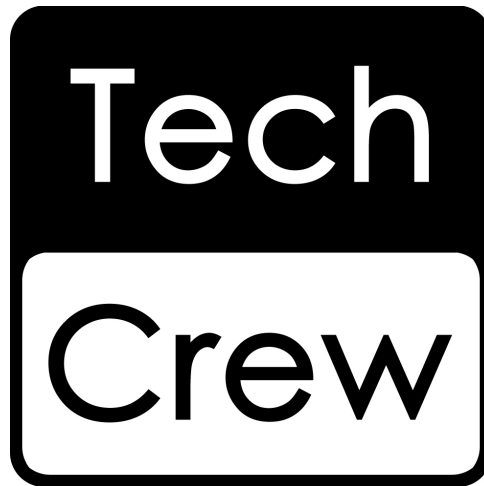


University of Warwick Tech Crew Society

Technical Guides



Lighting Terms Glossary

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Author: Richard Hogg

Acting Area	The part of the stage used by the performers.
Address	All lighting fixtures controlled by <i>DMX</i> will have an Address which it will respond to commands on. Each fixture will normally have a small range of addresses in order to accommodate the many <i>attributes</i> that intelligent lights generally have.
AJ	Short for Adjustable Spanner
Apron	The part of the stage projecting into the auditorium. E.g. in a Proscenium theatre any stage area in front of the main house curtain.
Arc Line	Trade name for a tube containing a series of strobe units which flash in sequence. Many tubes can be connected together in order to create a 'line' of strobes. (Arc line is always used in a Cooler Show)
ARTNET	Ethernet control protocol - Can carry 256 DMX lines down one Ethernet cable - reducing the need for huge numbers of dmx lines.
Attributes	The various functions of an intelligent lighting fixture, e.g. colour, pan, tilt etc.
Back Light	Light from behind in order to better define the actors and separate them from the scenery.
Ballyhoo	Swinging a follow spot beam around in a figure of eight motion.
Bar	A horizontal metal tube for hanging lanterns.
Barndoor	A four shutter device that can be attached to the front of a lantern in order to shape the light beam emitted.
Batten	A <i>Compartment Flood</i> situated above stage level.
Beam Angle	The direction of the cone of light produced from a spotlight.

Birdie	A small version of the par can that takes a Par16 lamp. Often concealed on scenery due to its size
Black Light	See <i>UV</i> .
Black out	A state where all stage lighting is turned off
Board	Main control for the lights. Also known as the 'desk'. Person that controls the board is often referred to as the 'board op'
Boom	A vertical metal tube for hanging lanterns.
Boom arm	Horizontal brackets attached to a boom to facilitate the hanging of lanterns
Breakout	A connector at the end of a multi-core cable that facilitates the connection of many items to the cable.
Bridge	An access catwalk, normally used to rig/focus lanterns.
Bulb	See <i>Lamp</i>
Channel	Each Dimmer and intelligent light attribute on a desk will be assigned a channel in order to control it
Chase	A sequence in which lights are turned on and off in a continuous loop to create the effect that different lights are 'chasing' each other.
Cheat	A change to the lighting state done very slowly in the hope that the audience will not notice
Chief Electrician	Although duties can vary the Chief Electrician is the senior member of the lighting team.
Chinagraph Pencil	Wax based pencil used for marking gel numbers on Gel
Compartment Flood	Series of floods connected together (often at the manufacturing stage) in one unit. Wiring is often done in pairs (or even threes and fours) to allow for multiple colours.

