

TECHNICAL SOURCE GUIDE

DE-STA-CO CLAMPS FOR LOCKING PLATFORMS IN PLACE

By Dan Culhane, The Children's Theatre Company, Minneapolis, MN.

Securing movable wagon units is not a new problem in the world of production. Many solutions have been developed over the years, including cane bolts, barrel bolts, plunge-type door stops, chocks, and even stage screws. The drawbacks to these have been problems in lining up holes or setting hardware properly in the dark under tight time constraints

My solution to this problem has been to use a platform locking device known as the De-Sta-Co clamp. I have been using this clamp since 1986, and it has many advantages over other platform locks. The De-Sta-Co clamp prevents a wagon from rolling by lifting the wagon up and off the wheels. Other locks on the market are generally designed to secure a platform by pressing a rubber pad into the floor without lifting the platform unit off of its casters. Dynamic loads produced by actor movement on some platforms can cause the unit to move on its rubber pad, as casters still carrying some of the load near the lock are still in contact with the floor. In either case, no time is spent lining up a pin with a hole in the dark.

Unlike chocks, the De-Sta-Co clamp will not allow the wagon to move around once it is locked in place. It is important to note that the more weight on the platform, the less chance of the lock slipping on the floor. Like most platform locking devices the De-Sta-Co clamp can be set and released quickly by foot so there is no bending over to set or release the clamp. Other advantages to this clamp include:

1. Cost: Approximately \$18, compared to \$40 for the comparable rubber padded floor lock.
2. Size: 6-1/16" when extended (for Model 608), which is ideal for the side of a standard platform.
3. Durability: Even though the De-Sta-Co clamp shaft can be bent, it takes considerable force to do so.

The type of De-Sta-Co clamp that I use is the Model 608, as it is the most durable and economical. It has an 850-pound holding capacity. We install this clamp on the upstage side of the wagon, bolting it directly onto the platform frame so that the clamp will pick up the platform 3/8" to 1/2". Although the clamp will allow a 3/8" bolt to be threaded into the nose, I generally use the clamp as is. I have used this option to avoid leaving marks on the stage by inserting a 3/8" flat head bolt into the end of the clamp.

Two contacts for De-Sta-Co clamps are:

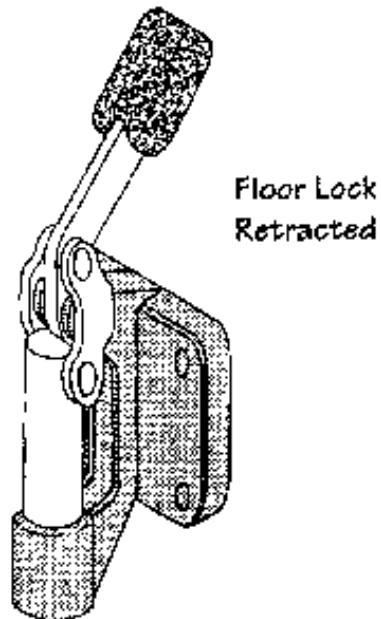
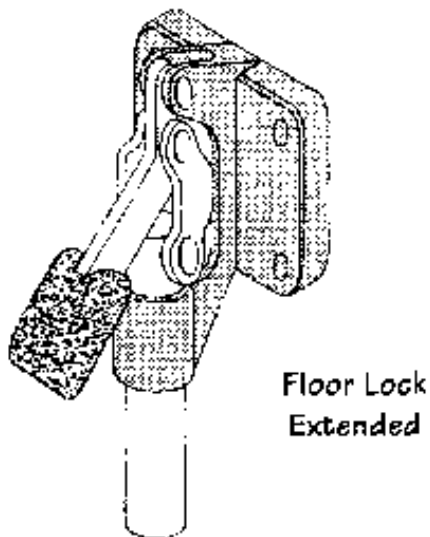
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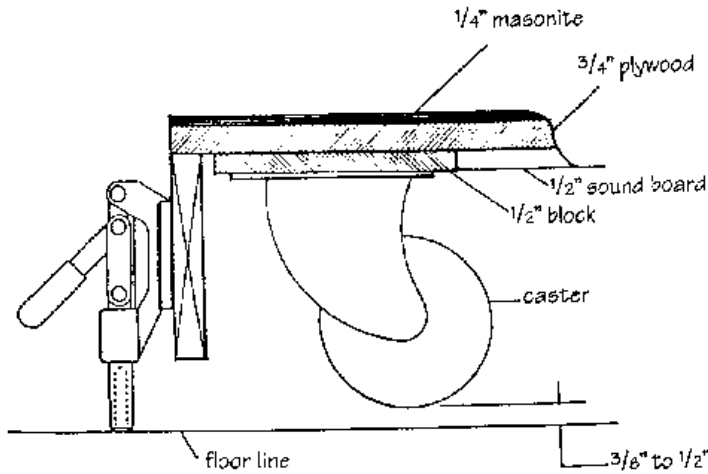
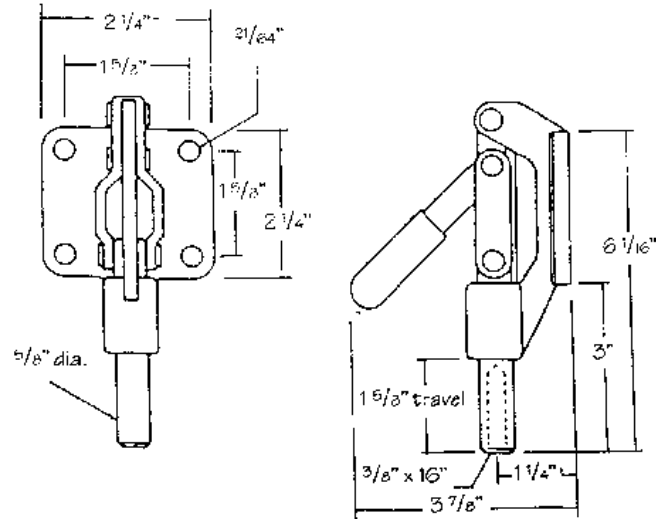
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Model #608 De-Sta-Co Clamp Picking up Platform

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