



2020-21 Class Guidelines

We are so excited to be entering a new season at the Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we plan to offer all classes in-person at the studio and online virtually through the Zoom platform. In maximizing dancers' safety, we have adopted some new policies and recommendations for both methods of taking class. Please review content below for ways to get the most out of your dance experience.

In-Studio Classes (From Dance Magazine):

Wear your mask and following safety precautions. Dancers should wear a mask to enter the dancing school and while in class. Dancers will be asked to wash/sanitize hands once in the building. Bathroom usage should be minimized to reduce contact. It is advisable that you bring an extra mask in case it become moist from sweat.

Please observe new times. Classes have been set to provide adequate time to clean studios between classes. Most classes have 10-15 minutes between classes. If you have two classes in the same day you may be asked to step outside or return to your car between classes.

Avoid socializing pre- or post-class. As much as you'll want to catch up with friends that you've missed, avoid hanging around the studio or lounge areas. If another group is using the studio before you, wait outside the building or in your car until the room has been sanitized.

Be prepared for temperature and symptom checks. Prior to entering the studio, a staff member will take your temperature via a no-touch thermometer. You should also be prepared to answer questions about how you're feeling, if you're experiencing any COVID-19-related symptoms or have been exposed to anyone who has tested positive. *If your temperature is above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, you should return home, watch for any symptoms and consult your doctor.*

If you can, skip the dressing room. Close quarters like dressing rooms—which likely don't allow for much social distancing—should be avoided, if possible, to limit your proximity with other dancers. Consider arriving for class with your dancewear under your street clothes. You may place your bag or shoes along the wall in the dance studio space. **The dressing room will only be used by limited dancers that have 30 minutes or more between classes through prior arrangement.** Social distancing and adherence to space limitation will be required.

Maintain social distance inside and outside of the studio. Class sizes will be limited according to the studio used. Be prepared to take class or rehearse with smaller groups. If possible, keep more than usual 6 feet between yourself and other dancers to allow for movement. Please observe the taped boxes on the floor as a guide for keeping your distance while in the dance studio.

Know that class will be different. Hands-on corrections, contact dancing and floor work will be reduced or avoided. If you're usually a tactile learner, you may need to ask for additional clarifications to auditory corrections. And while it may seem that the "fun" parts of class are forbidden for the time being, use this as an opportunity to zero in on and reconnect with your technique.



Virtual (online) Zoom Classes: (From Dance Spirit Magazine)

Identify a clear and private space for class, where possible. Kindly, let your family members know that you shouldn't be interrupted during your class. Of course, not all of us have the luxury of private space right now. If your situation means true privacy is impossible, ask family members (and pets) to be respectful of your teacher and classmates by staying quiet and not in the way.

Be On Time. You wouldn't arrive at the dance studio exactly at the scheduled class start time, would you? Same goes for Zoom class. If possible, log on a few minutes early. Technology can be unpredictable, so you'll want the extra time to get set up.

Wear Proper Dance Attire. Although circumstances are strange, there's no reason you shouldn't dress the part. It'll help you take class seriously if you're in your dance clothes with your hair up and your water bottle nearby.

Don't Forget Your Charger. Don't let a low battery keep you from participating. Technology issues are bound to happen, but a charger is an easy thing to have on hand.

Please Keep Your Video On. It's important for your teacher to be able to see you dancing in order to correct you. It also helps to personalize the class when teachers can provide real time tips and encouragement.

Please Mute Your Audio Once Class Begins. Muting your audio will prevent the background noises in your home from distracting the class, and keep potential echoes to a minimum. If your teacher asks a question that requires more than a yes or no answer, unmute yourself as quickly as possible to respond.

Make the Most of Nonverbal Communication. By now, most Zoom-using dance teachers have figured out the usefulness of communicating via nonverbal cues ("Thumbs-up if you want me to go over that again!"). Make sure you respond to these prompts quickly and visibly.

Please Avoid Virtual Backgrounds. Yes, you may be familiar with Zoom and its many tricks from school, but this feature is super distracting. As you move around the screen, you and the background can cut in and out, making it difficult for your teacher to properly see and correct you.

Provide Feedback. If you're having trouble with an element of your Zoom education—the sound quality is poor, or the instructor keeps moving out of frame while demonstrating—politely communicate your concerns to your teacher or through the studio email. This is an ever-changing landscape, and it's helpful for teachers to know what is and isn't working so they can make adjustments.

Treat This Like Any Other Class. Do your best to be just as present and focused on Zoom as in the studio. Avoid taking unauthorized breaks, talking to friends on Zoom, sitting or eating during class time.

Prioritize Kindness. This is a new and complicated scenario for everyone involved and there are a lot of people involved in a Zoom dance class: you, your teacher, your classmates, plus the people with whom you're all social distancing. If (when) glitches or miscommunications occur, be compassionate. We're all in this together!