



COMPETITIVE DANCE

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.

Sign up to audition online: <https://www.smartwaiver.com/v/dedaudition2018/>

New - Audition Fee of \$25 - is due at time of audition (cash or cheque is accepted) - When you register in the fall, this fee will be reimbursed and applied to tuition. In this way, auditions are free for all dancers who register in the fall (applies to recreational and competitive programs).

How to prepare: 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 Marie.

COMPETITIVE DANCE PROGRAMS

NUMBER OF HOURS/ROUTINES:

Mini competitive dancers (3 hour program) will train in jazz, tap, acro and hip hop. They will compete in 1-2 routines in their best style(s).

All other competitive dancers will have technique class on Mondays all year long. They will not learn routines in this 2.5 hours. They will train in ballet, jazz and tap technique with acro conditioning. Parents/guardians select the maximum number of routines for their dancer and we will work out the rest of the schedule based on choreography. Please see tentative schedule below for details.

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 2018-2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4:30-6:00 Mini Plus Technique Class	4:00-5:30 Mini Program	4:00-7:30 Junior Choreography	4:00-5:30 Mini Program	3:00-6:45 Large group Choreography at the gym. 7:15-9:00pm Senior Choreography at the studio.	January - March 1:00-8:00pm (Time will vary) Solo/Duo/Trio
4:30-7:00 Junior Technique Class	6:30-8:30 Intermediate and Senior Jazz and Tap Choreography	5:45-8:15 Intermediate and Senior Choreography	5:30-7:30 Junior Choreography		You book times!
7:00-9:30 Intermediate and Senior Technique Class	8:30-9:00 Pointe	8:15-9:45 Advanced Inter and Senior Hip Hop Choreography	7:30-9:00 Intermediate and Senior Choreography 9:00-9:30 Pointe		Extra rehearsals in March and on PD days

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

- Once a dancer accepts a position on the Competitive Team and completes registration, they have committed to attending class and competitions as outlined for the entire season. (Medical exclusions on Tuition permitted with Doctor's approval. 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.
- Participating in fundraisers requires a minimum of 3 hours of volunteer time at group events or at competitions throughout the season, if you choose to opt out and pay fees yourself, please indicate this on the online audition registration form.
- 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 in September) and the submission of our scholarship application and Student Essay.

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

COMPETITION SCHEDULE: We will confirm our schedule before registration in September. In 2019, we plan to attend View Dance Challenge in Moncton March 28-31st. All competitive teams will attend this competition. Mini, Part-Time and Regular program dancers will likely need to be there 1-2 days. Plus and Elite team dancers will likely need to be there 3-4 days. The second competition will be in April, we anticipate it will be a smaller competition on Saturday and Sunday only, April 27-28th in St. John, NB. All competitive teams will attend this competition. The third competition will be announced soon and will be attended by Inter/Senior Regular Program and all Plus and Elite program dancers. We are planning a May competition in Halifax or Moncton. If we can compete in PEI again, this will be optional as a fourth competition. We have heard on one coming to the Harbourfront Theatre in Summerside.

EXTRA PRACTICES: If you take on a solo, duo or trio, you can expect a lot of Sunday afternoon practices January to April. Otherwise, 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 View Dance Challenge 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!



TUITION

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

***Prices do not include HST**

TUITION	HOURS (approximate)	GROUP ROUTINES	OFF -ISLAND TRIPS	ANNUAL	MONTHLY (9 payments)
MINI PROGRAM	3 HOURS	1-2	2	\$ 850.00	\$ 99.45
MINI PLUS	4.5 HOURS	3	2	\$ 1125.00	\$ 130.00
MINI ELITE	6-8 HOURS	5-6	<u>3</u>	\$1,475.00	\$168.33
PART TIME PROGRAM (JUNIOR - INTER)	4 HOURS	2	2	\$1000.00	\$116.11
REGULAR PROGRAM (JUNIOR – INTER)	5 HOURS	3	2	\$1,250.00	\$143.78
REGULAR PROGRAM (INTER - SENIOR)	5 HOURS	2-3	<u>3</u>	\$1,250.00	\$143.78
FULL TIME PROGRAM (JUNIOR – INTER – SENIOR)	6-8 HOURS	5-6	<u>3</u>	\$1,475.00	\$168.33
PLUS PROGRAM (JUNIOR – INTER – SENIOR)	9-11 HOURS	7-9	<u>3</u>	\$1,900.00	\$217.00
ELITE PROGRAM *PLUS SOLO/DUO OR TRIO* (JUNIOR – INTER – SENIOR)	10-12 HOURS	8-10	<u>3</u>	\$1,975.00	\$224.48

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!

COSTUMES:

Competitive dancers will require a costume for each routine, dancers will have the opportunity to compete in 2 to 12 routines, depending on their program (selected by parent/guardian) and skill level (determined at audition). Costumes cost \$85 each. Solo/Duo/Trio Costumes can be borrowed from previous routines – all parties must agree to borrow.



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 DVD 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 December.

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 \$200 for a 10-hour session in which the dancers learned an entire routine over several days. 1 Guest Choreography session will be mandatory for each dancer (Jr Level and up only). Learning from different choreographers is a vital skill as a dancer.

SOLO/DUO/TRIO

If your dancer is interested in a special routine, please be sure to select it on your registration form, so that your dancer can be considered at auditions. Solos, Duos and Trios will be choreographed by our talented staff of teachers and taught in private/semi-private lessons. Cost is \$150-\$300 (tap and hip hop routines require more sessions). Performing a Solo, Duo or Trio is a fantastic (optional) experience. Thanks to individualized choreography and corrections at competitions, participating in a special routine is a fantastic opportunity for growth.

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. \$130.

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 \$50.

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). We can improve results at competition in our jazz routines by limiting use of foot undies. We've also found that jazz shoes/lyrical shoes stand up better to wear. 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.



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.

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. We'll be getting a head start this summer and everyone will be invited to participate.

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.) If you choose to opt out and pay fees yourself, please indicate this when you register online to audition.

Every family who opts in (decides to participate in fundraisers) is pledging 3 hours of time (throughout the season) towards group fundraisers (ones that benefit the whole group). Examples would be selling tickets (like 50/50) or treats, making decorations or posters for an event, supervising an event... dancers are encouraged to take part as much as possible. Younger dancers will often require parental supervision.

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 5% of the total profits of the fundraiser towards their dancer's fees.

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.



AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES!

- **Guest Choreographers:** This year we plan to have jazz and hip hop guest choreographers at our studio. Dancers will be selected for these special routines at audition. Cost for guest choreography is approx. \$150-200/student for approx. 10 hours of instruction.
- 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.
- **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!**