



Out-of-Town Production Specifications

Since 1981, the Capitol Steps have done over three thousand shows in hotel ballrooms, convention centers, banquet halls, country clubs, museums, theaters, auditoriums, and other venues around the country. Whatever the venue, our production's specifications can be divided into three general areas:

- A Stage & Quick-Change Offstage Area
- A Piano
- Technical Requirements (Sound and Lights)

Please read these specifications completely!

If you find that you have trouble complying with any of these requirements, or if the price quote from the sound and/or light company you are considering seems excessive or out of the ordinary, please call your booking agent.

We are looking forward to working with you and helping you provide the best presentation of the Capitol Steps.

Stage & Quick-Change Area

A properly placed stage with good sight lines enables your audience to better appreciate our performance. Also, the correct size and location of the Quick-Change Offstage area are essential to the success of the performance.

Stage Requirements

1. The Capitol Steps require a stage playing area at least 12 feet deep by 16 feet wide.

If you do not have a built-in stage, i.e., a theater or auditorium, you must construct one using risers. We recommend six risers, 4 feet by 8 feet each, and high enough for everyone in the audience to see the performers. Between 16 and 24 inches is fine.

We will bring with us a Capitol Steps banner which measures about 8 feet by 10 feet and hangs on its own tripod stands, which we also provide. We will place it upstage center as shown on the **Stage Plots**.

2. The stage risers should be stable, securely connected, and be covered with some industrial rug-like covering to help absorb sound.

3. Stairs should be placed on the side of the stage or, if designed like **Stage Plot A**, directly upstage. They should be in good repair; stable, free of loose nails and sharp edges, etc.
4. The stage area (risers) should be placed between 12 and 15 feet from the wall of the venue. This vacant area becomes our **Quick-Change Offstage Area**, as described on the following page.
5. Please place the stage so everyone can see the show. Our show faces forward, so no one should be seated on the side of the stage, or worse, behind it.
6. **If there is to be dancing, the dance floor must NOT be placed in front of our stage!** A comedy show like ours must have the audience **as close to us as possible**. A dance floor puts up an invisible barrier between the performers and the audience. Also, we strongly discourage clients from having us share our stage with a dance band or D.J., despite the size of the band or the stage. It just doesn't work . . . neither for us, nor the band. A second stage for the band and its accompanying dance floor should be placed in another part of the room.

Quick-Change Offstage Area

Requirements

The Capitol Steps uses several different kinds of props, signs, costumes and banners, which must be immediately accessible. Since our performance contains many different song parodies, we must have a working Quick-Change Area immediately behind the stage. If situations make this impossible, the Quick-Change Area should be on the side of the stage, preferably stage right (on your right as you stand on stage and face the audience). Here are the requirements:

1. A curtain-like covering, consisting of pipe and drape at least 8' high, should be positioned along the entire back of the stage. Then, both sides of this pipe and drape should be angled toward the back wall, forming an enclosed area. See Stage Plot A. If the Quick-Change Area is on the side of the stage, refer to Stage Plot B. The area formed by this pipe and drape curtain and the back wall of the venue will serve as the Quick-Change Offstage Area and **it should be at least 20 feet long by 12 feet deep or a minimum of 240 square feet**.
2. Two dressing tables, each approximately 30" by 60" for use as prop tables.
3. Two pitchers of ice water and about 15 plastic or paper cups, to be set on one of the tables before the start of the show.
4. Six chairs for cast in Offstage area.

5. **The area should have dim lighting, but cannot be left dark, or the performers will not be able to see the props.** If necessary, a small music stand or gooseneck lamp should be provided.

Note: In addition to prop tables we do require a similar table in the lobby or entrance area of your event for programs and/or tape sales.

