

## Care & Maintenance of Infinity IFR Wool Curtains

IFR refers to Inherently Flame Retardant. Made with non-combustible elements, IFR fabric is inherently and permanently flame resistant for the life of the fabric, without the addition of flame retardant chemicals. The flame resistance will NOT wash out or wear out but should be kept dust free.

Our Infinity IFR Wool is manufactured to meet or exceed the following standards: AS1530 Part 2 & 3.

### **STORAGE**

The best way to store drapes is to leave them hanging. If you need to take them down from their hanging positions, the best way to store them is in canvas hampers (expensive, but easy to move) or in storage bags.

Do not seal the drapes in a closed container such as plastic bags or boxes, as moisture cannot escape and may lead to mould and staining.

### **Folding the drapes for storage**

The best option is to keep the drapes hanging if possible. Ensure the floor is clean and dry before dropping the drapes in. Clean them before folding (see Periodic Cleaning)

Ensure the floor is clean and dry before dropping the drape in.

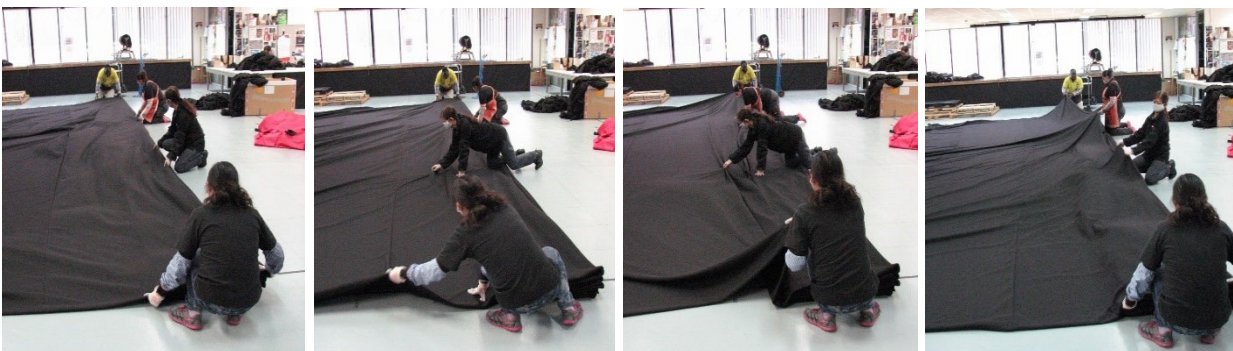
Lay the drape on its back (seams down, right side up). Take the opportunity to carefully vacuum the drape to remove any dust and cobwebs.

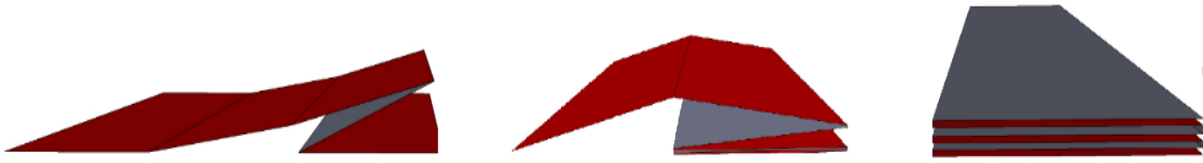
Fold vertically first – If the drapes are to be stored in a hamper or a bag, try to fold them to a size that will fit.

Start at the first or second seam from the edge of the drape (depending on fullness). Hold the drape at both the top and bottom and pull that seam over to the edge. Depending on the drop you may need one or more people in the middle to assist.

Adjust the drape so that the seams line up from top to bottom. On a drape with fullness, the bottom will be wider than the top.

Continue folding the drape along the seam lines until you have a long flat folded curtain. With a curtain with fullness tuck in the additional fabric on the bottom edge until you have a similar width all the way along.

