

# Hello Dolly Script

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## HELLO, DOLLY!

Book by  
MICHAEL STEWART

Music and Lyrics by  
JERRY HERMAN

Based on the play THE MATCHMAKER  
by Thornton Wilder

Original Production Directed and Choreographed  
by Gower Champion

Produced for the Broadway Stage  
by David Merrick and Champion-Five, Inc.

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**Hello Dolly Script** is a musical that has charmed audiences since its inception. Originally a Broadway production, this delightful show features music and lyrics by Jerry Herman and a book by Michael Stewart. The story revolves around the character of Dolly Gallagher Levi, a lively widow who takes on the role of a matchmaker in turn-of-the-century New York City. As the narrative unfolds, Dolly's adventures lead to a series of romantic entanglements, misunderstandings, and ultimately, a celebration of love. The musical has become a classic, captivating generations with its catchy tunes and heartwarming themes.

## Overview of Hello Dolly

Hello Dolly premiered on Broadway in 1964, quickly becoming a sensation. The show has had several revivals, most notably in 2017, which featured Bette Midler in the titular role.

The musical is renowned for its upbeat score, engaging storyline, and vibrant characters. Here's a breakdown of the key elements that make Hello Dolly a timeless piece of theater.

## Plot Summary

The plot of Hello Dolly unfolds in the bustling streets of New York City, where we meet Dolly Gallagher Levi, a strong-willed widow and professional matchmaker. She has a vibrant personality and a knack for bringing people together. The story begins as Dolly sets her sights on the wealthy and curmudgeonly Horace Vandergelder, a local merchant who is oblivious to the romantic schemes happening around him.

Key plot points include:

1. Dolly's Scheme: Dolly's primary goal is to marry Horace, which she believes will bring her happiness and financial security.
2. The Young Lovers: Vandergelder's niece, Ermengarde, and her love interest, Ambrose Kemper, are also entangled in Dolly's matchmaking.
3. The Adventure in New York: The characters embark on a journey through the city, experiencing humorous and romantic escapades.
4. The Climax: The climax revolves around a series of misunderstandings and revelations, leading to a joyful resolution where love triumphs.

## Main Characters

Hello Dolly features a rich cast of characters, each bringing their unique charm to the story. Some of the main characters include:

- Dolly Gallagher Levi: The vivacious protagonist who orchestrates the romantic entanglements.
- Horace Vandergelder: The wealthy yet stubborn man whom Dolly aims to marry.
- Ermengarde: Horace's niece who is in love with Ambrose.
- Ambrose Kemper: A struggling artist and Ermengarde's love interest.
- Cornelius Hackl: Horace's employee who seeks adventure and love.
- Barnaby Tucker: Cornelius's friend, eager to explore the world.

## Musical Score

The musical score of Hello Dolly is one of its standout features. Jerry Herman's compositions are not only catchy but also convey the emotions and themes of the story effectively. Some of the most beloved songs include:

- "Hello, Dolly!": The iconic title number that signals Dolly's return to the city and her vibrant personality.
- "Before the Parade Passes By": A poignant song reflecting Dolly's desire to embrace life and love.

- "It Only Takes a Moment": A romantic duet that captures the essence of falling in love.
- "Put on Your Sunday Clothes": An upbeat anthem about adventure and the excitement of life.

These songs are interwoven seamlessly into the narrative, making the music an integral part of the storytelling.

## Historical Context

Hello Dolly emerged during a transformative time in American theater. The 1960s were marked by a shift in musical theater, where traditional narratives began to evolve, incorporating more contemporary themes and styles. The success of Hello Dolly can be attributed to several factors, including:

- Cultural Shifts: The 1960s saw a growing interest in stories that celebrated individuality and romance.
- Star Power: The original production featured renowned performers, including Carol Channing, whose portrayal of Dolly became iconic.
- Innovative Choreography: The choreography, led by Gower Champion, brought a dynamic energy to the production, enhancing the overall experience.

## Impact and Legacy

The impact of Hello Dolly on musical theater is profound. It has influenced countless productions and remains a staple in high school and community theaters across the globe. Its legacy can be observed through:

1. Numerous Revivals: The show has been revived multiple times, each bringing new interpretations and star power.
2. Film Adaptation: In 1969, Hello Dolly was adapted into a film featuring Barbra Streisand, which further cemented its place in popular culture.
3. Cultural References: The musical has been referenced in various forms of media, showcasing its lasting influence.

## Broadway Revival (2017)

The 2017 revival of Hello Dolly was a significant event in the theater world, featuring Bette Midler in the title role. This production received critical acclaim and numerous awards, including Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical. Highlights of the revival included:

- Stellar Performances: Bette Midler's performance was widely praised for its energy and charisma.
- Modern Staging: The revival incorporated modern staging techniques while remaining true to the original vision.
- Cultural Resonance: The themes of love and resilience resonated with audiences, bringing

new life to the classic story.

## **Producing a Version of Hello Dolly**

For those interested in producing a version of Hello Dolly, there are several key considerations to keep in mind:

### **Choosing a Production Team**

- Director: Select a director with experience in musical theater who can bring a fresh vision to the production.
- Choreographer: A skilled choreographer is essential to capture the energetic dance numbers that are a hallmark of the show.
- Musical Director: A musical director must be adept at managing the vocal and instrumental aspects of the production.

### **Auditions and Casting**

- Open Auditions: Hold auditions to find the best talent for the various roles, ensuring a diverse and capable cast.
- Character Fit: Focus on matching actors with characters to create authentic portrayals.

### **Rehearsal Process**

- Schedule Regular Rehearsals: Establish a consistent rehearsal schedule to allow for thorough preparation.
- Incorporate Feedback: Encourage open communication and feedback during rehearsals to refine performances.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Hello Dolly script is a cherished piece of musical theater history that continues to enchant audiences today. Its memorable characters, enchanting music, and themes of love and resilience resonate deeply, ensuring its place in the pantheon of great American musicals. As productions continue to be staged and new generations discover its charms, Hello Dolly remains a testament to the power of love and the joy of living life to the fullest. Whether you are an audience member or a budding theater producer, Hello Dolly offers a vibrant and uplifting experience that celebrates the beauty of human connections.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the main plot of the 'Hello Dolly' script?

The main plot revolves around Dolly Gallagher Levi, a widowed matchmaker, who sets out to find a partner for the wealthy merchant Horace Vandergelder while also trying to win his heart for herself.

## Who are the key characters in the 'Hello Dolly' script?

Key characters include Dolly Gallagher Levi, Horace Vandergelder, Cornelius Hackl, Barnaby Tucker, and Irene Molloy, each contributing to the comedic and romantic elements of the story.

## What themes are explored in the 'Hello Dolly' script?

The script explores themes of love, matchmaking, the pursuit of happiness, and the importance of community and friendship.

## What is the historical context of the 'Hello Dolly' script?

Originally a play titled 'The Matchmaker' by Thornton Wilder, 'Hello Dolly' was adapted into a musical in 1964, reflecting the optimism and social dynamics of mid-20th century America.

## How has 'Hello Dolly' been received in popular culture?

Since its debut, 'Hello Dolly' has been celebrated for its lively music and choreography, becoming a beloved classic with numerous revivals and adaptations, including a famous film version starring Barbra Streisand.

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