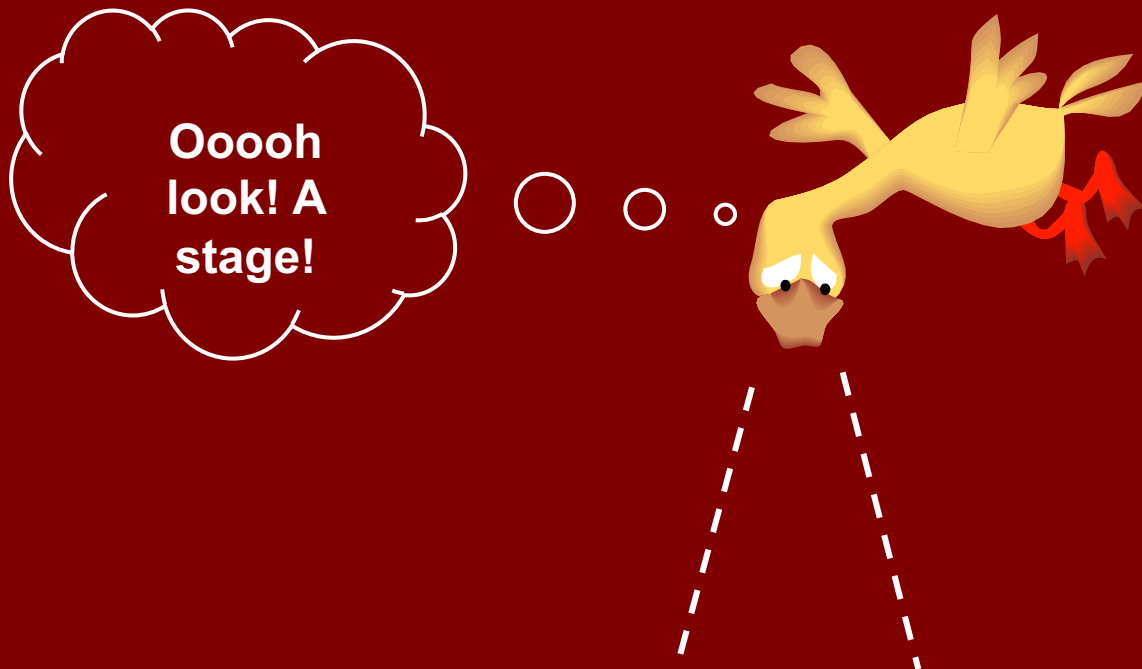


Drawing Ground Plans

What is a Ground Plan?

A birds eye view of the set, drawn using symbols for both staging and set.



A Ground Plan must have

K A **K**ey

A **A**udience and **A**rrows

V **V**iability – it has to work.

E **E**ntrances and **E**xits

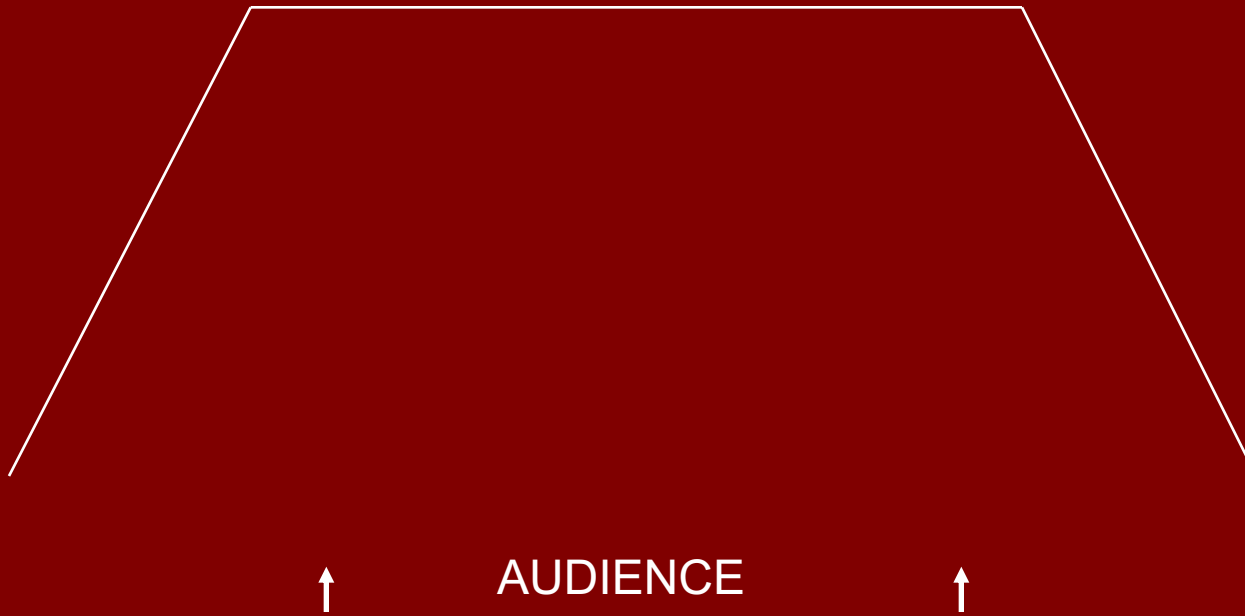
S **S**ymbols, **S**cale and **S**taging

