

Don't Dress For Dinner

Cast Information

A SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD. TITLE

Full-Length Play 95 minutes [67 pages],

Act I - 45 minutes (60%) [41 pages],

Intermission 20 minutes ,

Act II - 30 minutes (40%) [26 pages].

Comedy / 3f, 3m, The ages of the cast members will be matching age groups which could be anywhere between 30 to 50 years old.

Written by Marc Camoletti , Adapted by Robin Hawdon

A fast, funny, flirtatious, farce

Adult themes

The Team

Director: Steve Harris

Assistant Director: Summer Tilston

Backstage Manager: TBA

Lighting and Effects: TBA

Prompt: TBA



**THE PLAYERS
THEATRE Inc.**
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PRESENTS

DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER

**By Marc Camoletti
Adapted by Robin Hawdon**

24th July to 9th August 2026

**Directed by
Steve Harris**

**Assistant
Director
Summer Tilston**

***A FAST,
FUNNY,
FLIRTATIOUS
FARCE!***

By Arrangement with ORiGiN™ Theatrical
On Behalf of Samuel French
A Concord Theatricals Company

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Short

Bernard is planning a romantic weekend with his chic Parisian mistress in his charming converted French farmhouse, whilst his wife, Jacqueline, is away. He has arranged for a cordon bleu cook to prepare gourmet delights, and has invited his best friend, Robert, along too to provide the alibi. It's foolproof; what could possibly go wrong?

Plot

The play is a high-speed farce driven by miscommunication and escalating lies. Bernard's "foolproof" plan to have a romantic weekend with Suzanne unravels when Jacqueline decides to stay at home, leading to multiple affairs and mistaken identities. A cook is hired, but she ends up impersonating Suzanne, while Suzanne is expected to cook. The arrival of George, the cook's jealous husband, further intensifies the comedic chaos as everyone tries to explain away their contradictory actions. The characters' frantic attempts to maintain the status quo and cover up the truth leading to non-stop laughter and slapstick humour

Well.... suppose Robert turns up not realising quite why he has been invited. Suppose Robert and Jacqueline are secret lovers, and consequently determined that Jacqueline will NOT leave for the weekend. Suppose the cook has to pretend to be the mistress and the mistress is unable to cook. Suppose everyone's alibi gets confused with everyone else's. An evening of hilarious confusion ensues as Bernard and Robert improvise at breakneck speed.

This boulevard comedy was a smash hit in Paris, where it played for over two years, and in London, where it ran for six years at the Apollo and Duchess Theatres. It has since played in theatres all over the USA and the English speaking world and was revived in Chicago and on Broadway at the American Airlines Theatre in 2012. This production was nominated for two Tony awards.

Synopsis

Act 1

In a renovated French farmhouse about a two-hour drive from Paris, Bernard is hoping to send his wife, Jacqueline, to her mother's for the weekend, in hopes he can romance his mistress, Suzanne, a Parisian model. Bernard has hired a [Cordon Bleu](#) cook, Suzette, and as an alibi invited his friend Robert to dinner.

While Bernard is upstairs, the telephone rings. Jacqueline answers; it's the Bon Appetit catering agency confirming Suzette is on her way, which alerts her that something is up. Then Robert calls and Jacqueline again answers. He tells Jacqueline he is spending the weekend, a fact unknown to her. As Robert and Jacqueline talk on the phone, it becomes obvious that they are having an affair.

Jacqueline tells Bernard her mother has the flu and that she has cancelled their visit. Bernard panics, and when Robert arrives, he tells his friend about his affair with Suzanne. Since Suzanne is arriving at any minute, Bernard commands Robert against his will to tell Jacqueline that "Suzy" is his girlfriend.

While Bernard and Jacqueline are out buying groceries, Suzy arrives but it is Suzette, the caterer, not Suzanne, the mistress. Robert doesn't realise, and introduces Suzette as his

girlfriend when Bernard and Jacqueline return. Bernard is furious because of the mix-up, and Jacqueline feels betrayed because she thought she was Robert's only mistress.

Bernard and Robert secretly talk to Suzette, and for extra money she agrees to play Robert's mistress. Finally, Suzanne arrives and although alerted to and outraged at the fact that she now has to act as the cook, decides she has no option but to play her part in the deception. When Jacqueline eventually confronts Robert about Suzette, he avoids disaster by telling Jacqueline that Suzette is really his niece.

