

Being a Clown

What is a Clown?

Clowns feel and express powerful and intense emotions. They respond to events which often seem to us, normal people, trivial. If all of a sudden a beam of sunlight crosses the room, one clown may become happy as if this was the greatest and most wonderful thing that had ever happened in his or her life, another however might become completely and inexplicably depressed. Whatever their reactions, clowns are expressive and fragile in their emotions: they stay very close to what is happening inside them without worrying too much about whether it makes sense or is the right thing to do. The clown is a professional empathizer.

For example, if someone is crying, the clown might be overcome with sadness and not know why, simply through empathy and mimicry. This fusion with feelings often drives clowns to repeat the actions, sounds, words, and movements which give them pleasure. This is called the taste for excess and exaggeration.

Being Funny

Learn what makes something funny

Study and practice different kinds of humor:

Visual
Spoken
Auditory including musical
Silent

Observe what prompts laughter:

- * Exaggeration
- * Pushing the extremes of possibility—
extending something to its illogical conclusion
- * Failure and overcoming failure with surprising
success
 - * Contradiction of the expected
- * Misuse of words (puns are great!)
 - * Absurdity
- * Parody of the human situation
 - * Sounds

Creating Your Character

Have a focused character. A focus character has the following traits:

- * definite personality
- * costume that accentuates this personality
- * funny take that suits your personality
- * walk that strengthen your personality

A good costume highlights your features, and your personality.

Remember your costume must be:

- * Clean (not scary or vulgar)
- * Bright
- * A wig and/or hat. (or bald cap) (no rainbow colored wigs)
- * Shoes with traction
- * Make sure it is comfortable

Be able to develop and put on a face. You must be able to put your make-up on in reasonable amount of time (15-25 min.). Your final face must be clean and bright. It must also highlight your personality.

- * Be able to demonstrate one special talent, (i.e. unicycles, juggling, etc.)
- * Be able to for at least two balloon animals.
- * Be able to perform a prat fall.
- * Be able to at least tell two clean jokes.
- * Most of all - have fun, work hard, and show us what you're made of!!!

Types of Clowns

The Whiteface Clown

The Whiteface clown is a pleasant looking clown. He has decent manners, and is generally artistic in his/her performance. He is usually in command of any situation and often bosses around the other clowns.

True to the name, this clown has a face that is completely covered in white, with facial features painted in black and red. Other decorations may be added using other colors.

The Whiteface costume may be one piece or any variation of a suit. They are the only type of clown that may utilize sequins, rhinestones, or other flashy material. The Whiteface clown is always neat and put together in appearance and has no skin showing that is not painted and/or covered in white.

The Auguste Clown

The Auguste is the most comedic of clowns. His/Her actions are wilder than the other clowns. This type of clown is often a troublemaker, using slapstick comedy to get away with more and bigger pranks.

The Auguste face base makeup color is a variation of pink, red, or tan and not white. Features are exaggerated in size and are typically red and black in color. The mouth is thickly outlined with white, as are the eyes.

The Auguste clown is dressed in either well-fitted garb or in a costume that does not fit (either oversized or too small would be appropriate). Bold colors, large prints and/patterns, and suspenders often characterize Auguste costumes.

The Hobo/Tramp/Bag Lady Clown

The Tramp/Hobo clown is the low man on the totem pole. He is usually responsible for cleaning up after the other clowns.

The Hobo face can be painted in a flesh colored pink or tan. Make-up designs can often include a beard and highlights of white around the eyes and mouth.

The costume should be tattered looking. A dark suit with many patches, sloppy coat with many pockets, etc. A derby or silk hat often accompanies.

The character and makeup portray a sad Tramp or a happy-go-lucky Hobo.

The Character Clown

This clown depicts a specific character or occupation. A character clown can be anything; baseball player, ballerina, doctor, etc.

Makeup and costume for this clown can be any of the above mentioned clown types. The makeup should complement the specific character being portrayed and can be subtle or bold, as long as it does not detract from the overall effect.

How to Apply Clown Makeup

Supplies

You will need:

- Clown white, black, and red grease paint (stick, tube, or jar)
- Eyeliner pencil
- Small paintbrush(es) for color
- Powder
- Ordinary power puff or a white sock filled with baby powder and tied in a knot
- Soft brush (makeup brush or baby brush will do)
- Mirror
- Small spray bottle for water

Steps

- Tie back your hair (including bangs)
- Finger paint on the clown white (or Aguste tan)
 - Using your fingers, spread the clown white all over your face and neck (front and back). Don't be afraid to lay it on, but don't get it too thick. Keep your eyes closed as you paint around them.
- Powder your face
 - With dry fingers or cleansing wipes, wipe paint off places you want to be a different color. Then, carefully powder your face. **DO THIS OUTSIDE!** Be sure to close your eyes while powdering.
 - Brush off excess powder
 - Spritz your face lightly with spray bottle of water to re-shine your face after powder
- Paint the details
 - Use wither your finger, small paintbrush, or eyebrow pencil
 - Powder again after each color

Removing Makeup

When you are finished clowning, you can use baby oil, Vaseline, cold cream or makeup remover wipes to remove your grease paint. The best, and easiest clean up option, is the makeup remover wipes.