Crossfade	A change to the lighting state that involves both an increase in the intensity of some lanterns and a decrease in the intensity of others.
Cue to Cue	Where action and dialogue are skipped at the expense of where cues are in the script in order to cut down on the time required for a technical rehearsal.
Cyclorama	Backcloth lit from above or below. Often shortened to Cyc
Diffuser	A filter (often called a frost) which softens a light beam and disperses it over a larger area
Digital Light Curtain (DLC)	A motorized batten with built in colour changer that can create the effect of a wall of light (when sufficient haze is present)
Dimmer	Device used to control the electrical supply to a lantern and thus the intensity of the lanterns.
Discharge Lamp	A type of lamp which can not be dimmed and is commonly found in use in moving lights due to the use of mechanical dimming and the bulb's resilience to movement
Distribution Board	A way of distributing an incoming power supply out to a series of more useful smaller supplies
Distro	Short for <i>Distribution Board</i>
DMX	Control protocol used on all modern lighting desks. The standard is DMX512 which is a 512 channel capable system. A single DMX cable will carry all 512 channels
Downstage	The area of the stage nearest to the audience.
Electrics Groundrow	A Lantern, for example a <i>Compartment Flood</i> placed on the stage floor in any position other than along the front of the stage (Where the term is <i>Footlights</i>). Note the word <i>Electrics</i> as this distinguishes between a lighting groundrow and a scenic one.
Fade	A timed change in the lighting state

Fade Time	The length of time over which a <i>fade</i> should take place
Footlights	A Lantern, for example a <i>Compartment Flood</i> situated along the front edge of the stage.
Floats	British term for <i>Footlights</i> .
Flood	A simple lantern that disperses light over a large area. There is very little control available over the area over dispersion
Floor Cans	A <i>Parcan</i> with an extra yoke to facilitate it being placed on the floor of the stage. Often has a shorter nose than the standard par can
Fly Bars	The suspension bars above stage which are used for suspending scenery and lights.
Fog Machine	See <i>Smoke Machine</i>
FOH	See <i>Front of House</i>
Follow Spot	A spotlight that can be used to 'follow' the action on stage. This lantern requires an operator
Front of House	Anything that is in the auditorium
Frost	A Diffusion Filter. See <i>Diffuser</i>
Fresnel	1) A type of lens developed by Augustin Jean Fresnel in the 18th Century 2) A spotlight with a soft edged beam due to the use of the fresnel lens from which the lantern takes its name.
Fuzz Light	A lamp contained within a small plastic cone with a revolving mirror. Used as a police light effect - hence the name
Gaffa Tape	Most important thing in the technical world. The world is held together by Gaffa Tape.
Gate	Central line of a <i>Profile</i> that the light flows down

Gauze	A woven cloth that will either be opaque or transparent depending on where the light hits it from. Lit from in front it becomes opaque. From behind it becomes transparent.
Gel	Colour Filter made out of a gelatine based substance.
Gobo	A metal plate which has a designed cut from it and can then be used in a profile spot to project that image.
Groundrow	A low piece of scenery free-standing on the stage floor.
Grelco	A 2-way 15A electrical splitter
Hard Patch	Physical <i>patching</i> of lights at the electrical connection stage.
Hazer	Produces an atmospheric haze of smoke different to that expelled by a smoke machine which is heavier and thicker.
Hook Clamp	Used for suspending lanterns from a bar
House Lights	Functional lighting in the auditorium to allow audience to enter and exit
Intelligent Light	See <i>Moving Light</i> and <i>Scanner</i>
Internally Wired Bar (IWB)	A scaffolding bar that has a series of (usually 15A) sockets along it with all of the wiring 'internal' to the scaffolding bar.
Iris	Adjustable aperture that can be placed in a profile spot to reduce the size of a beam of light.
Lamp	Industry name for a bulb
Lantern	A <i>luminaire</i> designed for stage use
Luminaire	International term for any type of light emitting instrument

