**The 12 Golden Rules of Theatre Etiquette**

1. **No cell phones:** Never let them ring or buzz during a performance. Do not speak on them during a performance. If you must take an emergency call, leave the auditorium and only begin speaking to your caller once you are away from the rest of the audience. Even your neat watch that chimes or beeps the hour is a distraction.

2. **Don’t Talk** Never whisper, let alone talk, during the performance. If you really need to talk, bother your companion for info about the plot during intermission or after the performance.

3. **Sit still.** Ramming elbows into your neighbor or kicking the front seat is highly annoying.

4. **Do not hum along with songs**, no matter how familiar the tunes are.

5. **NO FOOD**. It is a performance you are going to, and not a picnic. Even if food is allowed in the auditorium, you should refrain from eating anything. The chewing and scraping at remnants can be a disturbance to your patrons.

6. **Muffle loud noise.** If you fear that you will cough during the performance, bring a handkerchief to smother your mouth and pastilles to put in it. Considerate theatregoers would rather asphyxiate than interrupt a good actor.

7. **Be Polite to other guests**. Always apologize if someone is forced to stand as you make your way to your seat, but if you are late (and you should never be) reduce your apology to a quick, sorrowful nod.

8. **Clap at appropriate times.** Refrain from clapping at actors’ entrances and exits, even if they are famous.

9. **Dress for the occasion.** There is no need to be clad in a dinner jacket or evening gown for a simple performance, but always remember to look smart and presentable, and not as if you have been grabbed from a washing machine that has yet been turned on.

10. **Refrain from adding extra height**. Try your hardest not to be tall, which means shunning headgear and primped-up hair. Be aware of sight lines. Refrain from wearing hats or having large hairdos that impede sightlines. And if you cannot help your height, request for a seat on the aisle or somewhere where you will not interfere with people’s sightlines.

11. **Be on Time and Stay Seated.** Do not enter or leave the auditorium during a performance unless it is an emergency. Arrive before the performance begins and always remember that it is the option of the theatre to prevent audience members from entering the auditorium until intermission or at least a scene change or not at all once the performance has commenced.

12. **Know the rules of the specific theatre.** Listen to the house announcements and instructions! Photography of any kind is usually prohibited during a performance. If they do allow pictures to be taken, refrain from using the flash or video light.