

Session #	2027 Dates	Name - description
1	Jan 6-27	Actor's Voice – Posture, breathing exercises, projection, articulation, inflection
2	Feb 3-24	Acting 101 – theater games, script analysis, observation, interactions with props
3	March 3-24	Wellness – relaxation, warm-ups, taking care of your tools, protecting yourself, social, emotional & nutritional health
4	Mar 31-Apr 21	Improv – sharpen listening skills, learn 5 guidelines to apply to improv
5	Apr 28-May 19	Five Senses - using physical, facial, and verbal expression to express all 5 senses
6	May 26-June 2, 9, 23	Characterization – objective, character arc, making choices
7	June 30-July 21	Dance/Movement –
8	Aug 4, 18, 25, Sept 1	Blocking – stage types, blocking shorthand, staying open, stage business
9	Sept 8-29	7 W's introduction - the 7 W's are a comprehensive inquiry tool that combines the timeless 5 W's with modern problem-solving logic to help actors uncover the full scope of their role
10	Oct 6-27	Makeup/Costume – original costumes and makeup looks
11	Nov 3-24	Vocal – define your vocal range, vocal health, choosing audition song(s)
12	Dec 1-22	Auditioning – choosing monologues, slating, attire...

Must be registered at least 7 days before the start of each session.

Pricing:

\$120 per session

OR

\$1300 for all 12 sessions (savings of \$140)

Payable quarterly via Ludus

2028 Schedule: Prerequisite: Must have taken 9 out of 12 of the previous classes to attend

1	Jan 5-26	Non-verbal Acting – using your body language to tell a story, doing an action while delivering lines
2	Feb 2-23	7 W's Deep Dive –
3	March 1-22	Getting into character – understanding characters from the two shows – dive into motivations and arcs for characters
4	Mar 29-April 19	Auditioning – prep for your audition; personal one-to-one coaching sessions will be included

Must commit to all 4 of the above.

Audition Date: May 8 & 9 - Callbacks May 10, 2028

Rehearsal and Show Dates:

Fast Fest Show:

Rehearsal Dates:

TBD June through August

Show Date:

August 18 & 19, 2028

How to Dance in Ohio:

Rehearsal Dates:

May 24 - August 2, 2026 - Wednesdays, 6-8

August 9 - October 18 - 2 to 3 nights a week, 6-8:30

Show Dates:

October 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27 & 28

Pricing:

\$700 total for all listed above - the show

Monthly payments available through Ludus, with the last payment due August 1, 2028.

Next Stage Players — Class Goals & Outcomes

Actor's Voice

Posture • Breathing • Projection • Articulation • Inflection

An actor's voice is one of their most important tools. Artists will learn how posture and breathing support a strong voice and practice projection, clear articulation, and vocal inflection. **Goal:** To help artists speak clearly, confidently, and expressively on stage without relying on yelling or straining their voices.

Acting 101

Theatre Games • Script Analysis • Observation • Props

Strong acting goes beyond memorizing lines. Through theatre games, script work, observation, and interaction with props and scene partners, artists will explore how actors make purposeful choices on stage. **Goal:** To build foundational acting skills while helping artists become more comfortable, creative, and independent performers.

Wellness for the Performer

Relaxation • Warm-Ups • Caring for Your Tools • Social, Emotional & Nutritional Health

A performer's body, voice, and mind are their instruments. Artists will learn the importance of warming up, relaxing, caring for their bodies and voices, setting healthy boundaries, and understanding how physical, social, and emotional wellness can affect performance. **Goal:** To teach artists healthy habits that help them feel prepared, safe, confident, and ready to perform, both on and off stage.

Improvisation

Listening • Responding • Creativity • Five Guidelines of Improv

Improv teaches performers to listen carefully, think creatively, respond in the moment, and work as a team. Artists will learn five basic guidelines of improvisation and practice them through games and scenes. **Goal:** To strengthen listening, communication, spontaneity, confidence, and the ability to adapt when something unexpected happens on stage.

