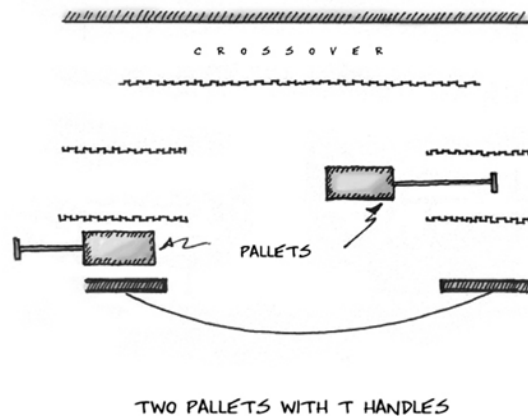


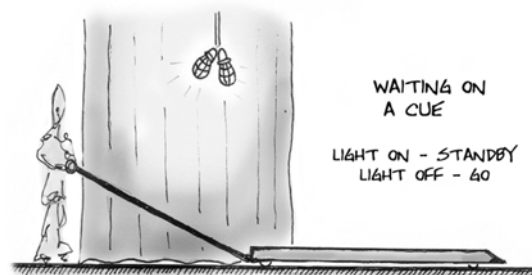
How Do You MAKE ...

PALLETS

In the theatre, *pallets* are very low platforms used to move scenery on- and offstage. Most often, there are one or two pallets on either side of the stage, and they are operated with a *push stick* to move on and off. When the pallet is pulled offstage, the scenery on top of it (most often furniture or some other prop) can be changed so that a new batch is pushed back onstage the next time. Sometimes the pieces are just laid on top of the pallet, and sometimes it is necessary to fasten them with loose pin hinges. This is a really old-style practice that has been around for a very long time. You can use the same push stick idea for more dimension types of scenery.

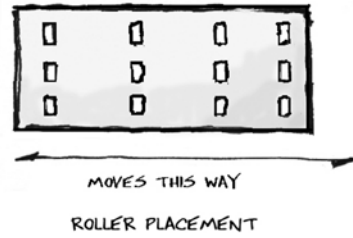
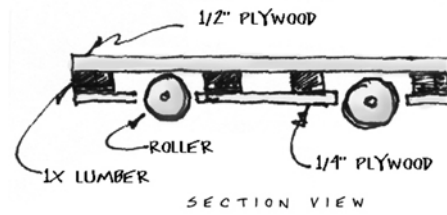


The push stick is pinned to the offstage side of the pallet to roll it back and forth. A stick is used so that the stagehand doing the actual work will not be seen. Steel square tube is excellent for this purpose, because it is very strong for its size. It is best to paint the stick either black or the color of the deck in order to make it as unobtrusive as possible. A spike mark is set up so that it matches with the end of the handle when the pallet is in place.



If a stagehand rolls the pallet onstage to the spike mark, sets the push stick handle on the floor, and then stands on top of it while the scene is played, then the pallet will be in its proper location and stay there. If done properly, the stagehand will be behind a leg and thus hidden from view. It is difficult to complete a cue like this trailing a headset wire, so it is a good example of a time to use cue lights. A T-handle makes it easier to pull on the pallet and get it to roll back offstage.

Here is an excellent method of making a pallet that I saw once on a touring Broadway show. The unit is built much like a stressed-skin platform with a top and bottom layer of plywood. Rollers are used rather than casters, because of their lower profile. It is necessary to use quite a few of the rollers in order to disperse the weight of the pallet and its load.



PALLET WITH ROLLERS