

## B

**baby spot** -- small spotlight used to illuminate a small stage area or an actor's face from a short distance away

**backdrop** -- large sheet of of painted canvas or muslin that hangs at the back of a set

**backing** -- 1. Flats placed behind doors, windows, hallways, etc., to hide the space beyond 2. The financing of a show

**backlighting** -- the process of illuminating the subject from the back. In other words, the lighting instrument and the viewer are facing towards each other, with the subject in between. This causes the edges of the subject to glow, while the other areas remain darker. The back light is usually placed directly behind the subject in a 4-point lighting setup. A back light, which lights foreground elements from the rear, is not to be confused with a background light, which lights background elements (such as scenery).

**backstage** -- stage area beyond the acting area, including the dressing rooms

**baffle** -- any sheet of material used to prevent light from spilling over to an area where it's not necessary

**balance** -- aesthetically pleasing integration of performers, set, properties, and lighting

**balcony** -- second tier of seating

**balcony rail** -- a lighting position on the front edge of the balcony; originally installed in most Broadway theatres

**ballad** -- romantic, smooth-flowing song

**balloon** -- to forget one's lines

**barn door** -- a color frame with two or four flaps that cur off excess light

**batten** -- long iron pipe that stretches across the stage and upon which scenery or drops are hung

**batten clamp** -- used to attach lights or scenery to a batten, also for gripping the batten at the top of a drop when it is to be flown

**beadboard** -- a flexible, lightweight, synthetic material, commercially marketed as Styrofoam, among other brands; sold in sheets

**beam** -- a horizontal lighting position over the audience

**beat** -- specific moment in an actor's speech

**below** -- stage direction meaning downstage

**belt** -- to sing in a forceful manner using the chest voice

**bit part** -- small role

**black-box theater** -- flexible room for theater performances where the audience seating and playing areas can be rearranged in any way that suits the needs of the individual production

**black out** -- a fast darkening of the stage

**blackout drop** -- a black drop that lives behind a scrim drop, making it fully opaque

**blackout switch** -- a switch on a lighting control board that turns off all the lights...a very bad idea

**blank verse** -- unrhymed verse written in iambic pentameter

**blocking** -- the movement of the actors onstage

**blocking rehearsals** -- rehearsal emphasis placed on stage movement, which is either overseen or dictated by the director

**blueboard** -- a synthetic material, similar to beadboard but more dense; sold in sheets and may also be pink

**bombast** -- boastful or ranting language.

**book** -- 1. Contract for a production; 2. Refers to the story and dialogue in a musical or opera

**boom** -- a vertical lighting position, either backstage or in the auditorium

**booth** -- area in which the light and sound operators sit, usually in rear of the theatre

**border** -- drapery or short rope hanging across the stage above the acting area to mask the fly loft and overhead lights

**border light** -- series of lights hung parallel to the proscenium arch and masked by the borders projected from above onto the stage

**bounce** -- stray light beams that bounce off shiny surfaces and go where they don't belong

**box booms** -- a lighting position in the auditorium, commonly on either side of the proscenium arch

**box office** -- place where tickets are sold for admission to performances

**box seats** -- expensive seats located in front of and to the right of the balcony and separated from other seating areas

**box set** -- realistic, interior setting made of flats to simulate the three interior walls, and sometimes a ceiling. The audience views the play through the imaginary fourth wall.

**brace cleat** -- flat metal piece screwed to the back of a flat used to attach a stage brace for triangulation which assists in holding the flat in an upright position

**brace jack** -- triangular piece of wood hinged to the bottom of scenery which can be screwed or weighted to the stage floor

**break a leg** -- an expression used instead of "good luck" when one wishes an actor success before opening night

**breakaway** -- costume or prop that is specially constructed to come apart easily onstage and to be assemble quickly for the next performance

**break-up** -- 1. When an actor's dialogue is interrupted by laughter; 2. The name of a gobo used in lighting to produce a particular pattern

**bridge** -- 1. Adjustable platform above the stage to stand on to adjust lights; 2. Music or short scene between major scenes of a production

**bridle** -- a method of distributing weight by means of attaching two or more ropes to a batten with clips and attached to a grid line

**bring up** -- 1. Increase brightness of lights; 2. Raise the curtain

**Broadway** -- that area of New York City on and adjacent to the street named Broadway where the commercial theater of the United States is concentrated

**build** -- to increase the loudness, rate, and energy of a line, speech, scene or song in order to reach a climax

**built** -- costumes made from scratch from either patterns, renderings or both.

**bump buttons** -- buttons on a lighting control board that "bump" the lights up to full when pressed

**bump cue** -- a lighting cue (usually at the end of musical number) that quickly pushes the level of light to a brighter level

**bump up** -- stage lights come up immediately

**business** -- activity performed by an actor during or in place of a speech

**by-play** -- secondary stage business upstage while main action of the scene is being played out downstage

