TIME SAVERS OF THE EXPERTS

Pipe card -
Before the hang, cut a copy of the light plot into pieces that depict the individual light pipes and booms and paste each to a piece of cardboard. Add a rule across the bottom of each card to indicate every foot off centerline of the illustrated pipe. These small, portable cards containing all pertinent lighting information (instrument location, size, type, bulbing, gelling, and circuiting) help work to proceed quickly and without confusion.
Label the pipe -
Mark the counter weight fly pipes in your theatre with a centerline and in six-inch increments in each direction from the center. Label each foot mark to the ends of the pipe so you don't need to use a tape measure.
Safety cord -
Every overhead instrument should have a safety cord to insure that, if a clamp should fail, the instrument won't fall on the heads of actors and crew members. The safety is a piece of 1/16" or 3/32" wire rope about two feet long with an eye on one end and a snap hook on the other. Loop the cord through the yoke and over the electric pipe and snap it together.
Shutter pull -
Pull out all the shutters on ellipsoidals when they're hung so the focus can start with the instrument's beam fully open.
Gels -
Use a white china marker to write gel numbers at the top center of the gel face. The writing won't affect light transmission. You'll be able to read the number from the stage by ghosting the lamp. Before the hang, cut, label, frame, and separate gels by pipe or boom.
Instrument labeling -
Different focal length ellipsoidals often look alike, and it's impossible to tell, by looking at the instrument, what wattage bulb is inside. This most theatres adopt a standard procedure of labeling the instruments on the top of the yoke. Mark the size and focal length designation (for example, 6X9) on one side and the bulb wattage and size (for example, 750w EHG) on the other. It's also a good idea to stencil your school name on the instruments so they won't be confused with rental or borrowed equipment.
Wrench on a cord --
Always tie your wrench to your body to prevent dropping it on your mates' heads when you're working on a ladder. Use a phone cord just long enough for you to extend your arm full length over your head while you're holding the wrench. A dog clip attaches the cord to your belt loop. The coiled cord will stag close to your body and out of the way when you stuff the wrench in your back pocket.
Ties -
When attaching cables to pipes, wrap the tie line twice around the cable and pipe and cinch with an overhand knot. This will hold the cable tight to the pipe while you secure it with a bow. Allow enough cable slack between the pipe and the instrument to allow for easy tilting and panning during focus.
Tape measure -
Save yourself some ladder time by using a tape measure to indicate when the pipe is flown out high enough. Use masking tape to secure the end of a 50 or 100 foot cloth tape measure to the light pipe. Have someone watch the tape measure on the floor as the pipe is flown out and yell, "Stop!" when the proper height is reached. Then just give the tape a tug to retrieve it. The masking tape will let go easily.
Flash 'em -
Test all your instruments to make sure they go on before the pipe flies out. It's a lot easier to fix problems on the ground than in the air.