

Top Girls by Caryl Churchill, Character Breakdown

All roles are open to performers of any age, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender identity

Characters			
Name	Scenes	Description	Notes
Marlene	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2	The central protagonist of Top Girls, who has just been promoted to managing director at the employment agency where she works. Marlene's career ambitions have led her to abandon her family, including her daughter, Angie, who was instead raised by Marlene's sister, Joyce	Lead Role, No Doubling
Isabella Bird	1.1	An English woman who lived from 1831-1904. She was an avid explorer and traveled all around the world between the ages of 40 and 70. She wrote extensively about her experiences abroad. Bird married late in life because of her professional aspirations, but her husband died short of their 5-year anniversary. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.	Can be doubled with any part except Nijo, Gret, Joan, Griselda,
Lady Nijo	1.1	A concubine to the Emperor of Japan in the 13th Century, and later, a Buddhist nun. She had 4 children, all of whom were taken away from her. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I	Can be doubled with any part except Isabella, Gret, Joan, Griselda,
Dull Gret	1.1	The subject of Brueghel's famous painting called Dull Gret, which depicts a woman in an apron and armour leading an army of women in battle against a horde of demons in Hell. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I	Can be doubled with any part except Nijo, Isabella, Joan, Griselda,
Pope Joan	1.1	A legendary Englishwoman believed to have disguised herself as a man and served as the Pope from 854-856. Joan is brilliant and well-versed in philosophy, theology, metaphysics, and poetry. Her reign as Pope ended tragically - she revealed her gender when she gave birth during a public procession and was subsequently stoned to death. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.	Can be doubled with any part except Nijo, Gret, isabella, Griselda,
Patient Griselda	1.1	She is based on the character of the obedient wife in the "Clerk's Tale" from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. In Chaucer's story, Griselda	Can be doubled with

		marries a Marquis who tests her fidelity by taking her children from her. She remains obedient, and the Marquis eventually rewards her by reuniting her with her children. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I	any part except Nijo, Gret, Joan, Isabella
Joyce	1.3 2.2	Angie's adoptive mother and Marlene's sister. Joyce and Marlene do not get along well. Joyce raised Angie because Marlene wanted to escape Ipswich and pursue a career. Joyce represents the perspective of the working class. However, she is not a particularly sympathetic character and is very resentful of her sister.	Can be doubled with any part except Angie and Kit
Mrs. Kidd	2.1	The wife of Howard Kidd, Marlene's co-worker. Mrs. Kidd visits Marlene at the Top Girls office to request Marlene to give up her promotion since Howard has worked at the firm longer and has a family to look after.	Can be doubled with any part except Angie, Win, Louise, Nell, and Shauna
Angie	1.3 2.1 2.2	Marlene's 16-year-old biological daughter who was adopted by Marlene's sister, Joyce. She is aggressive and unintelligent and spends most of her time with her younger neighbor, Kit. Angie makes an unexpected visit to London to see Marlene (whom she believes to be her aunt) because she aspires to be like her.	Can be doubled with any part except Joyce, Mrs. Kidd, Kit, Win, Louise, Nell, Shauna
Kit	1.3	Angie's younger next-door neighbor and closest friend. Kit is a bright girl with academic ambitions. Cruel and aggressive to Kit.	Can be doubled with any role except Angie & Joyce
Win	2.1	Marlene's coworker, Career-focused.	Can be doubled with any role except Angie, Win, Mrs. Kidd, Jeanine, Nell, Shauna, Louise
Louise	2.1	A forty-six year old woman interviewing at Top Girls. She wants a new job after twenty-one years at a firm that does not truly value her	Can be doubled with any role

		experience, but Win feels that her age will make it difficult to find her a new position.	except Angie, Win, Mrs. Kidd, Jeanine, Nell, Shauna,
Jeanine	1.2	A twenty-year-old woman who Marlene interviews at Top Girls. Jeanine wants to save money for a wedding and eventually have children. Marlene takes this to mean that Jeanine lacks career ambitions and therefore, Marlene treats her as an inferior.	Can be doubled
Nell	2.1	Marlene's coworker, career-focused, jealous	Can be doubled with any role except Angie, Win, Mrs. Kidd, Jeanine, Louise, Shauna,
Shauna	2.1	A young girl who interviews with Nell. Nell is impressed with her until she discovers that Shona has falsified her background and actually has no experience at all	Can be doubled with any role except Angie, Win, Mrs. Kidd, Jeanine, Nell, Louise,
Waitress	1.1	Waitress at dinner party. No speaking lines.	Can be doubled with any role except Can be doubled with any part except Nijo, Gret, Joan, Griselda

