

# THE DANCE PROJECT

Revised June 2023

If your dancer is interested in joining one of our competition groups but you feel like you need more info, you've come to the right place. We know that as a parent, you probably have a lot of questions about what competition dance will entail, and we're here to ensure that you know as much as possible so you and your dancer can make the best decision about what dance classes and programs are best for your family. Read on to learn more about The Dance Project Competition Programs!

## **What is Competition Dance? What exactly is the difference between competition & recreational dance?**

At The Dance Project, we define competition dance as a program for dedicated students that want to accelerate their dance studies and challenge themselves to perform and compete. The Dance Project's competition program also allows students to form bonds with teammates that share the same level of commitment and passion for dance, as well as helps dancers to develop their leadership skills & confidence.

There are a few things for both parents and students that separate our competition dance program from our recreational classes, but when we really boil them down, the primary difference comes down to commitment. Before your dancer decides to pursue competition dance, we recommend that you sit down as a family and determine if the proper commitment can be made. A few things you need to ask yourselves::

- a. Are we committed to coming to practice each week, on time, ready to work?
- b. Are we committed to taking feedback and constructive criticism to improve our dance skills?
- c. Are we committed to the team? Dance is a team sport, so realizing upfront that your teammates will be constantly relying on you & taking that responsibility seriously is extremely important.
- d. Are we committed to practicing at home? Competition dancers are expected to practice and stretch at home several times a week.
- e. Are we committed to extra practices & rehearsals if needed?
- f. Can we commit to the competition schedule? This includes weekly practices, ballet technique, competition dates, etc.
- g. Can we commit the finances to ensure our dancer has the required footwear, practice attire, costumes, etc. These costs tend to be slightly higher than they would be for our recreational students.

If you can answer 'yes' to all of these questions, read on! If you're struggling with any of the necessary commitments, competition dance might not be a good fit for your family. But not to worry, there are tons of recreational opportunities on our [Fall 2023/ Spring 2024 Schedule](#) for you & your dancer to explore!

## **Do dancers have to audition for competition classes?**

Yes. Depending on whether or not your dancer is a new or returning student will dictate their audition schedule, but all dancers are required to attend a set schedule of class(es) during the summer before the season begins, as well as audition.

We require all competition hopefuls to audition because a.) We want them to understand the heightened importance & expectations of joining a team that is heavily reliant on each other in order to be successful, and b.) we want to ensure we properly form teams that are similar with regards to age/maturity and skill level.

### **What are the competition programs offered at The Dance Project?**

For dancers who are 7-11 years of age with limited dance experience, we offer a Petite 1 Company Group. This group of dancers will spend 1 hour per week focused on ballet technique and jazz skills. They will compete in jazz only and as a result will only require 1 costume.

For that similar age group, we offer a Petite 2 Company Group. This group is likely on the higher end of the age range and will also likely have had more dance experience than dancers in our Petite 1 Group. This group of dancers will spend 1 hour per week focused on ballet technique and jazz skills. They will compete in jazz only and as a result will only require 1 costume.

For dancers who are 11+ years of age, we offer our Company Group. Dancers will be placed based on skills assessment as determined by performance during summer courses, prior years experience, auditions, and instructor discretion. This group spends 90+ minutes per week focused on jazz and contemporary dance, as well as an additional 60 minutes per week focused exclusively on ballet technique. In addition, our Junior and Teen Company Groups are also offered the opportunity to join our Tap Company Group, which requires additional time and financial commitment.

### **How many competitions will we attend in a season?**

We aim to attend two competitions each season. We strive to attend competitions that align with our beliefs as it relates to promoting creativity & storytelling. Competitions are typically sometime between March and May. Petite Companies are likely to attend just one competition per season.

### **What exactly is the required time commitment for competition dancers?**

- Summer classes & camps based on age and skill level
- Auditions, based on age and skill level
- Choreography day(s) - held in late August. These are mandatory for all competition students.
- Weekly classes and practices
- Practice and stretching time at home at least a few times per week. We recommend that all competition students practice their dances and stretch for at least 30 min 3-4 times per week at home. This ensures continual progress as well as helps to make the most of our class time in the studio

- 1-2 competition weekends. As soon as competitions are selected, we will publish further information with regards to dates, but we ask all competition families to set aside 1 full weekend, typically between March and May for competition performances
- Recital weekend
- Note that there also may be extra practices, rehearsals, and/or performances scheduled as we prepare for competition season. These will be communicated as early as possible

### What is the financial commitment for competition dance?

While Competition Dance does tend to be more of a financial commitment than recreational dance, it might not be as expensive as you think. At The Dance Project, we strive to make our competition programs as affordable as possible and are very conscious of the decisions we make and how they will affect our dance families. That said, below is a rough breakdown of expenses that you can expect to accommodate competition dance. (note that these costs are subject to change and are meant to serve as an estimate, not exact budgetary figures).

