

Overview of Role

The props chargehand (dressing) manages a dressing props team to dress the set at the start of each shoot, ensuring the vision for the look of the set is achieved in line with schedules. They work with the props master (PM) and props store person to ensure that the correct props are sent out to the set. They also liaise with the set decorator (SD), production designer (PD) and props master so that the props and dressing are placed in the correct positions. They are responsible for striking, or undressing the set, once the scenes have been shot and the production completed.

Core Responsibilities:

These core responsibilities are provided as a guide and are not exhaustive. The exact responsibilities in a particular job will vary depending on the scale / budget band / genre of the production.

1. Interpret the brief and prepare to dress the set

- ☒ Interpret the production designer's, set decorator's or others' set dressing plan sketches, verbal ideas and instructions
- ☒ Confirm that the dressing plan has been understood, and that clear and accurate plans have been circulated to dressers
- ☒ Coordinate with the PM or assistant props master regarding dailies to assist with dressing sets
- ☒ Suggest suitable dailies and assist with booking them as required
- ☒ Establish lines of communication across the team
- ☒ Consult with the PM when outsourced skills for dressing are required

2. Dress sets for productions

- ☒ Ensure all dressing teams work safely, carefully and efficiently to unpack and check props from the truck onto the stage or location
- ☒ Ensure any loss or damage to props found at the set or location is reported immediately to the stores team
- ☒ Liaise with the PM to ensure that any necessary tools above and beyond personal kits are provided and are safe to use
- ☒ Work with the PM to identify specific equipment, for example scissor lift or genie boom, and confirm that anyone using these is trained and certified
- ☒ Work in collaboration with dressing and set decorating teams, supervising the dressing of sets as per the dressing plan and schedule
- ☒ Inform the PM of progress and any challenges as they arise
- ☒ Understand the characteristics of a wide range of tools, selecting and using the most suitable tools for the job
- ☒ Ensure tools are fit for purpose and safe to use at all times; carry out necessary maintenance when required
- ☒ Dispose of any substances, adhesives and paints in accordance with environmental and health and safety regulations
- ☒ Work in collaboration with set and props painters as required

- ☒ Attach items safely using the correct fixtures and fittings for the studio or on location as required
- ☒ Liaise with the locations teams to identify what is allowed on location and work accordingly
- ☒ Confirm with the PM which props require additional ageing or distressing and undertake this work as instructed
- ☒ Liaise with the practical spark on set to identify safe working practice with electricity on set, and seek advice in the absence of qualified team members
- ☒ Ensure that hot work permits are in place if required
- ☒ Work collaboratively and effectively with personnel bought in to meet specific task demands
- ☒ Liaise with the PM, riggers, construction, SFX and electrical team to understand how the script requirements and any subsequent changes can be implemented

3. Prepare and maintain props

- ☒ Ensure that all dressing is in place and signed off
- ☒ Handle and store props with care, ensuring that props are protected and ready for use, particularly those which have a high worth
- ☒ Check that props are in working order and safe condition for use to protect themselves and others from danger
- ☒ Recognise props that have been damaged or are malfunctioning, take action and consult with senior members of the team for guidance and sign off
- ☒ Liaise with the stores team to ensure all paperwork is amended to reflect revisions
- ☒ Ensure that any props not in use are ready to be dressed or used on set and are working, and appropriately stored until required
- ☒ Respond quickly, efficiently and safely to requests to modify or repair any props required on set
- ☒ Confirm the arrangements for modifications and repairs when these cannot be carried out on the set
- ☒ Handle and store edible props in line with legislation, hygiene regulations and protocols
- ☒ Check and confirm the facilities for storing edible props are correct, liaising with a home economist as required
- ☒ Ensure that the props room and truck are kept clean, tidy and organised throughout the shoot
- ☒ Return props and other materials to suppliers, hirers, or storage in the agreed condition accompanied by the relevant documentation
- ☒ Work with the stores and wider props team to arrange the storage, recycling or disposal of props and other materials in line with production requirements

4. Strike dressed sets

- ☒ Work in accordance with the agreed timescales and deadlines for striking sets
- ☒ Confirm permissions to strike have been given to chargehands from the PM
- ☒ Ensure all documentation is available to provide ease of access for future shoots; photographing the set for pick up and re-shoot reference
- ☒ Manage the team to carry out the strike in a collaborative, effective and safe manner to meet the instructions and the agreed deadline
- ☒ Ensure that there are sufficient packing resources and that all dressers are packing props carefully and in line with the schedule
- ☒ Disassemble set dressings, arrange them so that they can be identified, labelled, recorded, packed effectively and returned or stored appropriately
- ☒ Check if any of the set is to be retained for pick up

- ☒ Confirm that all props are labelled, packed and handed over to the props drivers for the most expedient, safe and secure drop offs
- ☒ Liaise with the dressers, stores team and PM regarding any damage to or loss of props, communicating more widely if required
- ☒ Ensure any damage and loss to props during the strike is communicated to stores to enable prompt revisions to paperwork, records and conversations with prop houses
- ☒ Work with the props team and production to store items carefully in a secure environment as required
- ☒ Ensure all documentation is available to provide ease of access for future shoots; photographing the set for pick up and re-shoot reference
- ☒ Ensure that all props are returned in the agreed condition
- ☒ Work with asset coordinator and the props team to identify which props can be recycled or disposed of, and ensure delivery to agreed organisations or places

5. Manage the work of the dressing team

- ☒ Check that all members of the team understand the requirements and specific activities they are responsible for
- ☒ Monitor team performance to ensure that requirements are being met
- ☒ Provide advice and guidance as appropriate to enable work to be completed
- ☒ Provide training for dressing trainees
- ☒ Demonstrate safe use of tools and techniques to juniors and trainees
- ☒ Create a productive working environment

6. Comply with health and safety requirements

- ☒ Work in compliance with health and safety legislation, regulations, and protocols and ensure the team complies
- ☒ Ensure the team complies with working at height regulations, including safe ladder work and being visible
- ☒ Ensure that dressing teams are in possession of and wearing PPE as required
- ☒ Consult with the PM and production if specific equipment is required
- ☒ Communicate the need for safe working at all times; monitor and assess safety levels throughout the dress
- ☒ Communicate instructions for safety around substances to all team members
- ☒ Follow manual handling lifting techniques and arrange suitable collection for large props

Role Specific Skills:

- ☒ Script breakdown and interpreting the props set dressing requirements
- ☒ Liaise with the PM and SD to dress sets in line with production requirements
- ☒ Train junior members of the team

Transferable Skills:

- ☒ Communication: interpreting other's requirements and communicating requirements to other departments and colleagues
- ☒ Team-working: collaboration within own and with other departments, liaising with the set decoration team, suppliers, and stores teams
- ☒ Problem-solving: contingency planning and resolving issues so that productions remain on schedule

Attributes:

- ☒ Resilience and enthusiasm: adapt positively to changing work priorities and patterns, ensuring deadlines continue to be met. Proactive and explores new ideas and non-standard ways of working which will enhance and deliver the best results for the production
- ☒ Productivity: organises work effectively and achieves required results within deadlines. Demonstrates the drive and energy to get things done in pressurised situations and escalate appropriately when necessary
- ☒ Ethics and integrity: honest and principled in all of their actions and interactions. Respectful and inclusive of others, and meets the ethical requirements of their profession
- ☒ Flexibility: willing to both listen and learn and to accept changing priorities and working requirements and has the flexibility to maintain high standards in a changing production environment