



COMPETITIVE DANCE

2019 HANDBOOK

Thank you for your interest in Down East Dance Academy's Competitive Dance Program. We are proud to offer a complete program with emphasis on building strong technique and performance skills. Programs vary from 3 to 14+ hours per week.

Register to audition online: <https://dancestudio-pro.com/online/deda>

**There is a fee to audition as described in the above link, most of the funds will be credit towards next season's tuition.*

How to prepare for audition: Dancers should stretch and warm up before audition, relax and remember to have fun! Auditions are run like a class, with adjudicators quietly taking notes. Dancers will audition in several styles depending for which program they are auditioning. If unfamiliar with a style, we just ask dancers to do their best and employ different marking criteria in this instance. Our mission is for every dancer to have a positive experience at their audition.

How dancers are adjudicated: Dancers will be marked on technique (correct placement and stretch), flexibility, strength, posture, performance style, ability to recall combinations, musicality/timing and attitude towards new and challenging material. Adjudicators are Teachers, Junior Teachers and Alumni Dancers where appropriate. We have developed very detailed marking sheets that help us choose dancers that are best suited to each program and it has proven to be a fair and accurate. Our goal is to place dancers. We will accept all dancers if we can place them in at least 1 competitive routine in their strongest style. We offer several levels of difficulty in each style/age category.

How results will be posted: Individual letters will be sent out by email. We encourage dancers to be resilient – just keep on dancing! Disappointment is a part life and kids always get over it rather quickly. Ultimately, dancers will enjoy their classes next year and there will always be other opportunities to shine as a dancer.

Why attend competitions: To receive feedback from qualified judges, apply it to our routines to improve our dancing and quality of instruction/choreography, to motivate dancers to work hard, to meet other dancers, to have fun family time, to persevere even when you are not rewarded with a win, to be a gracious winner, to be professional and show discipline and respect, to be a part of a team and a dance family, to work together, to help others, to see the value in giving it your all everyday!

Awards: Each competition is different in the way they reward dancers. Some give medals to each dancer but trophies are very hard to earn, some give ribbons to each dancer but offer more overall awards or big medals, but not to each group. We choose a variety of competitions and take great care in how we register our dancers. We teach dancers to support each other, to work as a team and be professional.



COMPETITIVE TEAM AGE GUIDELINES:

Mini (Age 5-8)

Junior (Age 9-11)

Intermediate (Age 12-14)

Senior (Age 15-19)

***Dancers can audition for a team that is above or below their age category. They will be scored like any other dancer. Please discuss your options with Miss Marie.**

NUMBER OF HOURS/ROUTINES: Parents/Guardians decide how many routines the dancer can be in (financial commitment). Miss Marie will decide how many routines they are ready to do. We will not give dancers more routines than parents have requested, but we may give them less.

Mini competitive dancers (3 hour program) train in jazz, tap, acro and hip hop. They will compete in 1-3 routines in their best style(s). It is the best place to start as a dancer; this program is all about preparing dancers to be versatile, well rounded dancers who are ready to be Juniors.

All other competitive dancers train in equal amounts of technique to choreography hours (approx.) For example, if they were given 2 routines/2 hours of choreography, they need to take 2 hours of technique for a total of 4 hours a week. Technique can be in the form of jumps and turns class, strength and stretch class, ballet class or tumbling and tosses*.

*Tumbling and Tosses dancers must have back limber and be approved at auditions.

****NEW THIS YEAR** AGES 12+** - Dancers select the team they would like to audition for: Jazz Team, Tap Team, Lyrical/Contemporary Team, Hip Hop Team and Acro Team. 1 team is about 5 hours, 2 teams is about 7 hours, 3 teams is about 8 hours, 4 teams is 9 hours and all 5 teams is about 10 hours per week of classes and choreography. It is possible for a dancer to be on two teams and have two routines. This new structure allows for more flexibility in the schedule and more options for dancers.

