

Overview of Role

The props dresser works as part of the dressing props team, to dress the set at the start of each shoot to ensure the vision for the look of the set is achieved. They answer to the dressing chargehand, props master (PM) and assistant props master to ensure that the correct props are dressed into each set. They maintain and repair props as required, and are also involved with striking or undressing the set, once the scene has 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

- ☒ Confirm with the chargehand the set dressing plans, sketches and instructions
- ☒ Work effectively with the chargehand, the dressing team and other relevant departments to realise script requirements
- ☒ With the chargehand, address how any challenges can be met
- ☒ Unpack and check props from the truck onto the stage or location, use prop lists to ensure props are received and correct
- ☒ Prepare props ready for dressing into the set

2. Dress sets for productions

- ☒ Work in collaboration with dressing and set decorating teams to dress sets to meet the dressing plan, informing the chargehand of progress and any issues as they arise
- ☒ Check with the chargehand and / or props master to ensure they have the tools and personal daily kit to meet the dressing instructions
- ☒ 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
- ☒ Attach items safely using appropriate fixtures and fittings in both studios and location-based properties
- ☒ Liaise with the chargehand and 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 or in collaboration with props painters
- ☒ Liaise with the chargehand and practical spark on set to identify safe working practice with electricity on set, and seek advice in the absence of qualified team members
- ☒ Consult with the chargehand when outsourced skills for dressing are required, working collaboratively and effectively with personnel brought in
- ☒ Liaise with the PM to understand how the script requirements for dressing and any changes can be implemented

3. Prepare and maintain props

- ☒ Ensure that all props required for the shooting day are on the standby truck, and 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
- ☒ 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
- ☒ Take action to prevent mishandling, loss or damage to props

4. Strike dressed sets

- ☒ Work in accordance with the agreed timescales and deadlines for striking sets
- ☒ Confirm permissions to strike have been given with the chargehands and PM
- ☒ Work collaboratively to carry out the strike in a 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
- ☒ 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
- ☒ 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. Comply with health and safety requirements

- ☒ Work in compliance with health and safety legislation, regulations, and protocols at all times
- ☒ Comply with working at height regulations, including safe ladder work and being visible
- ☒ Wear PPE as required and check with the chargehand if specific PPE is needed
- ☒ Consult with the PM and production if specific equipment is required
- ☒ Follow manual handling lifting techniques and arrange suitable collection for large props

Role Specific Skills:

- ☒ Liaise with the chargehands to dress sets in line with production requirements
- ☒ Prop handling, specialist care and maintenance
- ☒ Use hand and power tools as required

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, production 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 escalates 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