

Competition Team Auditions 2017-2018

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I expect at competition team auditions?

Lead competition team instructors will observe the dancers, while younger instructors will guide them across the floor and teach them a dance combination. The dancers will show us their flexibility and do some jazz technique across the floor in groups. After learning the combination, they will perform in smaller groups for us. We will also want to see some tap technique across the floor or in the center.

We have a closed door policy for auditions, as to not distract the dancers or instructors. Parents will be asked to leave the studio and come back at the end of their dancer's audition time.

What should I wear to competition team auditions?

Dancers should wear tight-fitting dancewear to auditions. This may be a leotard OR it can be a tank top, t-shirt, sports bra or crop top, as long as it is not baggy or loose-fitting. All dancers must wear spandex shorts with their top, unless they are wearing a leotard. No leggings, please!

Dancers must bring tap AND jazz shoes or turners to auditions. This is extremely important!

All dancers MUST wear their hair up for auditions. A high bun is highly recommended. Dancers should look polished and put together, ready to perform. When you look and feel great, you dance great!

If you are auditioning for hip hop, you may bring tennis shoes and pants if you would like. This is not required, just optional.

How are competition teams selected?

We base our selections off of the following criteria:

- Technique and Flexibility
- Stage Presence
- Ability to follow along with the instructor and stay with the music
- Coachability and attitude
- Age & number of dancers auditioning for a given age group

Although auditions are a very important process for us, we are observing the dancers throughout the year, not just on the one day. This includes class time and performances. Please keep in mind that attendance at all competitions is mandatory. Previous history of poor attendance in class and at competitions will be considered, as will a negative attitude and lack of effort. If you choose to audition for a competition team, and especially for select groups, you are expected to make dance a priority. Hard work, a good attitude, and stellar technique will be rewarded.

Our competition teams are not selected based on popularity or personality, but on talent and dedication. We do our best to keep similar ages and ability levels together, but ultimately we strive to form teams that will be successful in the competition season.

What are instructors looking for at auditions?

We are looking for dancers who will stand out above the rest. This includes dancers with a great deal of enthusiasm and energy, who are trying their best and giving 110% throughout the entire audition. This would also include dancers with lots of confidence, showmanship, and attitude. Dancers also need to be able to keep up with the floor work and choreography.

Again, we want to reiterate that it's not all about the "audition" on the one day. We are truly watching dancers all year long. We see who is giving their all in class every week, not just at auditions or until they get their lines for the year. Thank you in advance for trusting our judgment. (:

How are select groups selected?

Placement in select groups, other than your regular competition team, is reserved for the strongest, most confident dancers at the studio. These are dancers who can hold their own on the stage and are willing to work extremely hard and put the extra time in. They must be both respectful and coachable, in addition to having great technique. We sincerely consider all dancers who audition for these groups. They are not selected based on favoritism, but on ability and showmanship.

Just because a dancer auditions for a select group, that does not mean they will be placed in one. In addition, just because they were in a certain group last year does not mean they will be in the same one this year. The process for choosing these groups will be more selective this year than it has been in the past. Please discuss this with your dancer before signing up to audition for these groups, as some dancers may not be interested in this type of extra commitment. In addition, we want to stress that these are EXTRA groups. Our first and foremost focus is on the main competition teams.

What is required for select groups?

Select group practices will be scheduled outside of regular class time. This may include summer practices, weeknight evenings, or weekends. These practices also may be held at either studio location - Sauk Centre or Alexandria. There are also additional costs associated with these groups. This includes costume, choreography, and competition fees. Please consider this when auditioning.

How are solos, duets and trios selected?

Solos, duets, and trios will be given to truly standout dancers. This does not just involve great technique, but the ability to hold their own on the stage. They must have the ability to OWN the stage and demand the judges' attention. These are very selective and will not be given to every dancer who auditions for one. Dancers auditioning for a solo, duet or trio may be asked to dance by themselves for us at auditions. Please discuss this with your dancer before signing up to audition.

What is required for solos, duets, and trios?

The time commitment for a solo, duet or trio can be quite extensive. Practices will be scheduled with a choreographer, but dancers will also be expected to practice extensively at home on their own. In addition to the time commitment for practices, these dancers may also have an extra day of performing at competitions. Often, these are scheduled to perform on Thursdays or Fridays, early mornings, or late evenings (including Sundays) when large groups are not performing. This may require extra hotel stays. In addition to the time commitment, there are extra fees for costumes, choreography and competition as well.

Just because a dancer had a solo, duet or trio last year does not necessarily mean they will have one this year. The process for choosing these dancers will be more selective this year than it has been in the past. In addition, we want to strongly emphasize that group dances need to come before solos, duets or trios, meaning that these select dancers must be keeping up with their group dances and knowing their choreography consistently throughout the year. Please discuss this with your dancer before signing up to audition for one of these.

What are the studio's expectations for competition team parents?

It is very important that competition team parents have a positive attitude and willingness to be flexible. In addition, we ask that they encourage their dancer to improve and succeed and make it a priority to get them to all of the necessary practices. Please listen to your dancer's wants and needs, and guide them if they aren't ready for a certain group.

In addition, you are responsible for knowing the competition and recital dates. These are MANDATORY, no exceptions. Please keep track of these dates, as well as practice schedules throughout the season.

We also ask that you respect our decisions for competition team selection. We have been doing this for many, many years, and we truly have your dancer's best interests at heart. If you have concerns or questions, please contact the studio rather than venting or complaining to the lobby. We are more than happy to help! (:

Why are there multiple classes competing in the same age division?

We do this to give more dancers the opportunity to be on a competition team. As stated above, we try to place dancers not only by age, but also by ability level. This helps us create successful teams for the competition season.

Why are many of the same dancers in select groups?

Select groups (solos, duets, trios, small groups, hip hop and lyrical) are SELECTIVE. Everyone is given a chance to audition for these if they would like to, but that does not mean everyone will be chosen. This is a way for us to highlight our strongest dancers, very much in the same way as you would have an A Squad or Varsity team for sports. If everyone was in these groups, not only would it lose its appeal, but it would also defeat the purpose. In addition, we do not have enough staff to choreograph and teach a solo, duet or trio to every dancer wishing to do one.

How does my dancer get better?

We encourage dancers to take advantage of extra classes we offer at the studio, such as ballet or private lessons. Not only will this help them to improve, but it will give those who want it more studio time. In addition, dancers should be stretching and practicing at home. Many of our select groups include dancers who have gone the extra mile to get where they are today. With that being said, doing private lessons or taking extra classes does not guarantee a spot in one of these extra groups, or on a competition team in general. Unfortunately, it still comes down to technique and stage presence, and we have to choose our strongest dancers. Ultimately, the dancer's goal should be to continue to improve and to be the best that they can be.

NEW This Year: Performance Teams

This year, we are also considering adding a "Performance Team" option. These dancers would have the opportunity to do many of the things that competition teams do, but with slightly less commitment both financially and time-wise. In addition, these dancers may compete at a less competitive level in competitions and would not perform in all of the production numbers. Both current competition team dancers and new competition team dancers have the possibility of being placed on a performance team rather than a competition team for the 2017-2018 season. This will be based on ability, effort and commitment. It would not be a move up or down for a current competition team dancer to be placed on one of these, rather just a better fit for them as a dancer.