LED	Light Emitting Diode - A low voltage bulb that gives off very little heat and is finding increasing usage as brightness increases through advances in technology.
Lighting Plan	A scale drawing of the lighting rig that details the positioning of all lanterns and other important features.
Lighting Plot	The process of recording each lighting state (normally into the desk)
Lighting State	The intensity of each lantern at a particular moment during the show.
Lighting Stencil	Plastic stencil with shapes for lighting fixtures on it. Used to draw a lighting plan.
Lumens	A measure of the output from a lighting source (e.g. the brightness)
LX	Short for electrics, e.g. anything to do with lighting
LX Tape	Almost as important as Gaffa Tape.
Master	An overall control on a lighting desk A lighting desk may have many masters in which case the Grand Master is the most important.
Mirror Ball	A spherical object with many small mirrors covering it. These are often used in discos and ballrooms as they throw small specs of light all around the room when hit by light. Mirror Balls are often motorised to add to the effect
Molefay	Type of lantern often used as a crowd blinder. Fitted with a number (usually 8) of Par 36 ACL (Aircraft Landing) Lamps
Moving Light	A lighting fixture that is capable of remotely controlled intelligent operation. A number of features and effects are incorporated and the whole instrument can be panned and tilted to move the light beam. Control is usually given by a moving lights desk (Like the Avolites Pearl) and sent via <i>DMX</i> cable to the fixture.

Multicore	A single cable with a large number of cores run down it. This facilitates the sending of more than one circuit down the cable length.
Pan	Horizontal movement of a lighting instrument
Parcan	Simple lantern containing just a par lamp inside a simple metal case.
Par lamp	A sealed lamp that contains the filament and optics. The output is almost a parallel beam. Very popular in Live Events (especially Rock Concerts, for which they first became popular) as they are very light and the lamps are practically indestructible compared to most.
Patching	The Cross connection of different lighting circuits in order to connect lanterns to appropriate dimmer channels.
Plotting	See <i>Lighting Plot</i>
Profile	A type of lantern with at least one <i>PC</i> lens that will project the shape of any object (e.g. a gobo) placed within its gate
PVC Tape	Plastic insulation tape that is used for securing cables to bars and taping coiled cables.
Rig	Installation of equipment and scenery for a particular show
Rock Desk	A lighting control desk that is specifically designed for Rock Concerts or other similar live events. Usual features include the ability to 'flash' groups of dimmer channels.
Safety Chain	Chain or steel wire looped around the lantern and bar to prevent the lantern falling in the event of the clamp breaking or coming loose in some other way.

Scanner	Similar to a <i>Moving Head</i> but instead of the whole unit moving to direct the beam, there is a mirror to direct the light that can be panned and tilted. Scanners are faster than moving heads at movement due to the fact that there is less weight to move each time a pan/tilt operation is executed
Shutter	Metal blades used to shape the beam of a profile lantern.
Smoke Machine	Smoke Machines/Foggers produce a thick fog of non-toxic smoke that is specially designed for theatrical usage. It is available in many different scents.
Socapex	Lighting <i>multicore</i> cable. Shortened to Soca commonly
Soft Patching	Electronic patching at the lighting desk that allocates dimmers to channels.
Special	A lantern that has a specific purpose in the rig at one point in the show or that creates a specific effect unrelated to the standard washes of the stage
Spider	See <i>Breakout</i>
Spill	Light that strays outside the main beam.
Strobe	A device that emits a series of very fast and short light flashes which creates an effect where by action seems to be in slow motion. This type of light can be dangerous to people sensitive to such things especially those with epilepsy. Guidelines exist to control their usage.
Tallescope	Trade name for a retractable ladder on a wheeled base that is used commonly for the focussing of lanterns.
Technical Rehearsal	A technical run-through of the show to identify and work-out any technical problems. This often a very long process due to the repetition that is involved to get things right. Often referred to simply as the 'Tech'
Tilt	Vertical movement of a lighting instrument
Trelco	A 3-way 15A electrical splitter

Upstage	The area of the stage farthest from the audience
UV	Ultra-violet light. High frequency light that causes specially treated surfaces to fluoresce. Makes white show up particularly well.
Universe	Term relating to DMX - Each DMX Line represents a universe, thus a multi-dmx desk controls many different dmx universes
Wash	A lighting coverage of the stage area
Working lights	Theatre lighting that is used during fit-ups and non-show times to add greater illumination to the venue for the purposes of working.
Zarges	Trade Name for an A-Frame ladder

Some of the definitions found above are based on those found on the theatrecrafts.com website. This website is a far vaster collection of information and its usage is acknowledged in the creation of this guide. For further information of lighting terms please visit www.theatrecrafts.com.