



Theatre etiquettes

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Getting into theatre

- ∞ **Ask** the consultant whether he would be happy for you to **join** him, preferably the day before.
 - If you want to scrub then ask him at this point, as they may say “actually there will be a couple registrars, so no”.
- ∞ Find the **theatre list** for the day you'll be going into theatre so you can get an idea what you'll be seeing.
 - This will allow you to read up relevant anatomy.
- ∞ Operating lists start at different **times**.
 - Find out when, & make sure you turn up for the very beginning as this is when everyone is introduced.
 - You will also be able to watch the patient being put to sleep.

In the morning

- ☞ Don't skip **breakfast**.
- ☞ Get changed into **scrubs** and put on a yellow theatre cap (indicates that you are a student).
 - Cap, mask & theatre shoe.
 - Take off all jewellery.
 - At all times make sure your ID is visible.

In the operating room

- ☞ Hopefully you will have met the **consultant** before. Greet anyway.
- ☞ Get in on the **team** introductions and make sure the team know you are a medical student.
- ☞ Find out who the **anesthetist** is and introduce yourself to them.

Simple rules of theatre

- ☞ **Masks** must be worn at all times once the instruments have been opened
- ☞ **Don't touch** anything green/blue in the operating room especially on tables/trolleys
- ☞ Do not touch the surgeons after they are gowned and gloved as they are now sterile
- ☞ Sit down and have a **drink** of water if you are going to faint
- ☞ **Be prepared** to help out if asked to do so but never take or use an instrument without being directed

Who is who?

- ∞ Usually there will be **3 people scrubbed** in and working on the patient.
 - usually a consultant surgeon, a registrar, and a scrub nurse.
 - scrub nurse stands next to the consultant and passes equipment to him.
 - She is in charge of everything that goes on in the operating theatre so make sure you introduce yourself to her and check that she is happy for you to be there and/or to scrub.
 - The assistant (usually registrar) stands on the opposite side.
- ∞ The consultant **anesthetist** is at the head of the patient.
- ∞ There will be **other** nurses around in case the scrub nurse needs more equipment, and also technicians to set up the operating table and position the patient at the beginning and end.

How to see

- ∞ If it is **open surgery** you may need a pedestal to see over the surgeon's shoulders.
 - Let them know you are standing behind them so they don't bump into you if they stand up.
- ∞ If it is **laparoscopic surgery** there will be a TV screen so you don't need to be standing as close to the surgeons.

Getting the most

∞ Not scrubbed:

- when you're standing for a long time just keep your legs moving so you don't faint.
- If nothing interesting is happening go talk to the anaesthetist. Ask about the machines and what they are doing.

∞ Scrubbed: get involved with assisting.

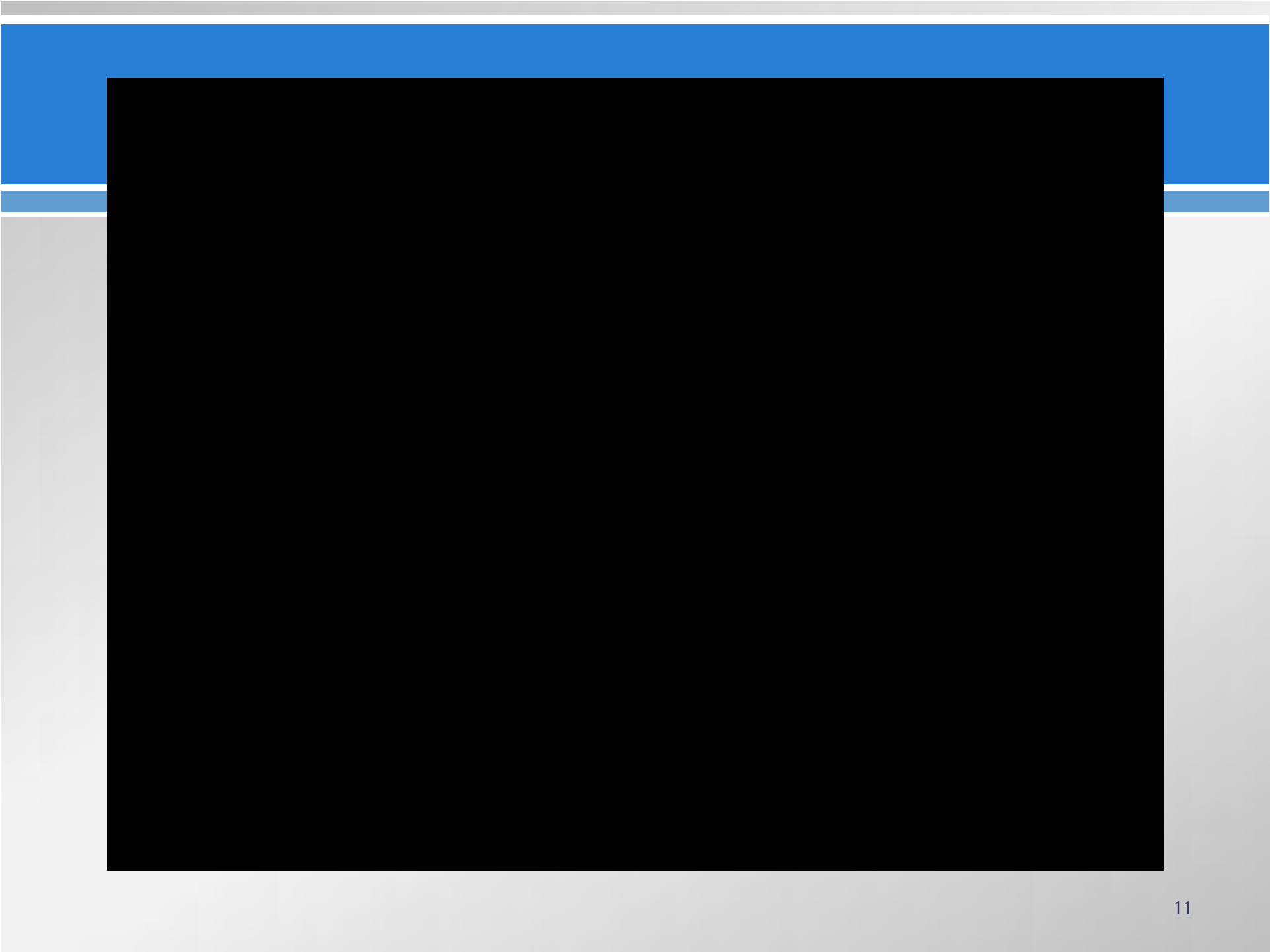
- Follow instructions carefully and clarify if you are not sure what you are being asked to do.
- Make sure you understand what the surgeons are doing and why.
- Ask to see/feel anatomy and pathology.

∞ The surgeons will be most happy to answer questions/teach you while doing things that are technically simple and routine to them eg. prepping the patient, opening the patient, closing the patient.

At the end

- ☞ When the surgery is finished you can make yourself useful by helping the theatre staff with moving the patient.
- ☞ Stick yourself onto the consultant/registrar as they usually will disappear to the coffee room.
- ☞ Get a drink.
 - At times you will have to wait extensively for the next operation.
 - This is also the time to disappear if you would like to, just make sure you thank the team.
- ☞ Enjoy your time in theatre and hopefully you will see lots of very cool things.





COMMON SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS

The End!