HOW GROUPS ARE FORMED FOR ROUTINES: Using information on the registration form (number of routines and competitions this dancer is permitted to take on) and the results of the audition, dancers will be grouped together in winning combinations. All routines have the potential to do well when the dancers are at the same level, the choreography is well suited to their skill level, the dancers look good together/with the theme or story, and it's well categorized at competition. We always do our best to help our dancers succeed and placing them in the appropriate group is very important.

(PS – it has nothing to do with who their friends are!)



Competitive Program - Tentative Schedule 2019-2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
3:15-4:00 Solo, Duo, Trio Practice (Bi-weekly)	3:40-4:00 Solo, Duo, Trio Practice (Bi-weekly)	3:15-4:00 Solo, Duo, Trio Practice (Bi-weekly)	Recreational Classes	4:00-5:30 Mini Program	3:45-5:45 Tumbling and Tosses at the gym.	Extra rehearsals February-April and on PD days when required.
4:00-6:00 Technique and Choreography Classes Ages 8-11	4:00-5:30 Mini Program	4:00-7:30 Junior Choreography		5:30-8:00 Junior Technique and Choreography	6:00-7:30 Production Choreography	
6:00-7:00 Strength and Stretch Ages 10+	5:30-6:45 Jumps and Turns Technique	5:45-7:15 Junior Intermediate and Senior Choreography		6:45 – 8:15 Hip Hop Team Choreography	7:30 – 8:45 Solo, Duo, Trio Practice (Bi-weekly)	
7:00-9:30 Intermediate and Senior Ballet and Contemporary Choreography	6:45-8:45 Jazz Team and Tap Team Choreography	7:15-9:45 Stretch and Strength technique and Hip Hop Choreography	8:15-9:00 Stretch and Strength	7:45-9:30 Inter/Senior Technique and Choreography		

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

- Once a dancer accepts a position on the Competitive Team, they have committed to attending class and competitions as outlined for the entire season. Entry and Costume Fees are still due/non-refundable.
- 95% attendance at all classes is required in order to participate in competitive routines. If a dancer’s attendance falls below this allowance, their participation will be limited (fewer routines, less competitions, less stage time). If a dancer’s attendance is unacceptable, they may not compete at all. No refunds will be issued.
- Tuition, Costume, and Competitive Entry fees must be paid on time.



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM:

Dancers who are in need of financial assistance can apply to our scholarship program. Requirements include exceptional work ethic, home practice, volunteering as an assistant (hours will be agreed upon before registration) and the submission of our scholarship application and Student Essay.

Please email us at downeastdance@yahoo.ca to apply.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE: In 2020, we plan to attend View Dance Challenge in Moncton May 7-10th. All competitive teams will attend this competition. Mini and Part-Time program dancers will likely need to be there 1-2 days. Full Time and Elite dancers will likely need to be there 3-4 days. The other competition will be in April. All competitive teams will attend this competition. The third competition will be in April or May and will be attended by everyone except the Mini and Part-Time dancers. There is usually a fourth competition that is optional for solos, duos, trios and special small groups only.

EXTRA PRACTICES: We do our best to keep extra practices to a minimum. We start routines in the fall to have them ready for March. However, please expect some extra practices leading up to the first competition. Snow storms and March break leading up to competition will inevitably lead to some extra practices!

HOME PRACTICE: Get yourself a Google Drive account if you don't already have one! During the better part of the year, dancers are taught new choreography at each class. Videos are taken and posted on the Drive which shares it with everyone. We will give you access by sending out a link in the fall. Students are expected to practice new choreography to prepare for the next class. If dancers are absent, they are expected to have the new section learned anyway, so as not to hold up the class. Dancers who practice at home have way more fun! They feel confident and able, they are leaders in the class and they shine on the stage because they know their dance!

COSTUMES:

Competitive dancers will require a costume for each routine, dancers will have the opportunity to compete in 2 to 15 routines (determined by parent/guardian) and skill level (determined at audition). Costumes cost \$90 each. Some costumes will cost more and some will cost less, some may be borrowed or purchased from clothing stores or costume shops. We look at it as an overall budget so that we can get costumes that work for each style of dance. Most studios charge \$185-300/costume. Thank you for working with us so that we can offer costumes at a more affordable price. Solo/Duo/Trio Costumes can be borrowed or purchased – all parties must agree.

