



# **Visual Guide to The Festival Theatre**

# Introduction

This is a visual resource for people visiting the Festival Theatre. It's been specially created for anyone who would like additional support or information about visiting the theatre. This might include people with autism, learning difficulties, sensory disorders, first time visitors or those whose first language is not English.



This Visual Story will help you familiarise yourself with the theatre before your visit. In this guide you will see images and information to help you find your way around the Festival Theatre, and to give an idea of what to expect when you're watching a show.

If you need any more information after reading the visual story please contact **[engage@capitaltheatres.com](mailto:engage@capitaltheatres.com)**

# Exterior

Welcome to The Festival Theatre. This is what the theatre looks like from the outside. It has a modern front with big windows.



There are lots of busses which stop nearby. The closest bus stops are just past Nicolson Square.



The theatre has a small car park available for anyone with access needs. This is accessed from Nicolson Square and has its own entrance to the theatre.



Parking spaces should be booked in advance by calling our Stage Door on 0131 662 1112.



These are the front doors.



The door on the left is wheelchair accessible and has a ramp. This door can be opened by pushing the button on the end of the handrails.

When you first enter the theatre, you'll visit the Foyer. This is what it looks like.



Sometimes the foyer can get a little busy when people first arrive. You can always head upstairs if you'd like a quieter space.



To the right, you'll see our box office, which is where you can collect tickets.



You might have to wait in a line if other people are collecting tickets too, but this only takes a short moment.



To the left, you'll find our café, where you can buy drinks or a snack.



The café is open before shows. It's a nice place to spend time if you arrive early.

When you arrive, you'll be met by our friendly staff, who wear black t-shirts and wear purple lanyards.



Our staff are here to look after you. They will show you to your seats and can help you with any questions.

You'll watch the show from the auditorium, which opens 30 minutes before the show begins. Our staff will let you know when it's time to take your seats. The auditorium is upstairs. You can either take the stairs or the lift:



You can take the lift to any level. The silver sign tells you what you will find on each level.



You might also hear a loud bell and announcement a few minutes before the show begins. This is nothing to worry about; it's just to make sure that everyone knows the show will start soon.



You can ask our staff for ear defenders if you like.

This is what it looks like inside the auditorium. The auditorium is split over three levels called The Stalls, The Dress Circle and the Upper Circle.





This is what the stage looks like from the seats.





This is The Stalls, the lowest level and closest to the stage:



There are no steps inside the stalls. There are 8 wheelchair spaces available in row P.

The Dress Circle is a little higher up and has a lovely view of the stage:



In the Dress Circle, you'll need to take steps to get to your seat.



The top level is called the Upper Circle.



This is the highest part of the building, and there are steps to get to your seat. It is a bit steeper in this part of the auditorium. If you don't like heights, please let our staff know and they'll be happy to help.



You are welcome to leave the auditorium any time you like. Outside the auditorium, you'll find lots of helpful spaces to make you feel comfortable.



There are toilets on every level of the theatre. Accessible toilets can be found on Levels 1 and 2.

This is the merchandise desk on Level 1.



This is where you can come to buy programmes, ice creams, snacks and sometimes merchandise like t-shirts and mugs. It can be busy here just before the show, but you can always come back later when it's quieter.

The theatre has two bars. One is just above The Stalls (F1), and the other is just above The Dress Circle (F2).



You will find information about where to find the bars on our signs. Our staff will also be happy to show you the way.



Each bar has a big open space with tables in the middle and a counter serving drinks and sweets at either end.



It can get quite busy at the bar, especially just before a show, or during the interval. Once the show begins, the bars will be empty, so this is a good place to come if you need a quiet space.

When the performance is about to begin, the auditorium will go quiet and the lights will go darker. You'll still be able to see around you.



The story will be told by people called performers. They might be actors, dancers or musicians. Sometimes they will wear special costumes, or wear make up, to show the character that they are playing.

Watching a show might make you, or the people around you, feel different things. There might be moments which make the people around you laugh. There might also be parts of the story which make you feel sad, surprised or unsure. That's okay.



Remember: You can leave the auditorium at any time you want.



If you're watching a long show, there might be a break in the middle. This is called The Interval, and it's a great time to go to the toilet if you need, or to get a drink. The lights will go brighter and the auditorium doors will open.



Shorter shows don't always have intervals. If you're not sure if your show has an interval, you can ask our staff.

Although it's unlikely, if there is an emergency, you will hear a loud alarm.



Our staff will look after you and tell you how to leave the theatre. It's important to do as they say. The noise will be much quieter outside and our staff will keep you safe.

When the performance has finished, the performers will bow and leave the stage. Some people around you might clap, cheer or stand up to show that they have enjoyed the performance. You can join in if you'd like to.





When it's time to go, the lights in the auditorium will get brighter, so you can leave safely. People might start to move around and leave the auditorium.



You can always stay sitting until it's less busy if you prefer. When you're ready to leave, our staff will show you the way out.

## **Other services which might be helpful**

Enhanced hearing headsets and personal hearing aid loops are available. Just ask any of the staff in the foyer and they'll be happy to help.

Ear defenders are available from the Merchandise Desk on Level 1

Assistance dogs are very welcome, and our staff are happy to look after them for you during the show.

For more information on shows which offer Captioning, BSL, Audio Description or Touch Tours, visit: **[capitaltheatres.com/your-visit/festival-theatre/access](https://capitaltheatres.com/your-visit/festival-theatre/access)**

Artlink (Edinburgh and the Lothians) provide a volunteer companion service for people who have difficulty in attending performances.

We hope you enjoy your visit to The Festival Theatre! You can tell us all about it if you'd like to by emailing **[engage@capitaltheatres.com](mailto:engage@capitaltheatres.com)**