

MORE THOUGHTS ON COSTUME ORGANIZING

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Each item will have a permanent tag stitched into it. The item will contain an organizational letter and number. The letter will correspond to a specific area in storage which holds listed items: for example row "A" will contain small miscellaneous underwear items such as socks, t-shirts, dance belts, bras, corsets, girdles, etc. The number after it would correspond with the box(or the hanging rack) the items will go into: ie, "1" bras and corselets, "2" t-shirts, "3" white tube socks, etc. Depending on your storage space, this works really well, and a map can be drawn up and posted at the front of the storage showing where all the sections are located in stock, and the kinds of items which would likely be found in that section. This helps students/volunteers/etc. find and replace items consistently in stock.

The one flaw I found in this plan is in making additions to a full stock. Our shelves were full, and to add new boxes for more, for instance jeans, we would have had to shift a box around to the next section (or one that was open and relevant in some way) and relabel all its contents. I'm sure you could say "A1a" flesh and white bras, and "A1b" colored bras, etc, and so forth. It's really just a matter of having the space to add into.

We also had all of our fabric stored in boxes, with a corresponding swatch in a small box stating width, yardage, box it was located in, and price or contents if applicable. Our patterns were photocopied and stored numerically in a filing system. The photocopies were then placed into a binder and we made our own pattern book, with sections of blouses, dresses, swimwear, etc., that we could reference quickly to find a pattern we could use.

Depending on the size of a show, another trick I picked up from some national tours I helped work, involved numbering costumes instead of labeling them with an actor's name. In ensemble/chorus shows, this works great. "Jane" is 1, "Bill" is 2, "John" is 3, and so on. That way you can label things both large and small with just a number and make sure it gets back to the appropriate actor each show.