

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
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IATSE LOCAL 52

JOB DESCRIPTION – Prop Department

Job Title:	Set Dresser
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DUTIES

On film and television productions, the on-set dresser is responsible for the continuity of placement of props and set decoration. With that job comes the task of cleaning and maintaining these pieces, and of policing the set to ensure that props are not lost or damaged. Watering plants and floral arrangements may also be required; . This person is also responsible for the department's tools and hardware, as well as properly packing items for travel.

Continuity is a major concern for the on-set dresser. Working with the script supervisor, this person takes digital photos (or Polaroids) of each set to ensure that the decor stays the same from one scene to the next and resets props as needed after each shot. Detailed logs are kept listing every item used, its position, and any notes on distressing and movement that should occur through the progression of the shots. Depending on the production, the inventory of props and dressings may number in the hundreds or thousands. It takes a highly organized individual to keep track of it all and perfectly replicate a design plot to the smallest detail.

SKILLS AND EDUCATION

No particular educational background is required, but studying art, film/TV production, or theater is helpful. Knowledge of interior design is a boon, whether you gain it through coursework or glean it from magazines and online. . Attention to

detail, the ability to think fast on your feet, and creative problem-solving are crucial. You should be handy with a drill and be able to exploit all 7,000 ways to defy gravity with gaffer's tape and fishing line. Experience in stagecraft, carpentry, and sewing are also valuable. You are expected to understand light, color, and how these elements affect different camera lenses, so courses in photography are encouraged. Most important is following directions and being reliable.