

NIAGARA DANCE CENTRE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2024—2025

WHY NIAGARA DANCE CENTRE?

At Niagara Dance Centre, we believe:

There is a dancer inside us all. We only have to be given the opportunity and guidance to learn, and we will grow into the dancer we want to become.

Dance is art. Dance is more than the perfect execution of choreography. Dance is movement, music, and soul. It is finding the beauty in the hard work in classes and performances; in celebrating our successes and learning from our struggles.

Dance benefits not just the body, but also the mind. In addition to physical conditioning, strength, and flexibility, dancing and performing develop confidence, positive self-awareness, and creativity.

Life should be enhanced by dance, not stifled. We believe we can give you a quality dance education without losing anything else in your life that makes you special.

In short, we see students as individuals with different talents and needs. Our aim is to teach our dancers to be ambassadors of our studio values, so they can use those talents to support one another's needs; to grow as teammates while they grow as artists:

- **resilience:** face challenges with grace, listen to and learn from feedback, and protect their joy;
- **integrity:** practice honesty, communicate transparently, behave respectfully, and take accountability;
- **leadership:** advocate for themselves and others, and represent themselves and the studio with poise;
- **excellence:** accept nothing less than their best, and seek opportunities to learn and grow;
- **dedication:** show up fully and consistently, be prepared, and commit to training in and out of class.

We continue to shape our studio around these beliefs, and hope you find as much joy in dance as we do.

APPROACH & EDUCATION

Our teachers engage in ongoing professional development—they take classes, workshops, and seminars and continue to earn professional certifications (like Dance Masters of America and Acrobatic Arts, to name a few) to ensure that their knowledge of best practices is up-to-date and that your dancer is in a safe and stimulating learning environment.

We also treasure our littlest dancers and are very proud of our dance program for our preschool and elementary school students, which we have recently revamped. We have a great teacher/student ratio, small classes, and a developmentally-appropriate curriculum to enhance learning while having fun

COMMUNICATION

We do the majority of our communication through e-mail. Please be sure to add amy@niagaradance.com to your preferred senders list. You will also often receive emails from Studio Director, our online portal system. Our newsletter, *Footnotes*, is emailed out several times a year to update you on studio news and events. We also post copies of communications at the studio, on our website (www.niagaradance.com), and on our social media pages (you can find us on Facebook—Niagara Dance Centre—and on Instagram—@niagara.dance).

CLASSES

We understand the demands and time limitations placed on families these days, and that our students and their families have lives outside of dance, too. That is why we offer back-to-back classes whenever possible. The following is intended as a guideline to determine which classes are right for your dancer, but there is leeway dependent on experience, ability, and maturity.

My Grown-Up & Me (ages 18 months–3 years) is a class for dancers to take with a special grown-up. In this class, dancers will learn creative movement and dance concepts like spacing, levels, rhythm, and tempo in a fun, low-stakes environment.

NEW THIS YEAR: Our preschool and kindergarten students (**ages 3–5**) may join our **“Primary Prep”** program: this is a combination class that introduces students to the foundations of ballet and tap. If dancers enroll in Primary Prep, they are eligible to join our **“Tumble & Groove”** add-on: a class that combines elements of jazz and acro dance.

Jazz, Hip Hop, and Acro may be added at **age 6** if the student has completed the Primary Prep program, taken the Tumble & Groove add-on, and/or is concurrently enrolled in complementary classes. Placement in these classes can also be at the studio owner’s discretion. We also offer **Breaking for Boys** at this age, an all-male hip hop class specializing in breakdancing techniques.

Musical Theatre, Contemporary, and Cheer Dance are available at **age 7** given sufficient experience and concurrent enrollment in complementary classes. These classes may be added sooner if students have experience in other styles or demonstrate excellent facility.

As students progress, we expand their classes from 30 minutes each to 45 or 60 minutes to allow for advanced training. Additionally, **Ballet Technique; Jump, Turn, & Stretch; Strength & Conditioning; Flexibility; adult classes;** and **competition-level classes** are 45–60 minutes each.

COMPETITION PROGRAM

Our competition program embodies our belief that life should be enhanced by dance. The competition track allows students more opportunities to train and perform throughout the year, and we have achieved demonstrated success, most recently having been named a “Studio of Excellence” by the Association of Dance Competitions and Conventions. We routinely win platinum, high gold, first place, and special judges’ awards, but more importantly, we are a “Class Act” award-winning studio, having been recognized at national competitions for our age- and level-appropriate dances and costumes. Additionally, our dancers have been recognized for their “Backstage Sportsmanship” and their “Studio Spirit”: in other words, for their consistent support and encouragement not only toward their teammates, but toward their competitors as well. At Niagara Dance Centre, our competition program helps our students to grow as dancers and as positive role models.