Piano

The piano, which you will provide, is the musical backbone of the Capitol Steps performance and, therefore, should be of the highest quality. Here are our piano requirements:

1. The preferred style of piano is a grand. If this style isn't available then an upright is acceptable. The piano must be in perfect working order, including:
 - All notes working properly.
 - Pedals working properly (please supply a sustain pedal if piano is electric).
 - Tuning done within 24 hours prior to the show.
2. The placement of the piano, when risers are used, should be on the floor. It should be on the stage left side of the stage if set up like Stage Plot A, or on the opposite side of the Quick-Change offstage area if set up like Stage Plot B. In theaters or auditoriums where a built-in stage is used the piano should be placed on stage left.

Technical Requirements (Sound & Lights)

The Capitol Steps show is both vocal, with several singers and piano accompaniment, and also visual, employing many signs, props, costumes, etc. The sound reinforcement and lighting requirements for the Capitol Steps are relatively simple but definitely essential. The client is responsible for providing a complete sound system with an operator, and sufficient lighting to brightly light the performing area.

Sound

The sound system should be of the highest quality. Virtually no system built into hotel ballrooms, banquet halls, or large function rooms, is adequate for our performance, since they are mostly designed for amplification of speeches, lectures, and the like.

We will supply the microphones and microphone stands except for the one piano microphone and the boom stands for piano microphones.

It is always advisable to have back up microphones and stands. Equipment to be provided by the client includes the following:

1. A mixing board with no less than six input channels and two separate monitor out channels. (Pianists monitor should have a mix of about 75%vocal/ 25%piano, and vocalists mix about 50%/50%.)
2. Amplifier(s) sufficiently strong enough to provide clear sound to the room and monitors.
3. 1/3 octave equalizer(s) to enhance the sound quality to the room and/or monitors.
4. Four quality speakers for the house (two, if audience is 100 or less), to be situated high enough off the ground (at least five feet) as to not blow away the audience members up front.
5. Three monitor speakers.
6. All necessary cables. (Note that there needs to be about 15-20 feet of slack for mics.)
7. Two microphone boom stands and one piano microphone. (We supply cast mics)
8. **An experienced sound technician.** No trainees please.

Sound Check and Rehearsal Time

About two weeks before our performance we will contact the sound company and arrange a time to check the sound levels in your venue. This sound check, requiring two hours, should be conducted just before the doors open for the event. Although, setting the sound levels usually takes only about twenty or thirty minutes, we often use the remaining time to rehearse any new numbers.

Note to sound technicians: Please do not ring out the system (create feedback) with performers in the room! You should complete the line check before the Steps arrive but if for some reason you need to see how hot you can push the system during sound check just ask the cast to leave for a few minutes.

