



## Starting Pointe Work

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It is every dancer's dream to have a pair of 'Pointe Shoes' and dance on their toes. As you approach this time when you can realise your dream it is time to consider the following. Whilst it is an exciting prospect, you should be aware that starting too early, before you are technically ready with poorly fitted pointe shoes can damage your feet—remember these are your feet, yours for the rest of your life. We aim to help you have an enjoyable and safe 'Pointe Work' experience and have compiled the following to help you achieve this.

Important facts and questions that you should consider and know about before commencing pointe work:

- The dancer must have the teachers permission to buy pointe shoes.
- The dancer should have passed the minimum of Grade 5 Ballet Exam.
- The dancer must be able to show and maintain good basic placement of the body.
- The dancer should use the foot correctly in battement tendu, rise etc.
- The dancer must understand the "Three Point Support System of the foot"
- The leg muscles must be properly developed.
- The strength of the muscles under the foot should be strong i.e a good meta- tarsal lift.
- Ideally a dancer should be attending two ballet classes a week.

## **The Responsibility of the Teacher**

The teacher should ensure that the young dancer has achieved good placement of the body, strong feet and leg muscles, and correct use of the feet and ankles. It is also of great importance for the dancer to be able to point her foot without curling the toes.

Special preparatory exercises will be given to help strengthen the feet, but ultimately the decision as to whether a student should commence pointe work should be left to the professional judgement of the teacher as no two students are identical. Needless to say, not everyone even in the same class will be ready at the same time - so trust us, we have your best interests at heart.

## **The Responsibility of the Dancer**

Listening carefully in class will prevent you from being distracted and enable you to hear clear instruction. Take your teacher's advice at all times and try and retain corrections and improve on these. In class, make good use of the floor (the dancer's best friend) every time you execute a battement tendu, glisse, rise, releve, saute, etc and aim to maintain a good ballet posture.

Allow your teacher/s to decide when it is the right time for you to commence pointe work. Remember other Dance Schools may have different policies.

To take care of your feet and shoes and NEVER wear someone else's shoes just to see how they feel!

**When purchasing your shoes you will need to buy the following:**

- Pink Nylon Pointe Shoe  
Ribbon
- Suede Pointe Shoe ends or Darning thread (to stop slipping)
- Any pads such as ouch pouches