Start by drawing the basic outline of your **stage** and add in where the **audience** is positioned in relation to the stage.

Add **arrows** to show the direction in which the audience is looking.

The six types of **stage** look like this.....

End On



Avenue



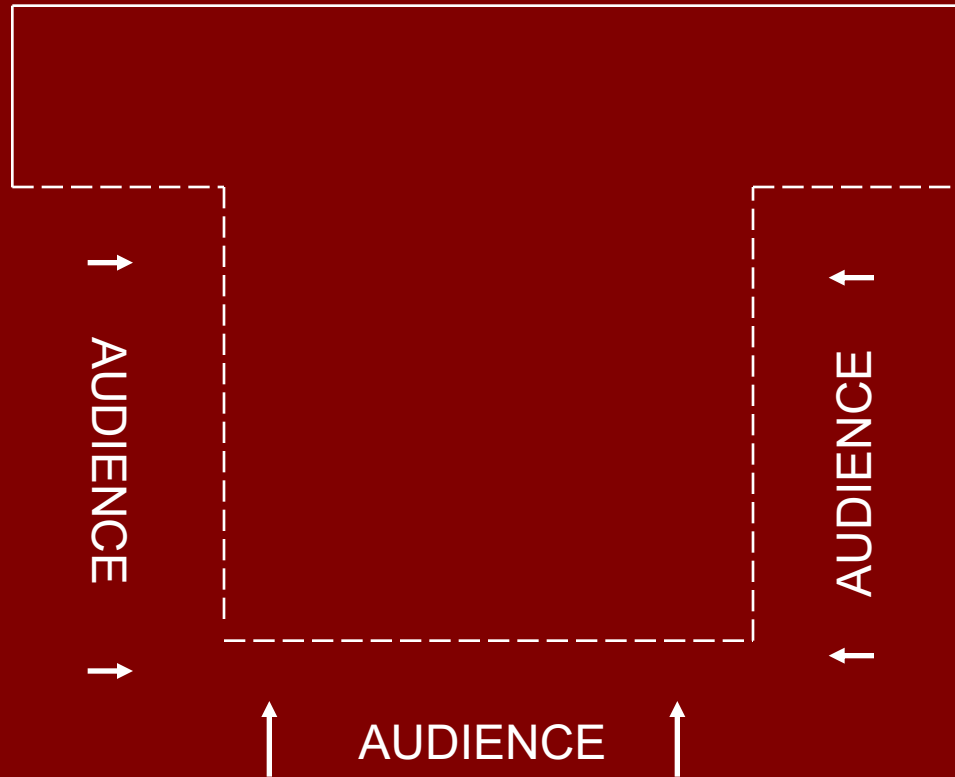