### 2023- 2024 Estimated Competition Dancer Financial Commitment

Competition Item	Petite Companies	Junior/ Teen Companies
Required Summer Classes/ Auditions	\$145+ per dancer (includes one mandatory summer class + audition fee)	\$145+ per dancer (includes one mandatory summer class + audition fee)
Monthly Tuition	\$100/ month/ dancer (includes choreo day(s) fees, competition fees, costumes, and monthly tuition)	\$123+/ month/ dancer (includes choreo fees, costume, and competition fees for jazz & ballet only. Participation in Contemporary companies and Tap Companies are extra financial commitments )
Shoes	Approx. \$30/ pair (requirement of jazz shoes & ballet slippers)	Approx. \$30/ pair (requirement of jazz shoes, contemporary shoes, & ballet slippers)
Dance Attire (ballet-specific)	Approx \$50 (includes required ballet attire of pink tights & black leotard)	Approx \$50 (includes required ballet attire of pink tights & black leotard)

### Please tell me competition dance isn't like what we see on TV (Dance Moms)...

While there are definitely some studios where this is the reality, at The Dance Project we are firm believers that dance competition can be a really positive and uplifting experience for all.

Our promise to you:

- All costumes will be age appropriate and midribs will be covered.
- All makeup and hair decisions will be age appropriate and as simple as possible
- We will promote & celebrate everyone's strengths, and help each other to improve upon our weaknesses
- We will not tolerate gossiping
- We will not tolerate comparing ourselves to others
- We will celebrate successes both big and small, and cheer on those around us

- We will communicate often that we don't attend competitions with the sole intention of winning. Rather our purpose is to challenge ourselves, meet new friends, share our gifts, and celebrate dancing with others who share our passions

We strive to carefully select which competitions we attend based on the alignment of our values as listed above.

### **What are the expectations in terms of attendance?**

We hold our competition students to a high standard as it relates to attendance and fully expect them to be in class each week. We understand that illnesses and other things come up. Please do your best to communicate with us when these things happen. However, when you commit to competition dance, you do have a commitment to your team. Dancers may have four excused classes total throughout the season. Beyond this, we may be forced to make decisions about whether they are able to compete. Dancers who miss a class the week of a competition may be asked not to compete as well. We don't anticipate this being an issue, but please know that we take the commitment to the groups you are in very seriously and we hope you do as well.

### **What do competition dancers need for class each week in terms of shoes & attire?**

#### For our Petite Company Dancers:

- Required attire for class each week is pink tights and a black leotard. Students are welcome to wear a black ballet skirt or black bicycle shorts over their leotard if desired.
- Students need pink ballet slippers, as well as tan jazz shoes
- Hair should be up and away from the face, secured in a high bun

#### For our Junior & Teen Company Dancers:

- Required attire for Jazz/ Contemporary classes includes black leotards and tights. Dancers may wear shorts/warmup layers as needed overtop.
- Required attire for Ballet Technique is pink tights and a black leotard. Students are welcome to wear a black ballet skirt or black bicycle shorts over their leotard if desired.
- Students need pink ballet slippers, tan jazz shoes, nude contemporary shoes.
- Hair should be up and away from the face, secured in a high bun
- If participating in Company Tap, students will need tap shoes as well.

All students should arrive to class on time, in attire listed above, with their shoes, ready to dance. Students should also bring water to class.

### **Why do competition students spend time focused on ballet?**

"Ballet is the root of all evil" is a common expression in the dance world, and it simply means that all dance forms stemmed in some way, shape, or form from the discipline of ballet. The technique and rigidity of ballet is what truly makes a great dancer, so constant practice and attention to ballet technique is absolutely essential. Simply put, ballet is the backbone of great dancing, and because of this we take ballet very seriously. Wearing the appropriate attire each week, as well as recognizing the importance of ballet, is critical to the success of your dancer.

## **Are there any extra opportunities that come along with participating in competition dance?**

We are always keeping our eyes and ears open for community performance and involvement opportunities for our competition students. These opportunities will be communicated to you as they arise.

For our Junior and Teen competition students, there is opportunity to participate in our mentorship program. Once competition teams are selected and announced, we will publish the fall schedule and students can volunteer to participate in classes of younger dancers and help to mentor them. This is a great opportunity for dancers to build leadership skills and form relationships with other dancers in the studio. Our young dancers love our competition mentors and look forward to dancing with them each week.

## **What are the next steps if we feel like this might be a good fit?**

If you're feeling like competition dance might be a good fit for your dancer, we're really excited!

What we recommend next is to [reach out via our website](#). It's best to have a conversation about your dancer's skill level, prior experience, and expectations before registering for anything new.