

# BROADWAY 101

A Comprehensive Study Guide  
covering everything that is Broadway.

## Theatre and Stage Makeup Tips

Good theatrical makeup is sometimes overlooked and under appreciated because it works so well in conjunction with the mood and stage setting and compliments the actor's performance. However, theatrical makeup is an important element of any production. Here is some information and ideas to help you successfully create your own looks for the theatre and stage.

Make sure your theatrical makeup kit contains the necessities. A makeup kit should contain the following basic items: foundation or makeup base, rouge, highlights, eye makeup, eyebrow pencil, mascara, lipstick, applicator sponge, cleansing cream and tissues. Because all of these items are available in a variety of forms and brands carefully consider your purpose when selecting your items. Makeup options also range from inexpensive Halloween makeup to professional makeup and special materials.

Consider the mood of the performance as well as costume and stage setting. Is the tone light and airy or brutal and garish? Your makeup choices should enhance the nature of the performance and create the illusion that the actor is his character. Test your makeup under the stage lighting to determine if you have achieved the expected results.

Go for the dramatic. Makeup designed for stage use is heavier than everyday makeup. An audience viewing a performance from a distance will not see makeup that is too subtle, so a heavier application, brighter colors, and applications like false eyelashes can be necessary. Heavier foundation gives the appearance of flawless skin. Choose a color that will be appropriate for the character's complexion by considering elements of the character like age and race. Add darker shades, including blush, to create contours in desired areas, and lighter shades to create highlights. Blend your makeup to avoid sharp contrasts. To make lips look bigger, simply use a lip liner to draw them in the desired size and shape and color them in. Eyes will look bigger if you extend the line on the upper lid past the corner of the eye and do not connect it with the lower line. Finish the look with powder to keep makeup from running under the hot lights.

Accept the challenge of creating monsters, injuries, aging, and other transformations. Mortician's wax and nose putty can be sculpted and used to construct facial features, artificial hair can be created from crepe wool and attached with spirit gum and latex, and tooth wax will black out teeth. Experiment with these items to create the effects you desire. Skin can be given the appearance of wrinkles through shadows and highlights as well as three-dimensional applications. Wounds or injuries can be created by sculpting and applying mortician's wax with spirit gum and adding the desired coloration, or they can be simply purchased pre-made from makeup suppliers or at Halloween.

Finally, no stage makeup application is complete without a proper skin care routine, hygienic use of makeup and supplies, and the replacement of expired makeup. For successful

theatrical makeup application, remember to include these steps in addition to creating an appropriate appearance for the mood and character, going for the dramatic, and experimenting with transformations.

## Creating Various Looks for the Stage

### Basic Stage Makeup



Applying a base of stage makeup can be tough at first. The difficulty comes from the stark contrast between the makeup's appearance in natural light and that which is seen from the stage.

Makeup should be stronger and darker than that worn in real life, however, you don't want to overpower the face in such a manner that the lead actor appears clown-like, especially to those audience members who splurged on front row seats.

The most common culprit in overzealous application is the cake base used in most performance settings. Wearing too much can cause the subject to look orange and unnatural, while too little will trigger a "washed out". Both appearances can be equally unattractive.

Use a proper cake foundation. This involves applying water to the pancake and then applying it to the face with a typical makeup sponge. The more water used, the thinner and lighter the color will go on. Apply from the inside of the T-zone out to the jawline and neck. This will prevent unnecessary streaking and an "orange" look.

Finish off with rouge on the apples of the cheeks and a liquid eyeliner, applying on the rim of the eye and then gradually thickening to prevent a cat-like final result.

#### Aging an Actor

Many times, especially in community theatre, a younger actor will be cast as an older character. The first step is to find examples of the character's age.

Look for pictures on the Internet of individuals within that age range. Really take a moment to study the lines and contours of a face lacking youth. Where are the wrinkles? Where is there a loss of elasticity?

Have the actor scrunch up his face while you apply the cake foundation. With the creases left behind, trace over in eye pencil. These will serve as drawn in wrinkles to add age and depth to the face.

Use some highlights and shading with various tones of cake foundation.

You can throw in some white and grey paint to add to the effect.

Some theatre companies keep it simple by using white glue or a clear gel that can fuse small portions of the skin together, or create a more defined crease in the skin.

Add some rouge or go the opposite route with a subtle brown to add sallowness to the skin  
Period Makeup

If you are performing a Shakespearean play or some other piece from a specific time period, it is important not to be heavy-handed with the base.

Create a white face with a simple powder several shades lighter than what the actor would typically wear.

Further the contrast with dramatically red lips. Give longevity with a longwearing lipstick or a red face paint.

Add accented beauty marks with an eye pencil or a dark brown paint.

Again, research is the most powerful tool you have toward a winning makeup look that is both convincing and appropriate.



### Animal Prints

Some dance productions may call for a human to be transformed into an animal. While masks are always an option, you could always try using face paint.

Cut adhesive strips into circles, ovals, stripes, or any other shape suited to your desired animal pattern.

Paint over the entire face and the adhesive strips with a base color such as black or brown.

After this has had a few minutes to dry (a blow dryer can speed this process), peel off the adhesive.

Carefully define the bare shapes made with your choice of color

Trace over the eyebrows, cheeks, jawline, and other areas of the face necessary for accentuation

Glitter and bright colors can help complete the look of other-worldly creatures.

Skin Abrasions

Lastly, special effects makeup can be great for a production full of drama or violence.

Invest in some latex or spirit gum that can be used to create gaping wounds, scars, or other disfigurements that add an element of fear to your play.

Combine gelatin and water to clump a chunky “wound” onto your skin

Red face paint or fake blood can add accentuation to the pretend injury

For scars, stick to shades of pink and a flatter marking

Special effects and really any form of applying stage makeup can be tricky. Taking classes specifically on special effects makeup at your local recreation center or community college can help you make the leap from amateur to budding professional.