The Five Senses

Sight • Sound • Smell • Taste • Touch

Great actors help an audience believe in things that may not actually be on the stage. Artists will explore how physical movement, facial expression, voice, and imagination can communicate each of the five senses. **Goal:** To strengthen imagination and help artists create more believable reactions, environments, and performances.

Characterization

Objectives • Character Arc • Making Choices

Every character wants something, makes choices, and often changes throughout a story. Artists will explore character objectives, relationships, motivations, and character arcs while learning that actors make intentional choices about how their characters speak, move, and react. **Goal:** To move beyond simply “saying the lines” and begin creating thoughtful, believable characters.

Dance & Movement

Body Awareness • Coordination • Expression • Musicality

Movement is an important part of storytelling, whether an artist is performing choreography, crossing the stage, or simply reacting within a scene. Artists will work on body awareness, rhythm, coordination, spatial awareness, and expressing character through movement. **Goal:** To build confidence and comfort with movement while helping artists use their entire body as a storytelling tool.

Blocking & Stage Movement

Stage Types • Blocking Shorthand • Staying Open • Stage Business

Knowing where and how to move on stage is an essential skill for independent performers. Artists will learn common stage directions, different types of stages, basic blocking shorthand, how to remain open to the audience, and how to use purposeful stage business. **Goal:** To help artists understand, remember, record, and independently follow blocking during rehearsals and performances.

The 7 W's of Acting

Who • What • Where • When • Why • Which • How

The 7 W's give actors a structured way to investigate a script and understand the full world of their character. Artists will learn to ask questions about who they are, what they want, where and when the scene occurs, why their character behaves as they do, which choices or obstacles affect them, and how they will pursue their objective. **Goal:** To give artists a repeatable tool they can use to analyze scripts, understand characters, and make stronger acting choices.

Makeup & Costume Design

Character • Creativity • Design • Original Looks

Costumes and makeup do more than make a performer look different—they help tell the audience who a character is. Artists will explore how color, style, time period, personality, and story influence theatrical design and will develop original costume and makeup concepts. **Goal:** To help artists understand the connection between visual design and storytelling while encouraging creativity and personal artistic expression... and it's fun!

Vocal Performance

Vocal Range • Vocal Health • Audition Songs

Understanding your own voice helps you become a stronger and healthier singer. Artists will explore their vocal range, learn techniques for protecting their voices, and discuss how to choose songs that showcase their individual strengths. **Goal:** To help artists better understand their own voices and begin building an audition repertoire that allows them to perform confidently and safely.

Auditioning

Monologues • Slating • Song Selection • Attire • Audition Etiquette

Auditioning is a skill—and like any theatre skill, it becomes easier with preparation and practice. Artists will learn how to choose appropriate material, prepare a monologue or song, slate confidently, select audition attire, enter and exit the room professionally, and respond to direction. **Goal:** To give artists the tools and confidence to prepare for and participate in auditions with greater independence and professionalism.

Overall Next Stage Players Goal

Next Stage Players is about moving from participation to artistry. Artists will build upon the skills they have already developed through Northern Starz programming and begin taking greater ownership of their theatrical work, while also teaching life skills. Through advanced training in acting, voice, movement, character development, design, wellness, and audition preparation, artists will be encouraged to **make their own choices, take creative risks, advocate for themselves, and become increasingly independent performers and community members.**

The ultimate goal is not for every artist to perform in exactly the same way—it is to help each artist discover **their own strengths, their own artistic voice, and what they are capable of achieving on the next stage.**



STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK + PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Learn More. Create More. Become More.

WELCOME TO NEXT STAGE PLAYERS

Next Stage Players is an advanced Northern Starz theatre program designed for artists ready to grow beyond foundational training and take greater ownership of their work. Together, we build acting, characterization, voice, movement, improv, ensemble skills, independence, confidence, and professional rehearsal habits in an inclusive, supportive environment.