INJURY/ILLNESS/WITHDRAWAL

- If a team member is injured or otherwise unable to compete, we may decide to employ an understudy. The injured member is required to share their costume with the understudy.
- No refunds are issued on any entry fee for any reason, therefore, the understudy will dance without incurring any additional registration costs.
- If a dancer chooses to withdraw, all tuition and registration/costume fees are still due.



TUITION

***GROUP ROUTINES ONLY – DO NOT COUNT SOLO/DUO/TRIO**

***Prices do not include HST**

PROGRAM	HOURS (approximate)	GROUP ROUTINES	OFF -ISLAND TRIPS	ANNUAL	MONTHLY (9 payments)
MINI PROGRAM	3 HOURS	1-3	2	\$ 875.00	\$100.58
PART TIME AND MINI PLUS PROGRAM	4 HOURS	2-3	2	\$ 1075.00	\$123.57
MINI ELITE JUNIOR BASE	5 HOURS	3-4	3	\$ 1,275.00	\$146.55
JUNIOR REGULAR	6 HOURS	3-5	3	\$ 1,475.00	\$169.54
JUNIOR PLUS	7 HOURS	4-6	3	\$ 1,675.00	\$189.66
JUNIOR PLUS	8 HOURS	5-7	3	\$ 1,775.00	\$204.03
JUNIOR PLUS	9 HOURS	7-9	3	\$ 1,875.00	\$215.52
ELITE PROGRAM *MUST HAVE SOLO* (JUNIOR – INTER – SENIOR)	10 + HOURS	8-10	3	\$ 1,975.00	\$227.02

Competitive dance tuition is 25-50% less/hour than recreational dance.

Due to heavily reduced tuition prices for competitive dance, we cannot offer family discounts. For large families, we offer a cap of \$500/month (\$4500 annually) for the tuition of all competitive dancers in one household. That's a lot of talent under one roof!

COMPETITION ENTRY FEES:

Competition Entry Fees vary depending on the competition. Awards and commentary vary in quality also. We will continue to vary our competitive tour slightly each year. Average price (routine/competition) Solo Entry: \$90, Duo/Trio: \$60, Group: \$40. Additional Registration Fees are unusual; however, some competitions have a \$30/dancer or \$40/family entry fee (example). It usually includes video of all your studio's performances. Each routine usually costs a bit less to enter (only \$30/dancer for group entry). Video can be expensive to purchase at competition, so the included video adds a lot of value. Most of the time it is free to watch, however, sometimes there is an event pass required for \$20-\$30. Entry Fees are due in October, November and January.



CHOREOGRAPHY FEES

Most choreography is included in tuition fees. Guest choreographers will be invited to the studio each season to teach some competition numbers. Workshop and choreography costs vary. Last year, dancers paid \$250 for a 10-hour session in which the dancers learned an entire routine over several days. Dancers will be recommended for a guest choreographed routine after auditions. Learning from different choreographers is a vital skill as a dancer.

SOLO/DUO/TRIO

If your dancer is interested in a special routine, please contact us (must have at least 1 year of competitive dance training). Solos, Duos and Trios will be choreographed by our talented staff of teachers and taught in private/semi-private lessons during the summer only. Solos cost \$60+tax+3%fee to book \$240 cash is due at first session. Duo/Trio cost \$10 +tax+3%fee per session to book. You can share cost by having each parent book 2-3 sessions for a total of 6 sessions. \$130 per dancer is due at first session. Performing a Solo, Duo or Trio is a fantastic (optional) experience. With custom choreography and individual corrections at competitions, participating in a special routine is a fantastic opportunity for growth. Routines will be rehearsed bi-weekly at the designated time.

WARM UP/MAKE UP/FOOTWEAR/FOUNDATIONS

Warm Up: Every dancer will require a team warm up to wear at competition, they keep costumes clean and ensure that dancers can always find each other in the large crowds. Cost is approx. \$150.

