

Indiana State Thespian Conference

Counterweight Rigging

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Rigging Procedures

Bringing In (or Taking Out) a Batten

1. Make sure stage area is clear
2. Check hand lines below and above the arbor for excess tension
3. Make call "heads up on deck, _____ coming in"
4. Wait for response "Thank you"
5. Open rope lock and bring set in.

Loading an Arbor (with a Loading Gallery)

1. Make sure stage area is clear below loading bridge
2. Clarify how much weight is to be added or removed "add 80 lbs. over pipe weight" 3. Loader: "Clear the rail, loading weight" Operator: "Rail is clear, load weight" Loader: "Finished loading, check for balance" Operator: "Checking balance. Thank you."

If you do not have a loading gallery:

1. Put a small amount of weight on the arbor-enough so the operator can safely raise the arbor to a height where the batten can be reached.
2. Add part of the load to the batten, overloading the batten slightly.
3. Lower the arbor so more weight can be added. This procedure is followed back and forth until both the arbor and the batten are fully loaded and balanced. The rail operator needs to be strong and in good physical condition for this work. (Glerum, *Stage Rigging Handbook*)
4. For unloading, the procedure is reversed. Do not remove all of the load or counterweight at one time. This could result in a runaway set. (Glerum, *Stage Rigging Handbook*)

What Things Weigh

1-1/2" Schedule 40 Pipe: 2.72 lbs./Ft Source

4 PAR: 7.5 lbs.

Source 4 ERS: 14 lbs.

Selecon Rama Fresnel: 12 lbs.

Drapes: depends on the fabric, fullness and size. Ask your draper

1x4: .64 lbs./ft.

2x4: 1.28 lbs./ft.

Luaun: 1/4" x 4' x 8': 17.5 lbs.

(wood and drapes are also influenced by the amount of moisture absorbed by the material)

Types of Loads

Point Load: A load exerting force at a single connection point (chain hoist, lights)

Uniformly Distributed Load: A load spread evenly across a pipe or truss (drops)

Static Load: A load that remains constant over time (a hanging scenic element)

Dynamic Load: A load that changes over time (aerial effects)

Shock Load: An instant load (run away)

Design Factors

Commonly called "safety factor" are the ratios of line capacity and what is being supported.

Static Load: 5:1

Running 8:1

Dynamic/Live Load 10:1

Termination Efficiency

Swaged Fittings 95-100%

Wire Rope Clips 80%

Clove Hitch: 75%

Bowline 60%

Design Factors/Termination Computation

All rope, wire or otherwise, has a Working Load Limit, which indicates the maximum weight it can support before failure. Once we determine what it will be used for, we need to “de-rate” the working load using both a design factor and a termination efficiency percentage.

For example:

1/8” Galvanized Aircraft Cable (GAC) has a Working Load Limit of 2000 lbs.

Using wire rope clips (with 80% efficiency) the de-rated Working Load is 1600 lbs.

$$2000 \times 0.8 = 1600 \text{ lbs.}$$

The allowable static load with a 5:1 design factor is 320 lbs.

$$1600/5 = 320 \text{ lbs.}$$

The allowable running load (at 8:1) is 200 lbs.

$$1600/8 = 200 \text{ lbs.}$$

Rigging Inspections

ANSI E1.47 (Recommended Guidelines for Entertainment Rigging System Inspections)

According to the standard, rigging inspections are to be performed annually.

Inspections come in two forms:

Level 1 (performed annually) is a basic inspection looking at system components, functionality and looking for any obvious issues.

Level 2 (performed every five years) is a thorough inspection of all system components. If your rigging includes motorized components, they should receive a level 2 inspection annually. If you don't know the date of your last inspection, you should have a level 2.

The inspector will not perform repairs

Resources

Standards

ANSI E1.4 (2016) Entertainment Technology—
Manual Counterweight Rigging Systems
<https://tsp.esta.org/tsp/index.html>

ANSI E1.47 Entertainment Technology —
Recommended Guidelines for Entertainment Rigging
System Inspections
<https://tsp.esta.org/tsp/index.html>

Books

The Stage Rigging Handbook (Third Edition)
Jay O. Glerum

The Theatre Riggers' Handbook (2016)
Delbert Hall and Brian Sickles

Safety Signage, Operations Manuals and Rigging Articles

<http://www.jrclancy.com/operations-manuals.php>

http://www.jrclancy.com/downloads/JRC_Cntrwt_Rigging.pdf

<https://www.hhspecialties.com/Counterweight%20Rigging%20Manual.pdf>

Documentation

Rigging Log Book: a record of all rigging issues, inspections, etc. Also, keep hard copies of all communication with administrators.

Student training with written documentation of proficiency. Typically both written and practical exams will be used.

Teacher training with written documentation of proficiency.

Training

Dana W. Taylor Consulting, LLC
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Glerum Master Classes
<https://www.usitt.org/glerummasterclass>