Act 2

Robert and Suzette are dancing drunkenly in and out of the room. When they have gone Jacqueline voices her frustration at Bernard's affair, which she discovered because of a note signed 'Suzy' and a receipt for a Chanel coat in Bernard's jacket pocket. The coat was a gift for Bernard's mistress. Since the coat was passed off as Suzette's, Jacqueline is sure Bernard's affair is with Suzette.

Suzanne thinks so as well; she and Jacqueline exact revenge on Robert and Suzette by pouring ice on them. Suzanne was satisfied but Jacqueline sprays Bernard with a soda siphon. More hijinks are brought out and confusion about Suzette being Robert's niece is brought to light.

Suzette tells Bernard and Robert that she has a husband, George, who will kill anyone she is seen even suggesting an affair. Jacqueline comes downstairs in a negligee and tells Bernard about her affair. Bernard is mad and threatens to kill the adulterer. Jacqueline discloses Robert's name and all is set for hell when George, Suzette's husband, walks in. George is told to believe Suzette is at another house and that Suzanne is his wife, until Suzette comes out to greet him. After questioning, George believes the evening was a game called "[Happy Families](#)" and they depart.

After Bernard and Jacqueline go to bed, Suzanne visits Robert's bedroom, claims they should share it and that he deserves a reward for buying her a new Chanel coat (because Suzette took the old one).

Auditions

What to Prepare for the Audition:

- **A Monologue:**
You will need to prepare one or two contrasting monologues for the audition.
- **Reading from the Script:**
You may be asked to read scenes from the script.
- **Be Ready to Move:**
If you are asked to move around, be prepared.
- **What to Wear:**
Wear something comfortable that allows you to move easily.

Accents

The play *Don't Dress for Dinner* is not originally written to be performed with a French accent; it is an English adaptation of a French play by Marc Camoletti, titled *Boeing-Boeing*, though its origins are sometimes misattributed.

While a French accent may be incorporated by specific theatre companies for artistic or comedic effect, the play itself, in its original French context and English adaptations, does not inherently require one.

If you can do a faint French accent and you are perfectly understandable, go for it.

About the Play

- *Don't Dress for Dinner* (or *Pyjama Pour Deux* in French) is a farce by French playwright Marc Camoletti.
- It was translated and adapted into English by Robin Hawdon.
- The play is known for its comedic misunderstandings and the fast-paced nature of its dialogue.

Accent Considerations

- **English Performance:**
In English productions, a French accent is not a requirement but might be used by an actor to portray a character from France, or as a stylistic choice by the director.
- **Original French Context:**
The original play *Pyjama Pour Deux* would have been performed in French, and a French accent would have been the norm for French actors performing in French.
- **Adaptation:**
The English version of the play is written to be understood by an English-speaking audience, so any French accent would be an added layer of character or humour for a specific production.

Commitment

By auditioning, and if cast, you are committing to the following;

1. A commitment to attend all performances and as many rehearsals as possible.
2. Provision of contact details and a theatre biography for the programmes.
3. Participation in publicity photo shoots and promotional videos.
4. Advise of any planned or unplanned absences as soon as practical.
5. Any other reasonable commitment the Director may make.
6. Abide by the theatre's Members and Cast and Crew Code of Conduct.
7. Have a Working With Children certification.
8. Be a financial member of the Players Theatre.

Casting

All auditionees should expect notification of the result within 72 hours.

Successful auditionees will be contacted by telephone and offered a role.

If your audition is unsuccessful, you will be notified by the Director.

If not cast in the show, there may be other positions in which you can be involved.

Roles may be changed during the rehearsal period at the discretion of the Director.

Characters

The play "Don't Dress for Dinner" features six main characters: Bernard, Jacqueline, Robert, Suzanne, Suzette, and George.

Bernard is the host who plans a romantic weekend with his mistress, Suzanne.

Jacqueline is Bernard's wife, who is unaware of the affair.

Robert is Bernard's best friend and Jacqueline's secret lover.

Suzanne is Bernard's mistress.

Suzette is the cook, and George is Suzette's husband.

In the supplied snippets, a comma = 1 beat, a full stop = 2 beats, ... or --- = 3 beats, ---- at the end of the line = cutoff.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **Bernard: (player, joey from friends)**

A married man who is having an affair with Suzanne. He orchestrates the evening to be with his mistress, but his plans are complicated by his wife's unexpected presence and the arrival of his friend Robert. He is confident beyond his abilities and thinks he is getting away with everything.

