

DC DANCE & PERFORMING ARTS

Safe Dance Practice

Safe dance can be defined as the practice of selecting and executing safe movement. Safe dance practice focuses on providing dance activities and exercises which allow students to participate without risk of injury.

In order to teach dance, you need to gain an understanding of the body and its limitations. Safe dance principles that aid this understanding include:

- an awareness of how the body moves
- a knowledge of common dance injuries, their cause, prevention and treatment
- a knowledge of the nature and function of warm-up and technique exercises in preparing the body to dance.

An understanding of the musculo-skeletal system and its function in movement aids in the application of safe dance practice.

- Observing and correcting basic technical faults in students allows them to move more safely and efficiently.
- Correct alignment of the body, and in particular, the feet and ankles, knees, hips and spine is critical.
- Alignment should be observed, whether the student is standing or in motion.

Each student brings to the class differences in terms of musculo-skeletal structure, level of fitness, experience and skill. Each student needs to be assessed and managed with regards to his or her alignment, strength, flexibility, endurance (stamina) and level of training. From an early stage, students should be encouraged to pay attention to how their body feels when moving and to maintain correct alignment. As students increase their knowledge and skills in dance, they can be more active in managing safe dance practices.