

The World of Ballet

Welcome to the wonderful world of ballet! Whether your goal is to actually dance ballet or just learn all about it, here you will find detailed information about one of the most beautiful and graceful of all dance styles. If you've ever seen a live ballet on stage, you are aware of a ballerina's amazing ability to transport an entire audience into another world. Ballet dancers must be highly trained and disciplined, but their hard work and dedication is evident in their ability to glide effortlessly across a stage. Learn all about the fascinating dance genre of ballet.

Becoming a Ballet Dancer

Maybe you want to become a professional ballet dancer, or maybe you're curious to try a few moves. Perhaps your child is begging to take ballet lessons. Ballet is fun no matter how old you are or what goals you wish to accomplish through ballet. Becoming a ballet dancer can be as simple as practicing moves in your bedroom or as complex as becoming a major dancer in a ballet company. All ballet dancers have one thing in common: a love of the grace, beauty and discipline of ballet.

Ballet Shoes and Dancewear

Probably the most important part of a ballet dancer's equipment is ballet shoes. After several years of proper training, some female ballet dancers wear pointe shoes to make them appear lighter and more delicate. Ballet dancers wear tights and leotards to class and rehearsals, as tight, form-fitting clothing is best for dancing. Tutus, or ballet skirts, are usually reserved for performances and recitals.

The Basics of Ballet

The basic positions and techniques of ballet were developed long ago. Over the centuries, choreographers have revised the classical techniques, but the basic positions have remained the same. When you begin learning the steps and poses of ballet, you will realize that most of them have French names. King Louis XIV of France started the first ballet school, the Royal Academy of Dance, in 1661. Most of the French terms have been carried throughout the years.

Dancing on Your Toes

Ballet dancing is known for its grace and elegance, as ballerinas seem to glide across the stage almost effortlessly. Ballet dancers strive to appear tall and light on their feet. Female dancers raise themselves even higher by going up on their toes with pointe shoes. Pointe shoes make it possible for ballerinas to dance on the tips of their toes.

Ballet Choreography

Choreography is the art of developing routines by linking together several moves or techniques, often set to music. Ballet choreographers may spend hours on a single dance, fine-tuning each step until it fits precisely with the music. Many young dancers don't realize that they are also amateur choreographers, creating routines and dances while practicing to their favourite music.

Ballet Past and Present

The first ballet was performed over 500 years ago. Men traditionally danced the leading roles, as women were considered too weak to perform the challenging and sometimes daring choreography. Female dancers didn't take the stage until years later. Many of the most famous ballets were adapted from fairy tales and folk stories.

Some ballets are based on historical events and bible stories. If you've never been to a ballet, you may be surprised by how emotional and moving ballet dancing can be.