particular, positions in sales, marketing, management, and public relations may be open to students with theater degrees.

## AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

- Stage
- Television
- Radio
- Motion Picture
- Video
- Casting
- Set design
- Stage management
- Hair/Make-up
- Special effects
- Wardrobe
- Prop management
- Broadcast technology
- Rigging
- Electrical work

Community theaters  
Regional theaters  
Commercial theaters  
Summer stock theaters  
Dinner theaters  
Children’s theaters  
Repertory companies  
University theater groups  
Touring companies  
Industrial shows  
Show groups  
Amusement and theme parks  
Television/film studios  
Radio Stations  
Nightclubs  
Cabarets  
Cruise lines  
Acting conservatories  
Public or community programs

## COMMON EMPLOYERS



## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



- [Actors Equity Association](#)
- [American Association of Community Theatre](#)
- [American Federation of Television and Radio Artists](#)
- [American Society of Cinematographers](#)
- [Directors Guild of America](#)
- [Educational Theatre Association](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Theatre](#)
- [Screen Actors Guild](#)
- [Stage Managers Association](#)



## STRATEGIES ON ENTERING THE FIELD

- Participate in acting workshops, courses, and seminars to get advice and experience and to make contacts with others in the field.
- Join unions, (e.g., Actors Equity Union, or actors’ guilds to stay abreast of opportunities and developments in the field).
- Get as much acting experience as possible. Perform in school productions, community theater, summer stock, etc. to hone acting skills.
- Pursue training through acting conservatories or mentoring from a drama coach.
- Develop a wide range of skills, such as singing, dancing, or acrobatics to be more versatile.
- Gain related experience by working in a college radio or television station.
- Prepare a professional resume that lists your acting experience. Have your resume attached to or printed on the reverse side of an 8” x 10” photograph of yourself.
- Be prepared to make the rounds. Distribute your resume to numerous agencies and offices. Follow up with several personal visits.
- Secure an agent or manager to help find jobs.
- Be aware that more opportunities exist in large cities such as New York and Los Angeles.
- Learn about the entertainment industry as a whole.
- Take courses on entertainment law, business, management, etc.
- An extensive network of contacts is essential. Get to know people working in your field and related areas.
- Consider whether you want to pursue acting as a full-time job or as an avocational interest.