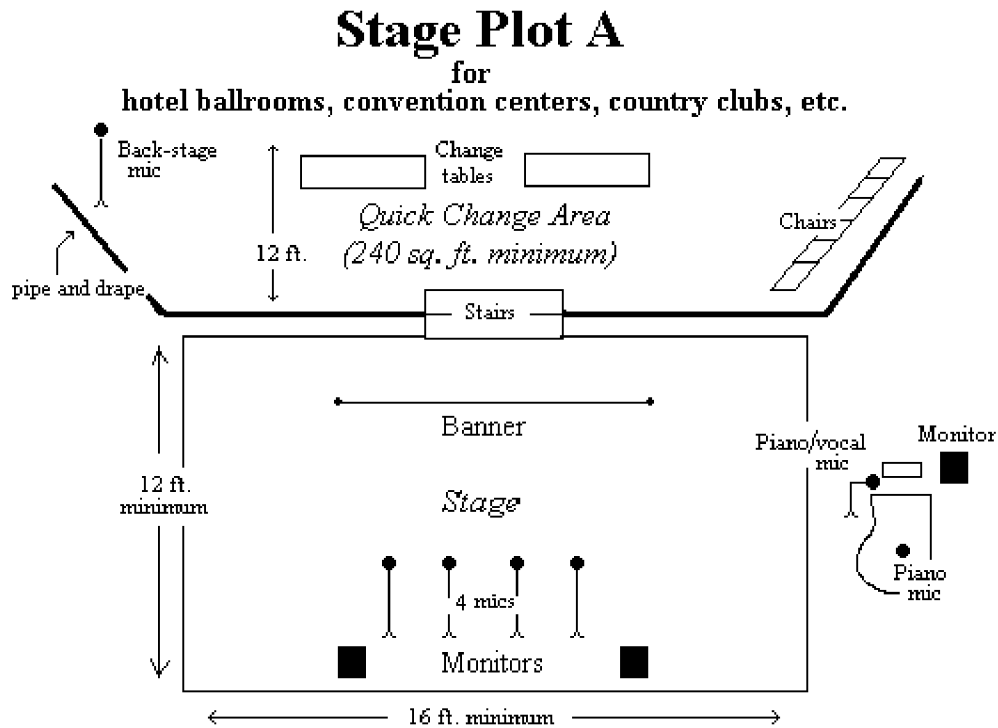
Lighting Requirements

The client is also responsible for providing the necessary lighting for the show. Our requirements are fairly simple. We need a general, bright, musical comedy style wash over the performing area. This is easily provided by theater settings, but for hotel ballrooms and the like, some sort of lighting usually needs to be brought in. **Overhead "track" lights are not acceptable and will not sufficiently light the stage.**

1. Fixtures (two or more Lekos or Par cans) of at least 2,000 watts. If the throw is more than 60 feet you should add another 1,000 watts.
2. Lights should be on trees or an overhead truss.
3. A dedicated 20 amp circuit, 25 amps if 3000 watts are used.

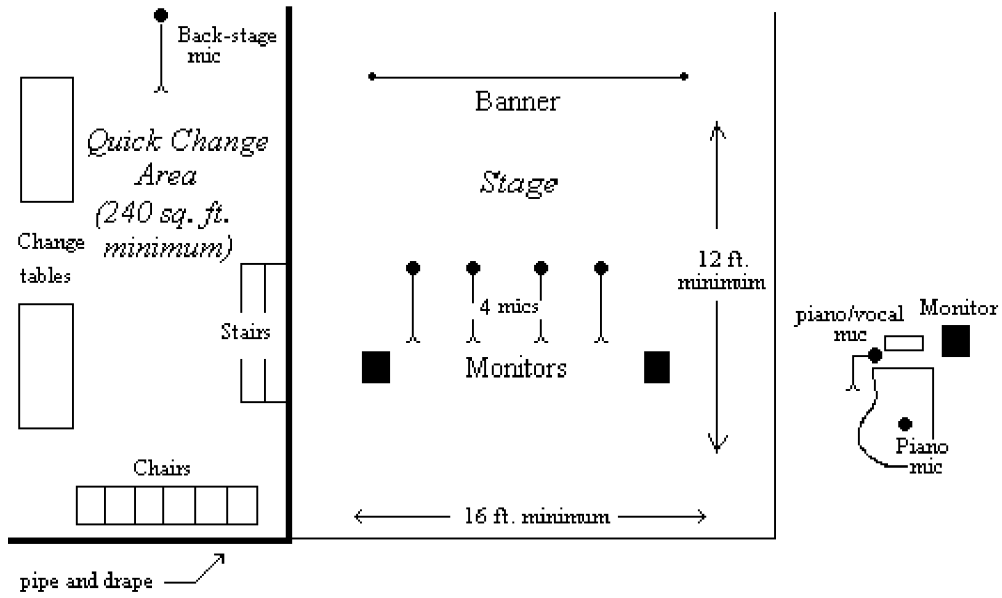
- Gels can be used only if they help create a bright "sunny" look. "Vegas-like" reds and greens should not be used unless they are properly combined to form an attractive white.

Note to lighting technician: There are no internal lighting cues during the show but the co-ordination of the house lights (which should be off during the performance) and stage lights should be discussed with a member of the Capitol Steps before the start of the show.



Stage Plot B

Quick-change area stage right



Stage Plot for Auditorium