AUDIENCE



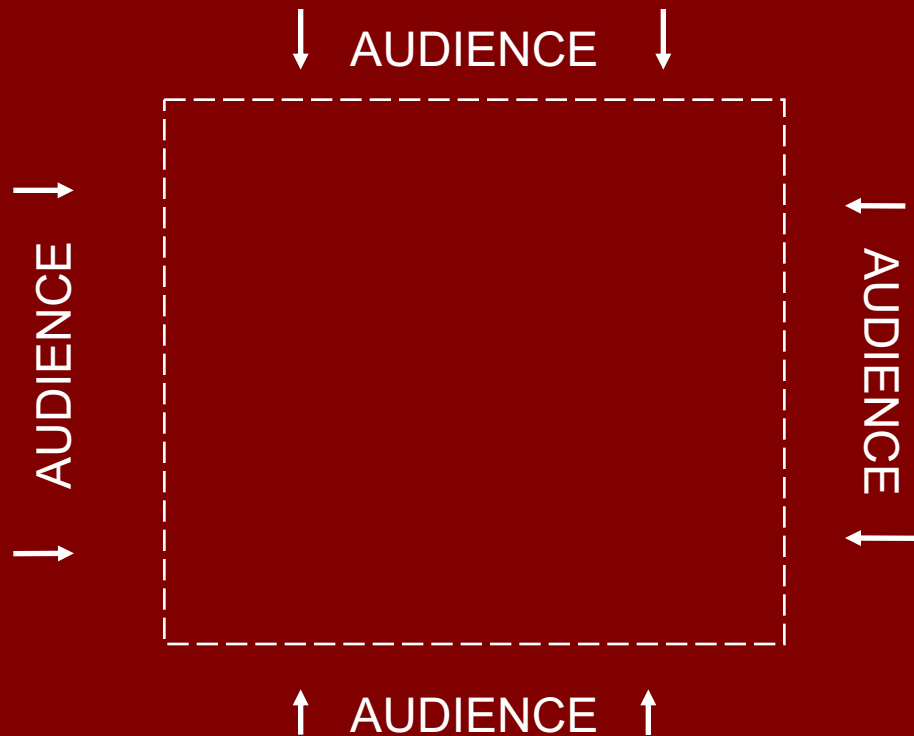
AUDIENCE



Thrust



Theatre in the Round



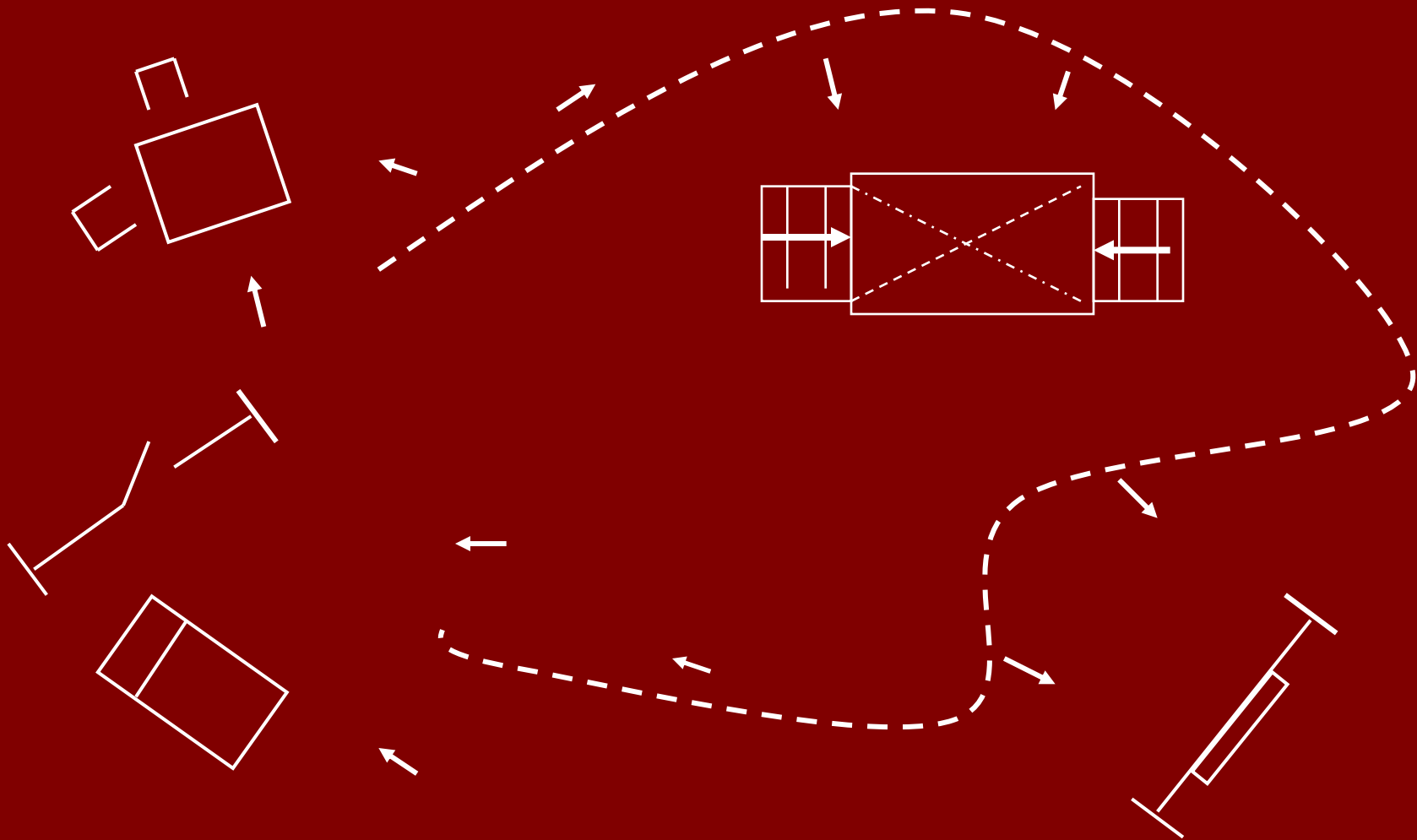
Proscenium Arch



AUDIENCE



Promenade



Next indicate using symbols where the **exits and entrances** are and how pieces of set are positioned on stage.

