



Northwestern University

Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz
Center for the Performing Arts

Shop Rules
Last Updated: 9/19/2024

Shop Rules

Primary Contact Info: Shannon Perry, Technical Supervisor: (847) 491-2588

Secondary Contact Info: Heather Basarab, Production Manager: (415) 297-4568

Emergency Services: Dial 911

Campus Police: Dial 456 or 847-491-3456 (non-campus phone)

General Safety

1. Students allowed in the shop: M-F, 9:30-1 and 2-5
2. No tool usage allowed outside of these hours unless given approval by a shop supervisor
3. Do not use any power tools without another person present to help in case of an emergency
4. Dress code for a construction zone:
 - Closed-toed shoes (sneakers or boots preferable)
 - Long pants recommended, and required for certain tasks as assigned by a supervisor
 - Long hair and beards must be tied up
 - No rings, watches, or dangling jewelry
 - No ear buds unless working in a quiet environment and given permission by a supervisor
 - Noise-canceling earbuds will not protect against hearing damage caused by shop equipment!
 - No loose-fitting clothing
 - Be prepared for anything you wear to become dirty or stained
5. No food allowed on the shop floor
6. Egress zones (marked with yellow paint on the shop floor) must remain clear at all times
7. The shop is a hazardous environment: always stay focused and alert to your surroundings

Personal Protective Equipment

1. Eye/Face Protection:
 - Safety glasses required at all times in the shop
 - Goggles should be worn over eyeglasses if an employee needs to wear eyeglasses
 - Face shields should be used when exposed to flying material (i.e. when grinding)
2. Hearing Protection:
 - Disposable earplugs or earmuffs required when operating tools and equipment, when in the vicinity of loud tool noises, or when exposed to loud and prolonged sound from theatre audio systems
3. Hand and Skin Protection:
 - Latex gloves should be worn whenever using potentially irritating substances
 - Chemical resistant gloves should be worn when checking the battery fluid levels of the MEWPs
 - Work gloves should be worn whenever moving trash to the dumpster or dealing with sharp edges of metal scenery
4. Respirators:
 - N95 nonreusable masks are required when engaged in any activity that creates particles
 - Respirators outfitted with P100 cartridges are required when welding
 - A shop supervisor will let you know if your project needs a different type of respirator



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- Respirators are not required while using spray paint in the spray booth; a supervisor will let you know if the product you are using requires a respirator even in the spray booth
- 5. Hot Work Protection:
 - Long pants, jackets/sleeve protectors, welding masks, and welding gloves required when welding
 - Welding gloves required when handling hot material
- 6. Knee pads are recommended for use whenever you are spending prolonged periods of time working on the floor.
- 7. Hard hats are required in the following scenarios:
 - When overhead work is going on in the grid or catwalks of any theater
 - When work is going on at height above you (i.e. when someone is in a MEWP and you are working nearby)
 - When standing a large scenic item upright
 - Any time there is falling object risk
- 8. Harnesses and appropriate fall protection are required when working overhead, as outlined in the shop's Fall Protection training program.

Tool Safety

1. You are not required to operate any tool or perform any task that makes you feel nervous or unsafe.
2. Do not use any tool or piece of equipment unless you have received training for it. Note that the following equipment types are always off-limits to any student unless given permission from a shop supervisor:
 - Welding
 - Automated scenery
 - Fly system operation or weight changing
3. Before use, perform a visual inspection on any tool or piece of equipment you are required to use. If it is damaged, report it to your supervisor.
4. Do not talk to others while you or they are operating tools
5. For supervisors: if someone has identified a tool as damaged, begin Lock Out Tag Out procedures and place the tool in the back of the tool room (the Graveyard).

Working Onstage Rules:

1. Follow all instructions given to you by your supervisor about donning hardhats and working underneath overhead workers.
2. When in an area where overhead work is occurring, be listening for calls from overhead alerting you to falling objects; be prepared to leave the area immediately if you hear a call
3. When weight loading is occurring in the Louis, be listening for calls alerting you to imminent danger; be prepared to leave the area immediately if you hear a call

Student Safety Resources:

1. The "Right-to-Know" SDSs can be accessed via the QR codes posted throughout the shop (NU login required).
2. If you have an immediate safety concern, notify your supervisor.
3. If you would like to report a safety concern and wish to remain anonymous to the shop staff, you may contact Heather Basarab, Wirtz's Production Manager, at heather.basarab@northwestern.edu
4. If you would like to report a safety concern and wish to remain anonymous to all Wirtz staff, you may contact Northwestern University's Office of Environmental Health and Safety.