Our Company Commitment

Theatre is a collaborative art. Every artist contributes to the safety, energy, creativity, and success of the group. Participation in Next Stage Players means committing to kindness, preparation, teamwork, responsibility, and respect for every person in the room.

1. Attendance, Punctuality & Conflicts

- Attend all rehearsals, workshops, tech/dress rehearsals, performances, and other required calls for which you are scheduled.
- Arrive on time and ready to begin. Whenever possible, plan to arrive about 10 minutes before your call time.
- All known scheduled conflicts must be submitted in writing at or before auditions. Emergencies or sudden illnesses must be communicated to the Director as soon as possible. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused will be at the discretion of the Director.
- If you will be absent, late, or need to leave early, notify the Director or Stage Manager as soon as possible and before the scheduled call whenever possible.
- Repeated unexcused absences or tardiness may result in a role adjustment, probation, or dismissal when attendance prevents the ensemble from progressing safely and successfully.

- Attendance at all scheduled tech/dress rehearsals and performances is expected unless Northern Starz has approved an exception.

2. Rehearsal Readiness & Focus

- Come prepared with your script, music, pencil, water bottle, appropriate rehearsal clothing/shoes, and any other requested materials.
- Check the designated Northern Starz communication channel and rehearsal schedule regularly for updates or changes.
- Make the production and its deadlines a priority. Know your lines by the OFF BOOK dates listed on the production calendar, and meet all blocking, music, choreography, and other preparation deadlines. Every artist is responsible for being prepared so the success and progress of the production are not held up.
- When a director, teaching artist, choreographer, music director, or stage manager is speaking, give them your full attention.
- When you are not actively working, remain quiet and productive so others can rehearse effectively.
- Cell phones and personal electronics must be silenced and put away during active rehearsal unless staff gives permission to use them.

3. Respect, Inclusion & Conduct

- Treat fellow artists, staff, volunteers, families, guests, and community partners with kindness, patience, dignity, and respect.
- Bullying, harassment, intimidation, exclusion, gossip intended to harm others, cyberbullying, or disruptive behavior is not acceptable.
- Use respectful language and honor personal boundaries. Keep hands, bodies, and belongings to yourself unless movement or contact is part of approved rehearsal work.
- Receive direction and constructive feedback respectfully and graciously. Questions are welcome; disagreements should be discussed calmly and at an appropriate time. Inspire the public to respect you and your craft through graciousness in accepting both praise and constructive criticism.
- Do not post negative, harmful, or unauthorized rehearsal content, choreography, costumes, scripts, photos, or videos on social media.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs, or being under the influence during any Northern Starz rehearsal, class, performance, or event is prohibited.

4. Safety & Personal Responsibility

- Safety comes first. Report injuries, unsafe conditions, concerning behavior, or anything that feels unsafe to a Northern Starz staff member immediately.
- Follow all safety instructions for the stage, backstage areas, scenery, technical equipment, choreography, and production spaces.
- Maintain appropriate personal hygiene and wear clothing and footwear suitable for the activity.
- Artists are encouraged to advocate for their needs. If a costume, movement, environment, or instruction creates a safety, sensory, accessibility, or comfort concern, speak with staff so appropriate support can be discussed.

5. Theatre, Costume, Prop & Property Care

- Respect Northern Starz facilities and all rehearsal/performance spaces. Clean up after yourself and leave each space ready for the next group.
- Direct your efforts so that when you leave the theatre, it stands as a greater institution because you were there. Take pride in caring for the space, the work, and the community you help create.
- Props are not toys. Do not touch props, costumes, scenery, technical equipment, or personal belongings that are not assigned to you.

- Carefully use, hang, store, and return costumes, props, scripts, and materials as directed. Lost or damaged items may need to be replaced when appropriate.
- Wear the costumes, makeup, wigs, hairstyles, and production elements selected by the creative team, while communicating any fit, safety, sensory, accessibility, cultural, or medical concerns to staff.
- Do not alter lines, lighting, properties/props, settings, blocking, choreography, costumes, scenery, sound, or any other phase of the production without consultation with and permission from the appropriate crew head, Director, and/or Stage Manager.