Make sure that the set is **Viable**.

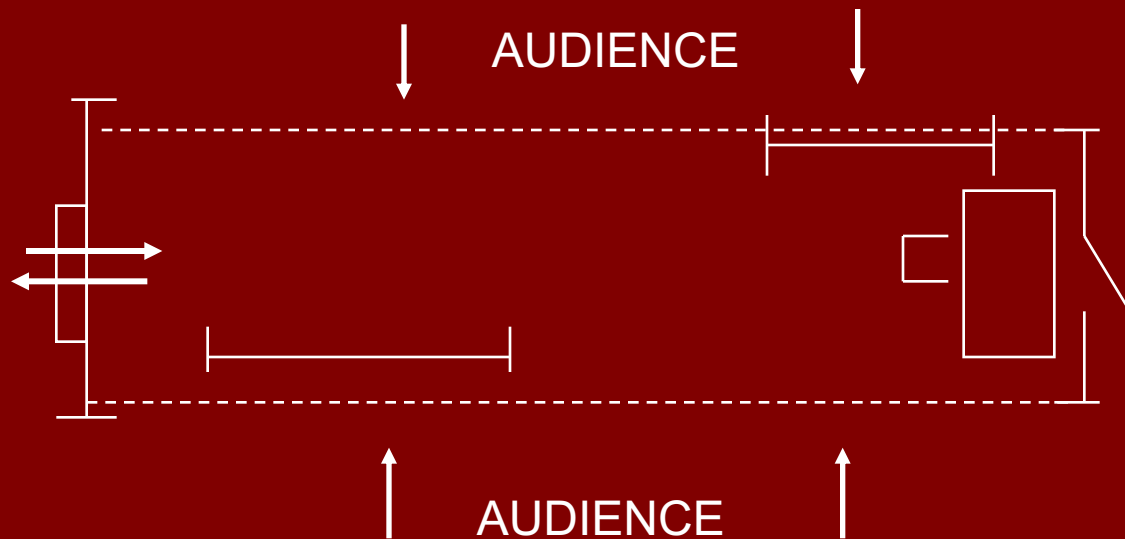
Doors, entrances and exits should not be blocked by pieces of set.

Flats are not placed downstage in a way that masks the audiences view of the stage.

Chairs are not placed facing upstage away from the audience.

The set has to work.

