

## BLOCKING NOTATION

In order for a play to be performed it must be acted by actors who have been directed by a director. It is the Director's job to convey the meaning and theme of the play to the audience and she often does this through staging and blocking. Staging or blocking a scene is to coordinate the movements of the actors as they speak their lines. It is the actor's job to remember the blocking so it can be consistently repeated. Therefore, it is helpful for actors to understand blocking shorthand or notation so they may quickly notate their movements and understand them thoroughly so the blocking can be recreated exactly for each remaining rehearsal and performance.

A written record of the choreographed movements dictated by the director should can be notated or penciled into the script by the actors as the blocking and movements are given. It is always wise to use pencil, not ink, when recording blocking as the stage movement could be changed later.

The following universal "stage notation/shorthand", which can be easily understood by anyone, allows actors to quickly record how, when and where they move throughout the course of the play. Universal stage notation is also helpful to understudies and actors who are filling in for missing regular players. Both Actors and Stage Managers should always keep up to date records of any changes to the blocking or stage movements dictated by the director during rehearsals.

Below are some common abbreviations for various blocking directions and stage positions:

- Cross (X)
- Enter (Ntr)
- Exit (Xit)
- Center Stage (CS)
- Downstage (DS)
- Upstage (US)
- Stage Right (SR)
- Stage Left (SL)
- Down Center (DC)
- Up Center (UC)
- Kneel (Kn)
- Off Stage (OS)
- Sit (st)

The notations can be combined too:

- Upstage Right (USR)
- Downstage Right (DSR)
- Upstage Left (USL)
- Upstage Center (USC)
- Downstage Left (DSL)
- Downstage Center (DSC)
- Cross Up Right Center (X URC)
- Exit Down Left (Xit DL)