Make Up: Required make up for females includes eyeshadow/blush palette, false lashes, lipstick, brow pencil and earrings. They help us create that uniform, professional look that our dancers are famous for. We try our best to use the same products every year to keep costs low, all new is about \$80.

Footwear: Dancers will require tap shoes (split sole), tan jazz shoes/black for boys (Mini Only), tan lyrical shoes (Jr/Inter/Sr), foot undies (only for those competing in acro). Demi Pointe Dance Shop has all the footwear/tights we require <http://www.demipointedanceshop.com/>

Foundations: Female dancers will also need a skin colored bodysuit and tights. Boys will need tan or black shorts/leggings to wear under costumes if they change costumes.

HOTEL/TRAVEL COSTS

Regular season travel will be within the Maritimes only. We try to book hotels with breakfast included and a pool in the range of \$129-\$149/night. Dancers in 3 routines or less usually stay 1 day or 2 (often getting away with staying just 1 night). Dancers in more routines could be dancing 3-4 days at competition. Families are welcome to stay wherever they wish. Dancers need to be present at the outlined times and are encouraged but not required to stay for any other reason (awards, events, activities). Sometimes families travel together to share costs. Schedules are released only 3 weeks before competition, so we recommended booking the full stay and cancelling unrequired nights before the hotel's cancellation deadline which is usually 48 hours.



FUNDRAISING

Fundraising can help with competition costs. You can opt out of fundraising and pay your own way but you will not be eligible to receive funds from any group fundraisers. Our fundraising committee is responsible for choosing and organizing fundraisers. Most fundraising takes place September to December.

Participating in fundraisers requires a commitment of 3 extra volunteer hours. These hours do not include the hours you put into a fundraiser that is profit/participation based (grocery bagging, meat order, pancake breakfast, etc.) These hours can be things like counting money, printing or cutting tickets, volunteering backstage at competition or recital. Younger dancers will often require parental supervision when they participate in fundraisers.

Each fundraiser will have 1 committee member responsible, the “Event Manager”. Duties include organizing schedules of volunteers, taking on the role of contact person, attending any events and distributing funds at the end of the event. This is a big job, so the event manager will receive up to 5% of the total profits of the fundraiser towards their dancer’s fees.

Be a part of our committee! We’re always welcoming new members and new ideas. We will send out information after auditions to all our new members so that you can become involved if you’re interested. Members don’t meet very often; most communication happens through our special fundraising committee Facebook group.

AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES!

- **Guest Choreographers** – dance with well known dancers and teachers at competitions and at our studio. These opportunities really help dancers improve and gain confidence.
- Competitive Dancers are always our first pick for **extra performances** like Storm Basketball games, benefit concerts and variety shows. We take every opportunity to highlight their amazing talent and hard work.
- **Video Judging** is available at several competitions: when dancers hear corrections from qualified judges while they watch themselves dance, it is incredibly educational. It teaches humility but also pride and is so motivating and rewarding to see the improvement in the video by the end of the season. It is remarkable the learning that happens all year long, but it will blow you away between February and May.
- **Networking:** The dance community in Canada is relatively small. Bringing in guest choreographers, attending workshops and competitions and performing at special events will build your dancer’s portfolio and establish connections that will open doors in the future.
- **Performance Style:** We are developing stage presence in our dancers, just as much as any other skill. Watching dancers at competition that are making amazing facial expressions and dancing their routine full out – and watching dancers that aren’t – is extremely beneficial to dancers. They get inspired in so many ways to push themselves to achieve their goals.



www.downeastdance.ca

- **Cognitive Skills:** Dancers learn to be awesome learners. They become absolutely amazing at retaining new choreography, corrections and terminology. There are many interesting articles on this, here's one: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-athletes-way/201310/why-is-dancing-so-good-your-brain>
- **Be a part of our Dance Family!** Our dancers, dance parents and siblings, teachers, assistants and volunteers have formed this amazing network of support for dancers and their families. We cheer each other on, we support each other through the challenges and we celebrate the victories together. We welcome new dancers and their families to our amazing team!

**Thank you for your interest in our Competitive Dance Program.
We are very excited for our best season yet!**