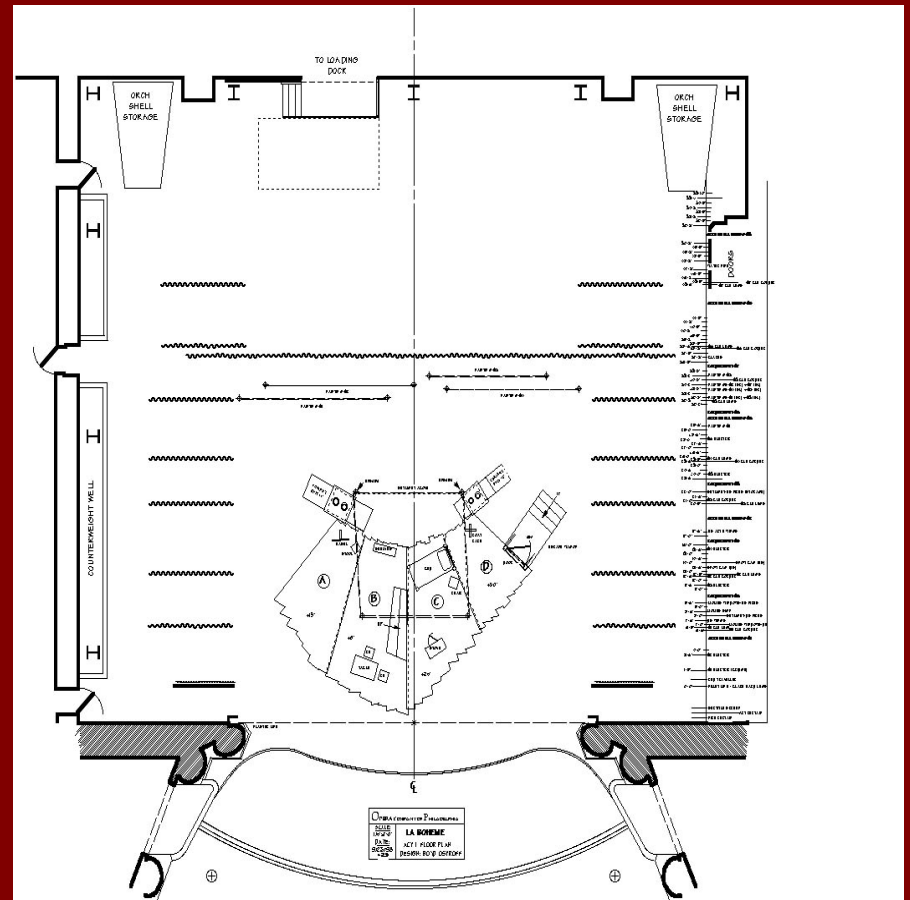
Not viable....



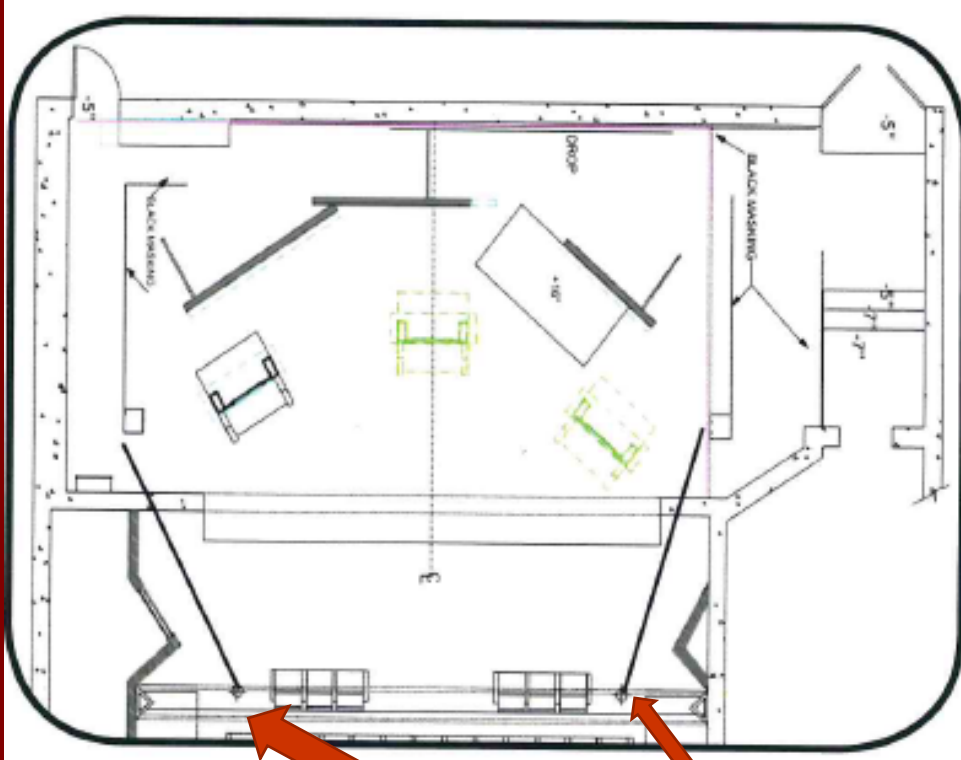
There are a number of problems with this set in terms of viability.....