We have three levels of competition and depending on interest and enrollment, there is the potential for multiple teams to exist within those levels:

- **Company:** NDC Company dancers will be exposed to additional training in addition to recreational classes. They will take a jazz routine to three regional competitions. Dancers will be required to take ballet and tap with their studio peers. Additionally, they will be placed in company jazz, ballet technique, and jump, turn, and stretch for a total of at least 5 classes minimum.
- **Company Plus:** Company dancers with at least one year of experience will have the option to add on a tap routine. Dancers will be required to take a ballet class with their studio peers. Additionally, they will be placed in company tap, company jazz, ballet technique, and jump, turn, and stretch—still a minimum of at least 5 classes: 3 performance, 2 technique.

- **Competition Team:** Competition team dancers compete lyrical, tap, and jazz routines at three regional competitions. Options to compete other styles, such as hip hop, contemporary, acro, and musical theatre may be available based on placement, interest, and enrollment. Dancers are required to take a minimum of at least 5 classes per week: lyrical, jazz, tap, ballet technique, and jump, turn and stretch.

In June, current and prospective company and competition team dancers attend a placement session at the studio. There are skills expectations for each level. We gauge a dancer's readiness for a level considering many factors, including, of course, technical proficiency, but also musicality, work ethic, resilience, attitude, attendance, and more. Dancers perform best when they feel confident, and that is why we are intentional about team placement. We will always find a place for anyone who wants to compete.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Only regular and timely attendance will increase a student's progress. If a student must miss a class, please notify the studio via the portal. There are no refunds or make-ups for missed lessons; however, teachers and class assistants may work with students on what was missed when it is necessary and possible, and often they will suggest alternative classes that dancers might attend in lieu of their own. If absences are excessive, dancers may be required to attend private lessons at an additional cost as they are not the only ones affected when they miss class: transitions, formation changes, and partner and group work are challenging to execute when dancers are absent. We are willing and able to work around other commitments as promised in our studio philosophy to a reasonable degree, but if they are not able to keep up, they risk their participation in recital routines.

CLASS ATTIRE

Students must be dressed in proper dance attire for lessons. Your enrollment packet will include information on what shoes and attire are needed for each class, as well as suggestions on what and where to buy.

COSTUMES

Costumes are selected and ordered early in the fall to ensure timely arrival. Every effort is made to keep costume costs down and to minimize work on your part. In the past, average costume prices have ranged as follows, not including shoes or tights:

PRESCHOOL/ELEMENTARY: ~\$70-\$90 per costume

PRETEEN: ~\$85-\$100 per costume

TEEN/ADULT ~\$90-\$105 per costume

Two (2) costume deposit fees of \$25 (plus tax) per each performing class are due with September and October's tuition and will be applied to the dancer's costume balance. This amount is non-refundable after November 1st. You will receive detailed costume and accessory information and prices in November. Each routine requires a separate costume.

All costume balances are due paid in full with November's tuition and are non-refundable. If you do not pay your balance, your costumes will not be ordered until your account is settled, at which time you may be liable for rush shipping charges and/or risk access to limited inventory. Please plan accordingly.

Please note that while the costumes are made-to-order, they are not custom, so they will not always fit perfectly. We measure students and order according to the manufacturers' recommendations. If you require alterations, please inquire about in-house tailoring for an additional fee.

EFFICIENT REHEARSALS

We hold dress rehearsals during normal class times right at the studio. Not only does it automatically fit your schedule, it allows us to find the best way to wear costume pieces and make sure that we clarify all the appearance and performance details. You will receive digital access to hair and makeup guides for your convenience.

Our stage rehearsal is held at the performance venue without costumes. This allows us to focus on staging without distractions and helps prevent the loss of costume pieces before the performance date. We also limit the hours of our stage rehearsal to prevent fatigue and get the students home at a decent time during a busy week of the year.

TENATIVE 2024-25 DANCE CALENDAR

Our dance season typically runs from mid-September through the beginning of June, including holiday breaks. This year, classes will be in session from September 9, 2024 through May 31, 2025.

Classes Begin	M Sept. 9 th
Costume Deposit/Competition Fee Deposit [■] 1 Due	Su Sept. 15 th
Specialty Number Requests Due	Tu Oct. 1 st
Titans of Dance Convention	Su Oct. 6 th
Indigenous Peoples' Day	M Oct. 14 th
Costume Deposit/Competition Fee Deposit 2 Due	Tu Oct. 15 th
Wild Dance Intensive*	Su Nov. 3 rd
Costume Balance/ Competition Fee Deposit 3 Due	F Nov. 15 th
Platinum Dance Experience*	Sa Nov. 16 th
Thanksgiving Break	W Nov. 27 th —Su Dec. 1 st
Winter Break	Th Dec. 19 th —W Jan. 1 st
Competition Fee Deposit 4 Due	Su Dec. 15 th
Competition Fee Deposit 5 Due	W Jan. 15 th
MLK, Jr. Day	M Jan. 20 th
Soul de Soul Convention*	Sa. Feb 1 st
Embody Dance Conference*	F Feb. 7 th —Su Feb. 9 th
Competition Fee Deposit 6 Due	Sa Feb. 15 th
Presidents' Day	M Feb. 17 th
Competition Fee Balance Due	Sa Mar. 15 th
AMP Dance Competition*	F Mar. 21 st —Su Mar. 23 rd
Competition Stage Rehearsal* [■]	Su Mar. 29 th
Dress Rehearsals* ^{♦♦}	M Mar. 31 st —Sa April 12 th
Dance Pictures [♦]	Su Apr. 6 th
Spring Break	Th Apr. 17 th —W Apr. 23 rd
Sheer Elite International Competition [■]	F Apr. 25 th —Su Apr. 27 th
Ticket to Broadway Competition [■]	F May 2 nd —Su May 4 th
Beyond the Stars Competition [■]	F May 16 th —Su May 18 th
All Out Dance Competition	F May 23 rd —Su May 25 th
Memorial Day	M May 26 th
Stage Rehearsal [♦]	Tu May 27 th
Recital [♦]	Sa May 31 st

