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Ballet

Guidebook

More Than Just Great Dancing![™]
Affiliated Dance Studios
★ Quality Curriculum ★ Teacher Training ★ Best Management Practices ★ Community Involvement

Welcome To Ballet!

At East County Performing Arts Center our Ballet program is the largest and most comprehensive in the area. We offer 8 levels of Ballet for various ages within each level where dancers will be able to experience both contemporary and classical styles.

Building Ballet and **Building Ballet Level 2** are our introductory levels of Ballet. Because we offer multiple age groups beginning dancers can feel comfortable while learning their basics

Graded Levels of Ballet

To advance to the next level of class dancers must pass their written vocabulary tests attend a demonstrative ballet test.

Level 1-2 is where dancers will be advancing their vocabulary and knowledge of the basics. Dancers will develop a good foundation of technique, strength and flexibility. Dancers can take a single class per week or multiple classes per week. The more classes a dancer takes the faster she or he will advance.

Level 3 is the beginning of our Pre-professional program. Although taking 2 classes a week at this level is not mandatory it is highly suggested for advancement.

Level 4-6 is for dancers who are dedicated to personal advancement and growth and show an interest in pursuing dance beyond high school graduation. It is required for dancers in level 4-6 to take 2 class per week.

Pre-Pointe and Pointe

Dancers who have studied Ballet for a number of years, attend 2 ballet classes per week, have no recent injuries, are able to maintain their technique in all ballet classes including Pre Pointe, and who are at least 11/12 years old may have the opportunity to be considered for pointe shoes. Pointe is an extension of serious ballet training and all students will be evaluated and placed at the discretion of the Ballet Director. We offer our Pre-Pointe class to dancers 8 and older to help prepare them for pointe shoes when they turn 11-12.



Q: When will my daughter be ready for Pointe Shoes

A: Your dancer's health and safety is our biggest priority. A child's body develops and achieves certain milestones in time and because of this girls are not evaluated for pointe shoes until they are 11 years old and in Ballet level 3. Once a dancer earns her pointe shoes she will take class twice a week in regular ballet shoes and attend pointe classes in her pointe shoes.

Tips For Your Dancer's Success

- ★ Commit to getting your dancer to class on time. Going through a warm up in class is very important to keep you dancer safe.
- ★ Help your child fulfill their uniform requirements, put her hair in a bun or teach her how to do it herself and make sure she has the supplies she needs.
- ★ Encourage your dancer to have good nutrition. Dancers are artists who train their bodies like athletes. Make sure you are giving them the healthy snacks and meals before and after class.
- ★ Throughout a child's and teen's dance education there will be ups and downs. Help your child manage disappointments by focusing on how much they love to dance. Celebrate the achievements and make sure your dancer knows you are their biggest fan!

Keep in mind, every dancer has their own pace at which they become ready for advancement. Our trained teachers invest in every dancer and want to see each one reach his or her full potential. Our school truly wants what is best for your child's dance experience.

Common Questions and Answers

Q: Is there a dress code?

A: Yes at ECPAC we have a strict dress code for our Ballet classes. The uniform is so important because it helps to build discipline in class and it is part of the culture of Ballet. All ladies must wear their hair in a bun, pink tights and pink canvas or leather split-sole ballet shoes. We have level specific leotard colors the girls are required to wear. Our Ballet leotard colors are listed below:
Building Ballet Levels 1 and 2 ages 5-7 Black leotard
Building Ballet ages 8+- Light Pink Leotard
Ballet 1- Hunter/Forest green
Ballet 2 Purple
Ballet 3- Red or Burgundy leotard
Ballet 4- Royal Blue leotard
Ballet 5 and higher- Any solid color leotard
Gentlemen must wear black shorts or pants, white tee-shirt and black Ballet Shoes.

Leotards can be purchased in our front lobby store.

Q: How many classes a week should he/she take?

A: This will depend on how serious the dancer is and how quickly he or she will want to advance. The more classes a dancer takes the faster she or he will advance. Once a dancer has graduated out of the entry levels we do recommend attending class twice a week. It is very difficult to advance out of the levels of Ballet, sometimes it take years for a dancer to master a level before he or she can move on. Please do not expect your dancer to be advanced to the next level each year, and please do not let your dancer get discouraged when she or he does not advance. This is a process and it can be a long process!

Ballet Vocabulary Testing

What is the written Ballet Vocabulary Test?

The Ballet Vocabulary test is administered in class and consists of a list of vocabulary words that the student needs to be able identify, define and or describe.



We facilitate ballet terminology tests because:

Ballet is a foreign language, these are not words that we use in our every day speech. By knowing the definition of the word it helps a dancer learn and execute the step correctly.

It is important for a dancer's advancement to be able to identify dance terminology.

The terminology a ballet dancer learns is universal, ballet has a language and learning the language is vital to communicating.

Dates of written testing:

Test #1 First week of December. Retest will be 2nd week of December. **Test # 2** Second week of April

Retests will be administered a week later, students who miss the retest will be tested on an individual basis. Study guides will be handed out in class, and sent home via email 2 weeks before the tests. Additional study guides are available at the front desk.

What happens if they don't pass?

Dancers have a second chance to pass the test. Dancers are required to earn a 70% on the test in order to pass. **Dancers cannot advance to the next level of ballet without passing the written test.** Although a passing grade does not guarantee advancement.

Ballet Level Advancement Test (BLAT)

What is the BLAT?

The Ballet Level Advancement Test or BLAT is a demonstrative test required for level advancement. Dancers will be given 3 different combinations of skills or phrases and where they will be graded by 3 adjudicators.

What if a dancer cannot attend?

Since the test is offered multiple times throughout the year dancers can wait until the next test time or schedule a private test with the Ballet Director and one other instructor for a fee of \$70

Why do we do level testing?

To ensure the quality and consistency of each level of ballet.

How does the test work?

Groups of 5-20 dancers sign up for testing time of 1 hour. Dancers will be asked to complete a series of steps across the floor, at the barre and center floor.

Each skill or phrase gets a grade of 0-5. Each skill or phrase must get a grade of 3 or better from all adjudicators to pass.

What are dancers tested on?

Dancers should expect to be evaluated on the execution of the skills on the Ballet Vocabulary Test for their current level.

What happens if a dancer does not pass?

Passing the BLAT is necessary to advance to the next level of Ballet. If a dancer does not pass he or she has the option of taking the test again at the next available testing day. The test is offered multiple times throughout the year and over the summer.



The Ballet Company of East County (BCEC) is our in-house ballet company. Each year ballet dancers have the opportunity to audition for two shows. *The Nutcracker* performed in December and *Alice in Wonderland* performed in May.



While participating in *The Nutcracker* and/or *Alice in Wonderland*, dancers will have the opportunity to learn what it is like to be in a professional show. They will be inspired by the dancers around them and they will grow as dancers and a storytellers.

Come experience the magic!

For more information please visit our website
www.brentwoodballet.org

Ballet Kids Performing Group

Does your dancer LOVE Ballet?

Become an East County Performing Arts Center Community Ambassador while performing in parades, at community events and even Great America!

Ballet Kids is open to girls and boys ages 6-10 taking at least 2 classes a week.

You can add a Performing Group to your dancer's schedule for \$35