The CL: Centre Line

- This is the line that the designer uses to mark the centre line on stage. This line is often used to divide the theatre space into two equal halves. It is often shown on a ground plan as a dashed line.

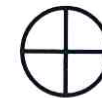


Symbols – sight lines



SIGHT LINES

Some designers choose to mark the audience's sight lines on their ground plan and then mark the horizontal sightlines of the audience. A designer might often look at what is called 'the extreme seats' within the auditorium and they will mark these using a circle and a set of cross hairs. Which look like this:



They will then use lightly drawn lines extending from this seat location to show where this audience member can see. They will consider whether they are able to see an opening on set, and it will help to ensure that the audience member is not able to see off-stage areas, or that they can see all the action on the stage.

Symbols

WHAT FOLLOWS ARE STANDARD SYMBOLS WHICH SHOULD BE USED WHEN DRAWING GROUNDPLANS



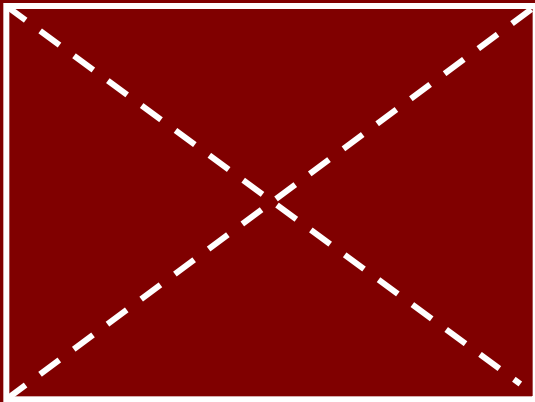
FLAT

DOOR FLAT



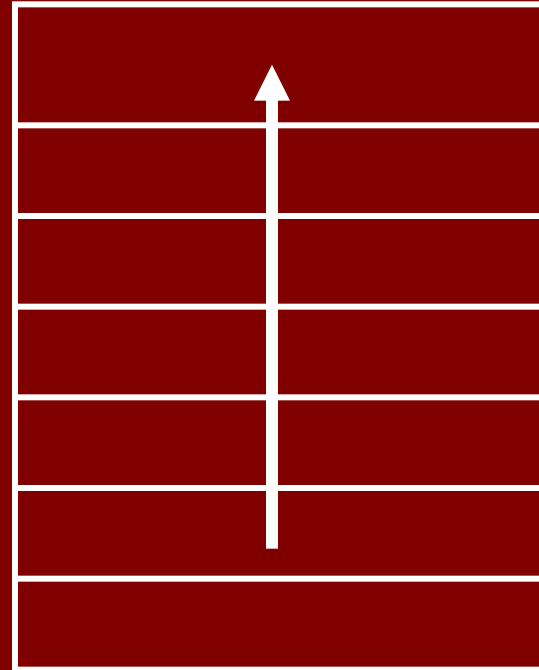


WINDOW FLAT



ROSTRA

STAIRS
(TREADS)