Bernard (*answering*) Hallo? . . . Suzanne—my darling! Where are you—still at the station? . . . I know, I'm sorry I'm not there, my angel, but something a bit tricky has turned up. Jacqueline's still here! . . . Yes—she's had to cancel her trip to her mother's. . . . No, no, no—don't worry, you don't need to go back. I've worked something out—it's all fixed.

- **Jacqueline: (sophisticated, aloof)**

Bernard's wife, who is also having an affair, unbeknownst to Bernard. She is initially cheerful but becomes suspicious and jealous as the evening progresses, leading to her attempts to uncover the truth. Lets see the concern, disappointment and also the excitement.

Jacqueline Robert! Robert, where are you—at the station? (*She looks towards the front door to check that Bernard has gone*) Robert, he's just told me you were coming! I'm just about to leave for mother's! . . . Yes! I've arranged to go to her for the weekend! But I didn't know you were coming, my darling—I've only just found out! Why didn't you call me? . . . Well they do have phones in Hong Kong. . . . Oh lord, my angel, I

- **Robert: (stylish but easy going, Chandler from friends)**

Bernard's best friend, who is also Jacqueline's lover. He gets caught up in Bernard's scheme and has to juggle both Bernard and Jacqueline's secrets. He is invited to the country house to provide a cover story for the affair but becomes entangled in everyone's clandestine relationships. Quick but with pauses positioned to deliver the punch lines perfectly.

Robert Look at it this way. I've ended up sleeping with the real cook in the piggery, instead of sleeping with the false cook in the cow-shed, although I'm actually supposed to be . . . not supposed to be sleeping anywhere with anyone, and all so that you can leave Jacqueline alone in the hay-loft while you roger the false cook in the cow-shed! It's not so much a mess as a dirty great pile of farmyard manure!

- **Suzanne: (Suzi for short) (a little oblivious)**

Bernard's mistress. A Parisian Model. She is initially alluring and classy but becomes frustrated when she has to pretend to be a cook. Lets see the elegance but also the disgust. Use the commas (mini pause) and explanation point (emphasise).

Suzanne Yes, she is his niece, and yes, you are sleeping with her, and yes, you're trying to sleep with me at the same time, and yes, you're a prize shit! Your wife has told me everything.

- **Suzette (Suzi for short):**

The cook hired for the evening, who gets drawn into the tangled web of lies and secrets, and ends up profiting from the situation. Initial impression is meek mild and innocent, then becomes calculating and opportunistic.

Suzette He's so bashful. He didn't used to be like that. (*She takes a deep breath*) I mean for a divorced accountant living in Montmartre with his stamp collection and two cats it was pretty bold to show me his appendix scar in the back of his Citroën after playing squash even though he is thirty-five years old, wasn't it?

- **George: (bulky, protective, aggressive)**

Suzette's husband, who arrives unexpectedly and complicates the situation, adding to the chaos with his jealousy and protective nature. You only get a few lines in the play make them count. I would like to see if the character George could also be Back Stage manager.

George Don't you old chap me! I *knew* there was something funny about you lot. Upstairs and downstairs, with mistresses and lovers all over the blooming place! (*Roaring*) There's a ruddy orgy going on here, isn't there?

Don't Dress For Dinner

Schedule

	Monday	Wednesday	Saturday
Information Day			28th March
Auditions			April 11th
Production Meet	April 13th 7pm		
Rehearsals Production team arrive at 7pm, cast at 7:15pm sharp. Rehearsals finish around 9:30 unless otherwise discussed.			
Meet and Greet	April 20	April 22	
Read Through	ANZAC Day	April 29	
Scene analysis	May 4	May 6	
Character dev	May 11	GG Preview	
Projection	May 18	May 20	
Speed and diction	May 25	May 27	
Over actor/Facial Exp	June 1	June 3	
Sunday rehearsals commence for Production team at 1:30pm and cast at 1:45 sharp. Sunday rehearsals will finish around 4:00 unless otherwise discussed.			
	Monday	Wednesday	Sunday
	Act I	Act II	Run Through
Books Down	June 8	June 10	June 14
Maybe on stage	June 15	June 17	June 21
	June 22	June 24	June 28
	Full Runs		
	June 29	July 1	July 5
	July 6	July 8	July 12
Tech Runs	July 13	July 15	July 19
	July 20		
Preview Night		July 22	
	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Performances	July 24th 8pm	July 25th 2pm	July 26th 2pm
	July 31 8pm	August 1 8pm	August 2 2pm
	August 7th 8pm	August 8th 2pm	August 9th 2pm