

Guidelines for Directors

Updated September 2025 by Helen Reading

1. If you would like to direct a play, contact the **Arts Manager**. You may want to put forward a play of your own choosing, or a play chosen by the Arts Manager. After a discussion, the Arts Manager will have the final decision.
2. Choose your assistant and establish their role in the direction of the play. You may want your assistant to have an active role ie: contributing to your direction; making the tea; movement direction or technical direction. As long as you are both clear about the roles that is fine.
3. Have either a stage design plan or an idea about the **stage design**. The **set builders** can advise you, but contact them as soon as possible to make sure they have adequate time and resources to meet your needs.
4. A pre-production meeting is essential. This is where you can meet representatives of the teams working on your play. Each team will need a copy of the script. **Costume, props**, set builders, Stage manager, Lighting and sound designers will need to attend. You may choose your own team or you can contact the **Production co-ordinator** to arrange a team for you.
5. Use the online Apollo Diary on the members page on the website to book any meetings or rehearsals.
6. **Design your poster.** You can ask the **publicity team** to do this for you or you can present your ideas which will be tweaked to fit in with the standard "Apollo style" poster. You will see the suggested finished poster to approve before it is printed.
7. Talk about your play and your ideas at every opportunity! The more people you talk to the more likely you are to get offers of help and a choice of cast.
8. Audition!!!! The best bit. You can ask the publicity team to advertise "open" auditions. This means that the information about the play/characters/plot can go out to the general public. If you think you are able to cast from the membership only that is fine and details will go out to members via the membership secretary. Have audition pieces ready – some people will want to know well in advance the pieces they will need to read. By this time you should have multiple copies of the script for people to have a look at. Have a sheet of paper with every auditionees' contact details and the

role/s they are auditioning for.

9. After the audition you should discuss your thoughts with the Arts Manager and your assistant before offering roles. It is then your responsibility to contact everyone to let them know the outcome. Contact the people you want to cast first, in case they have changed their minds or unable to take part. This saves the embarrassment of having to ask someone to play a role after telling them they haven't got it!

10. Once you have your cast, a cast list should be made public via Apollonius. A list of cast members and email addresses of non members must be sent to membershipsecy@apollo-theatre.org.uk Costume will also need a cast list with phone numbers so that they can contact them for fittings. All cast will need to be part of the membership and the membership secretary will be in touch.

11. If you have anyone under the age of 18 in your cast you will need to contact the Safeguarding lead or the deputy safeguarding lead to ensure adequate safeguarding procedures during rehearsals and performances are met. Please note that you will need to recruit chaperones so make enquiries in good time. Also, photos can only be taken with express permission from parents even if not being used for publicity. Please check!

12. Draw up a rehearsal schedule and get the dates into the online diary as soon as possible. The play in rehearsal before yours takes priority until their performances are over. Make sure your cast and crew (backstage people) have a copy too so that they know when to come in to set the stage and props etc. Before the stage is available, Hancock House, the bar, the dressing room and the Unit may be available for you. You can access the online diary in the Members section of the website under Really Useful Book. You log into the diary with your user name - first name.surname then your membership number as your password. For example: helen.reading (user name) 1234 (password) Any problems, let me know.

13. The props team will need a props list, unless there is one in the script, as soon as possible, to ensure that anything unusual or of a set period can be obtained in good time.

14. The publicity manager (Ginnie) will be contacting you for photos, details for the programme and any information that the team can use to promote the play. Please meet the deadlines they will give you.

15. Please be mindful of the need to treat everyone kindly. A successful play needs a happy cast and crew who are all working together. The Apollo is a lifeline for some of our members, just a nice hobby for others or an essential part of who we are. A thank you, a smile and a warm welcome go a long way. Like cake. If, however, you are finding anyone difficult to work with, please don't gossip, just tell the Arts Manager who will try to deal with the situation asap.

CONTACTS:

- Arts manager: Helen Reading artsmanager@apollo-theatre.org.uk or phone 07712 050 920
- Props: Teresa Milford teresamilford111@googlemail.com
- Costume: Mary Cody mmacody@hotmail.com or Liz Santer 07514 414 814
- Posters: Vicki Cook operations@apollo-theatre.org.uk
- Production co-ordinator: Amy Burns social@apollo-theatre.org.uk
- Publicity and anything you want in Apollonius: Ginnie Orrey gginnie@gmail.com
- Set design and building: Paul Jennings paulmartinjennings@gmail.com
- Apollo Director and Safe-guarding lead: Steve Reading director@apollo-theatre.org.uk
- Membership secretary: Carole Crow membershipsecy@apollo-theatre.org.uk
- Deputy safeguarding Lead: Mish Whitmore apolloyouththeatre@yahoo.com