TABLE

CHAIR





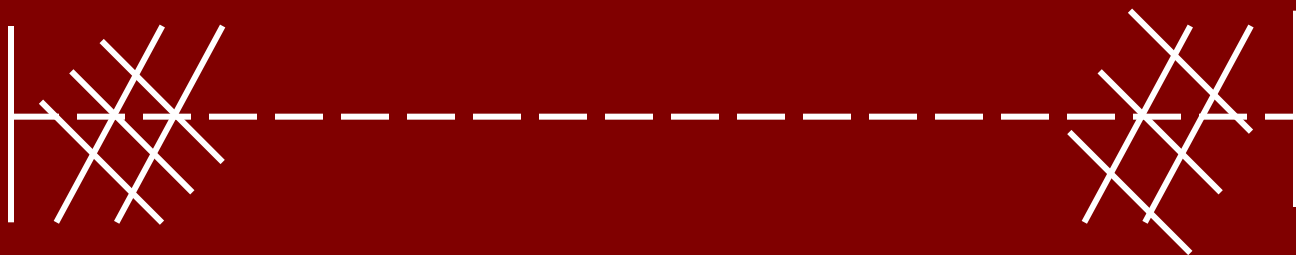
SOFA



BACK CLOTH

CURTAIN





GAUZE

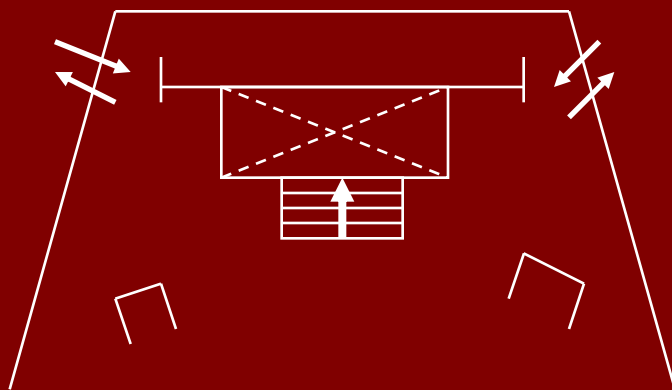


ENTRANCE

EXIT

The Key

Explains all the symbols on the Ground Plan and is drawn alongside or below the Ground Plan.



↑ AUDIENCE ↑

Key

Entrance/exit



Flat



Rostra



Chair(x2)

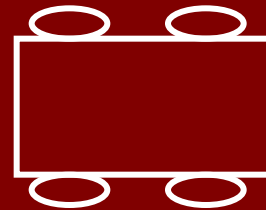


Treads



If you have a piece
of set which
requires you to
create a new
symbol, keep it
simple, and mark it
in your **key**.

Example – a
car



Example – a
fireplace



Scale

Symbols should be drawn with some consideration of **scale**.

A kitchen table is about four or six times the size of a chair.

A chair is usually a third of the size of a sofa.

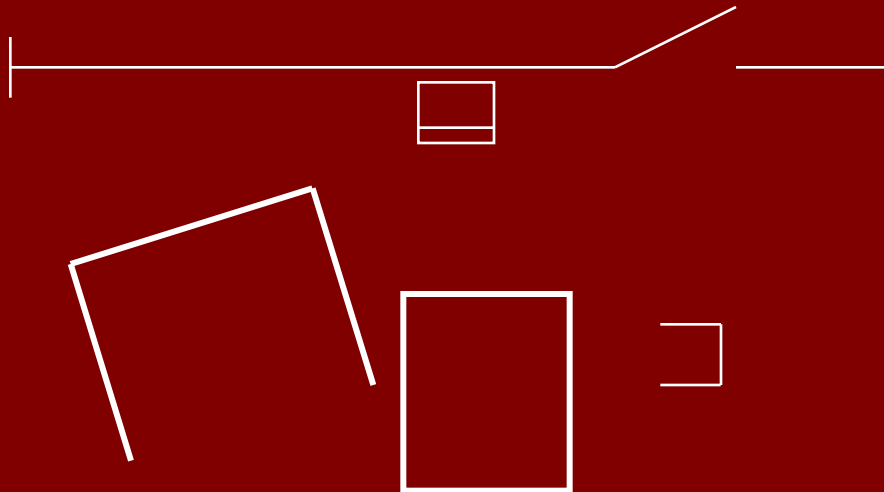
Flats are not smaller than chairs.

Tables are not bigger than flats.

Doors are not more than twice the size of a chair.....

Not to scale

+



Key

Door flat

Chairs (X2)

Desk

Filing cabinet



Also.....

It's a good idea to use a pencil and ruler and have an eraser handy when drawing your Ground Plan.

Remember KAVES, keep it neat and simple.

Do not put PROPS on a ground plan.

And finally some Ground Plans for you to try....

- An office with desk, two chairs, filing cabinet, A door flat, a window flat and a flat. END ON stage.
- A bedroom with a door flat, desk, chair, bed, bedside table. THRUST stage.
- A police interview room with table, three chairs, door flat and flat with two way mirror attached. AVENUE stage.
- Try each using at least TWO different Theatre Space Types.

Check your ground plans

- Have you considered audience sightlines; where might audience members have difficulty seeing things?
- Have you made it clear where stage furniture or scenic objects should be placed?
- Have you made it clear where entrances/ exits are and which way the doors open?

Ground plan for an extract from 'Curious Incident'...