*Optional for company & competition team dancers.

♦Attendance is mandatory.

♦Subject to change based on costume availability.

■Company & competition team dancers; subject to change.

TUITION AND FEES

Because we charge a course fee per *total hours* on a descending scale, not per *class lesson*, you get more value for your dollar. We add up the total class hours of immediate family members taking lessons to take full advantage of the discounts.

Tuition is due on the 15th of each month and can be paid in monthly installments, 3-month installments, or in one annual payment. Prepay discounts are available if you choose the 3-month or annual plan and pay by September 15th. **Please note that if you do not meet a payment deadline for a discounted plan, your plan will revert to the monthly option and the prepay discount will no longer apply.** The same is true if you choose to alter your payment plan after that date.

A \$15 cumulative late fee will be added to your monthly tuition if payments are missed. If the account is overdue by 90 days or more, you will be asked to keep a valid credit card on file. There are no refunds for missed classes.

Monthly payments are due on the 15th of each month. 3-month installments are due September 15th, December 15th, and March 15th. The annual payment is due on September 15th.

Hours	Per Month • Season	3-Month • Season (5% Discount)	Year-in-Full Prepaid (10% Discount)
1	\$32 • \$288	\$91.20 • \$273.60	\$259.20
2	\$62.50 • \$562.50	\$178.13 • \$534.38	\$506.25
3	\$91.50 • \$823.50	\$260.78 • \$782.83	\$741.15
4	\$119.00 • \$1071.00	\$339.15 • \$1017.45	\$963.90
5	\$145.00 • \$1305.00	\$413.25 • \$1239.75	\$1174.50

REGISTRATION FEE: \$25 (\$12.50 for each additional family member) is due upon registration and is non-refundable. Additional company and competition fees will be assigned as applicable.

We accept cash, checks, and major credit cards (subject to an additional processing fee). There is also an auto-pay option. Checks must be made payable to "Niagara Dance Centre." A \$35 fee will be applied to all returned checks.

DROP-IN RATES

Not sure if you want to commit to a class full-time? You can take any of our non-performance classes* at our drop-in rate! We ask that drop-in dancers email or call ahead to ensure we can accommodate you!

Number of Classes	Cost
1	\$10
5-Class Pack	\$45
10-Class Pack	\$80

*Non-performance classes include My Grown-Up & Me; Strength & Conditioning; Flexibility; Ballet Technique; and Jump, Turn, & Stretch.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

In order to facilitate at-home practice, all students will receive digital access free of charge to their recital routine music. Most teachers share notes and videos of their routines throughout the season, as well, to help students with choreography retention.

SPECIALTY ROUTINES

In September, students may apply to perform solo, duets, trios, quartets, and other specialty recital routines. We won't know that dancers are interested unless they ask! Routines are conferred by teacher approval only. Teachers base their decisions on a student's ability, showmanship, attendance, positive attitude, and progress made in class from week to week.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Because we believe there is a dancer inside us all, no matter our age or ability, it is imperative that you disclose any injuries, medical, and health conditions, including allergies and learning differences. We would never turn a dancer away, but our teachers need that information to be able to fully meet your dancer's needs! In some cases, we may require more information or a doctor's permission.

Niagara Dance Centre carries accident insurance but no medical insurance, so it is required that students are covered under a family policy. If injury does occur, it is understood that the studio and the family will work together to find the best source of reimbursement.

FACILITY

We are conveniently located near the Niagara Falls Airport, minutes from LaSalle, Wheatfield, the Town of Niagara, and the Grand Island Bridge.

We have two studio rooms, both of which have been outfitted with a professionally-designed O'Mara sprung floor, customized for our studio and installed by experts, which reduces the risk of injury to our dancers.

OUR DANCE COMMUNITY

Thank you to those of you who return each year. Your support has helped us make it to 35 years! If you know anyone who is interested in dance lessons, please ask us about our referral bonus.

If you are new to Niagara Dance Centre, welcome! We're so happy you're here and interested. We appreciate the opportunity to get to know you and hope you'll try us out!