6. Food, Drinks & Backstage Expectations

- Capped water is encouraged. Food and other beverages are permitted only in designated areas or at designated times.
- Keep dressing rooms, backstage areas, rehearsal rooms, and performance spaces clean and organized.
- During performances, remain quiet and attentive backstage and respond promptly to stage-management calls.
- Stay in assigned areas and follow all check-in, dismissal, and backstage procedures established for the production or event.

7. Performances & Production Responsibilities

- Arrive by your assigned call time fully prepared for the performance.
- Give your best effort at every performance and support the entire ensemble, regardless of role size.
- Return costumes and props to their assigned locations after each use and help keep shared spaces orderly.
- Participate in required production responsibilities, which may include promotional calls, production work, cleanup, or post-production strike when scheduled.

8. Communication with Families & Support Teams

Next Stage Players is built around increasing artist independence while maintaining strong communication with families and support teams when appropriate. Artists should communicate directly with staff whenever they are able. Parents/guardians/support persons should help ensure that schedules, transportation, conflicts, accessibility needs, and important program information are understood and communicated promptly.

9. Behavior Support & Accountability

Northern Starz will address concerns as individually and respectfully as possible. Depending on the situation, responses may include:

- Coaching or a private verbal reminder with clear expectations for improvement.
- A meeting with the artist and, when appropriate, a parent/guardian/support person; a written plan or temporary participation limits may be used.
- Role adjustment, probation, or dismissal when behavior continues to disrupt the program or when participation can no longer be maintained safely.

Serious safety concerns: Physical aggression, threats, severe harassment, substance use, or other conduct that creates an immediate safety risk may result in immediate removal from the activity or program without progressing through each step above.

10. Dismissal & Refund Policy

If a student is dismissed from Next Stage Players due to behavior, conduct, or failure to follow program expectations, no refund will be issued for the current month or for any classes or sessions that have already begun or been completed. If a student has registered and paid in advance for all 12 sessions, any refund will be prorated only for future sessions that have not yet started as of the date of dismissal.

11. Photos, Video & Promotional Materials

Northern Starz may photograph or record classes, rehearsals, performances, and events for programs, playbills, social media, websites, press, archives, and other promotional purposes. Any required media permission or release will be handled through Northern Starz registration or program forms. Artists and families should not share restricted rehearsal or production material without staff approval.

12. Casting & Auditions

Casting a production is a complex process. Auditions are an opportunity for each artist to show what they can do on that day, but not every production has a role that is the right fit for every artist. Casting decisions consider the needs of the entire production, including character fit, vocal and acting requirements, movement, chemistry, ensemble balance, and the overall needs of the show.

Sometimes an artist may receive a lead role; another time, that same artist may be cast in the ensemble, assigned a different role, or not cast in a particular production. These decisions can be disappointing and may be difficult for both artists and families. They are not a judgment of an artist's worth, talent, or potential.

Learning to audition, accept casting decisions graciously, continue developing your skills, support your fellow artists, and return ready to audition again are important parts of growing as a performer. Next Stage Players asks artists and families to approach casting with an open mind, respect the decisions of the creative team, and remember that every role contributes to the success of the production.

Participation Agreement

By signing below, we confirm that we have reviewed the Next Stage Players expectations together. We understand that participation requires commitment, preparation, respectful behavior, safe choices, and collaboration. We agree to communicate concerns early and work with Northern Starz staff to support a positive experience for the artist and the entire company.

Artist Name	Date
_____	_____
Artist Signature	Date
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian/Support Person Name	Relationship to Artist
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian/Support Person Signature	Date
_____	_____
Primary Phone	Primary Email
_____	_____

Known Accessibility/Support Information to Share with Staff (optional)

Northern Starz Center for the Performing Arts | Next Stage Players

Where Every Age, Every Ability, and Every Voice Belongs.