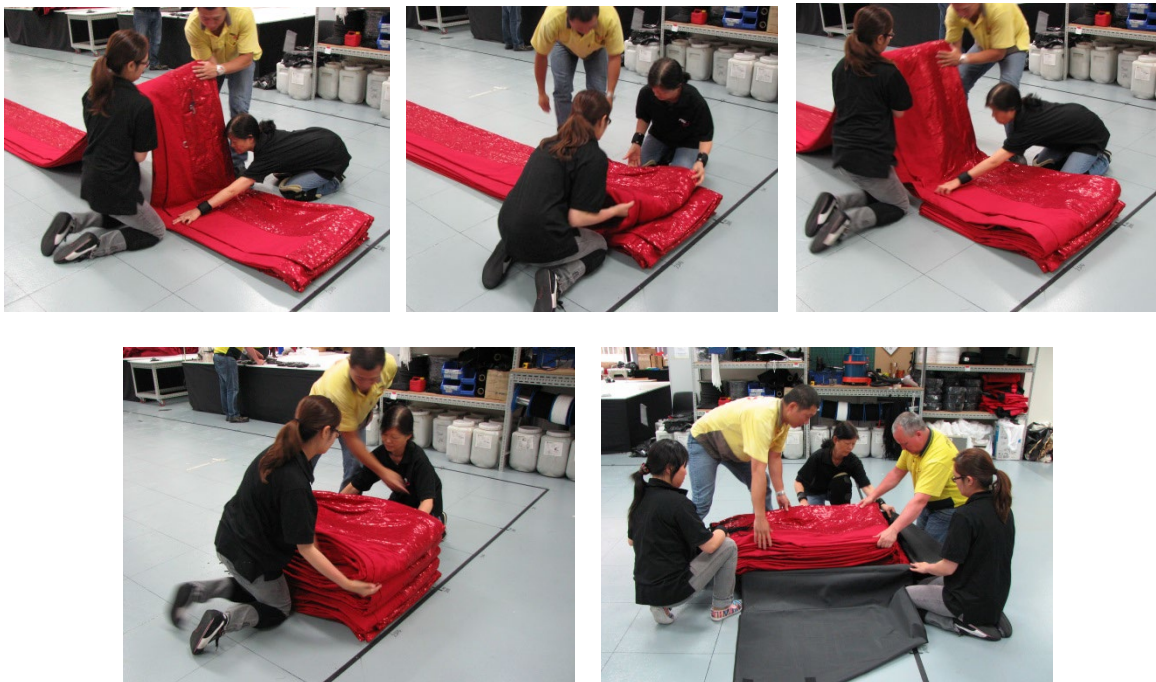




Now fold the drapes into a square, starting at the bottom edge and folding down to a size to fit your storage bag or hamper.

If possible put a drop cloth under the bottom edge to assist in lifting the folded drape, or you could fold directly into a bag or hamper.

If the curtain has a chain in the base it is important to make sure the chain is on the bottom of the drape when stored so the weight does not bruise the fabric below. If the curtain is to be stored for a long period (months rather than days) then the chain should be removed to prevent damage.



Do NOT stack heavy items onto a bagged drape, as this may cause crushing of the nap, and permanently scar the fabric.

When you next hang the drapes, get them up a few days prior to any performances. Any residual wrinkling should drop out.



## **PERIODIC CLEANING**

The major concern of wool drapes hanging in a theatre, apart from mechanical damage, is the collection of dust on, and within, the felted fibres of the wool. To prevent this, keep the theatre as clean as is practicable.

Periodically, but not less than once per year, work to remove the dust from the drapes. Shake them out; you will see dust flying from the drapes. Then take a soft-bristle broom and sweep the drapes to remove even more dust.

If you are going to lay the drapes onto the stage to sweep them rather than using a ladder or lift, clean the stage prior to lowering the drapes and lay plastic or paper onto the floor first.

We recommended that you have one broom, or set of brooms, dedicated to cleaning the drapes, so that you do not inadvertently further soil the drapes with debris caught in the bristles of a floor broom.

Minor stains or paint marks should be attended to as soon as they occur, and water-based substances may be removed with warm water without affecting the fire-retardant status of the curtain.

Rubbing the wool drape with another spare piece of wool can help remove mud and grime. You can try a commercial dry-cleaning fluid in small, localized areas to remove stains, but caution should be used with any stain remover as it may affect the color of the fabric. Test a small, low visibility area first.

## **MAJOR CLEANING**

It is rare for drapes to need to be completely cleaned.

IFR wool fabrics can be dry cleaned by a commercial dry cleaner an unlimited number of times without affecting the inherent flame-retardant properties. Dry-cleaning fluids will leave your drapes somewhat noxious for a few days, so let them air out in an unoccupied theatre for a week before any rehearsal/performance.

Washing large wool curtains in a machine or tub with water is not recommended due to the difficulty in handling and drying them flat. The felted wool may lose its shape.

## **REPAIRS**

Check the curtain periodically for any tears or fraying especially in areas that are in contact with any other surface (e.g. proscenium edge or fire curtain wires). Any tears or fraying should be immediately repaired if possible.

AVOID GAFFER TAPE – using tape on fabric may result in the tape pulling out the fibres and creating a bald spot. Often tape leaves a sticky residue when removed.

Temporary hand sewing or safety pinning a patch behind a tear is preferable for a short-term fix.

*Following the suggestions above should help keep your drapes in top condition and maintain their beauty and usefulness for decades.*