

Ashkenazy CLASSICAL BALLET

ACB PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Ashkenazy Classical Ballet! We're thrilled to welcome all of our dancers, both new and established, for the 2019-20 training year.

Ashkenazy Classical Ballet (ACB) has a unique approach to training that involves small class sizes with a strong student commitment to weekly group and private lessons. Much care is taken in the accurate development of ACB students, as our designated levels have a truly significant standard. Direct attention to details in regularly attended classes creates versatile, focused, dedicated students who exhibit excellent awareness of artistry and technique. ACB students work in a warm, friendly atmosphere infused with strict etiquette and high expectations. Our environment is a place where positivity and grace reign supreme as students are sincerely invested in and nurtured.

All classes are taught by Founder and Director Elesia Ashkenazy. ACB applauds the principles of classical ballet, namely Russian ballet technique and the work of Agrippina Vaganova. Though our classes are infused with Vaganova methodology and pedagogy, ACB welcomes guest instructors fluent in other methodologies and styles.

The most important rule in this school is to *enjoy* the process of learning and the celebration of student success. To ensure this, there are a set of norms for conduct and etiquette, guidelines to assure that we are not only enjoying ourselves, but doing so in an elegant, professional manner.

Studio Etiquette

The roots of ballet date back to the 1400s with beginnings in the royal courts of Italy and France. Royal etiquette was held in high regard, as evidenced by its subsequent codification. These traditions and expectations continue to remain central to today's pre-professional ballet academies.

Guidelines:

- Please arrive at the studio in time to prepare for class. For example, slippers and alignment belts should be on before entering the studio.
- Arrive neat and tidy, as this sets the expectation for the lessons and technique of the day. Are slipper elastics properly placed? Is the hair in a proper bun?
- Please use the restroom before class begins.
- Please use gentle voices in the waiting/viewing area and keep all belongings neat and tidy.
- Do not enter a studio before the instructor invites students to the doorway.
- If a student is late, it is customary to wait quietly—in view—outside of the classroom door until the instructor either greets the student at the door, or waves them inside.
- Do not eat, drink, or chew gum in class.
- Do not interrupt the lesson to use the drinking fountain. The instructor will allow a water break at an appropriate time. A water bottle may be brought into the classroom.
- Refrain from talking during class. If a question arises, raise the hand and wait.
- Do not sit on the floor in between exercises. Practice holding strong posture.
- Pay attention while other classmates are being either featured or corrected. This is one of the best ways for a student to learn.
- Students must strive to keep a positive attitude, even when the lesson is challenging.
- It is customary to thank the instructor—one by one—at the end of class, with a small curtsy or bow.
- Students exhibiting highly disrespectful and/or disruptive behavior will be dismissed from class and a meeting will be set with the parent.

Dress Code/Class Attire

Proper dress is imperative to classical ballet training. Leotards, tights, and slippers allow for the instructor and the dancer to see how the muscles are working, as well as to see placement and technique. Please wear the leotard color associated with the corresponding level of the dancer (e.g. black long-sleeved leotard for Cygnets, and blue 3/4-sleeve leotards for Bluebirds, etc.). Beginning in the Swan level, ballet skirts are allowed—a specific skirt will be selected and assigned.

ACB strongly upholds the importance of our dress code and class attire policy. By arriving to class appropriately dressed, a dancer shows pride and respect for themselves and their studio, as well as pride and respect for their instructor and the art of ballet.

Our attire is hand selected and made available through Portland Dancewear in Tigard, Oregon. You may obtain your dance attire by visiting this store:
9225 SW Hall Blvd, Tigard, OR 97223

Guidelines:

- Hair must be in a bun. For those with short hair, the hair must be neatly clipped and/or secured back from the face.
- Unless the instructor makes an exception, refrain from wearing warm-up shirts, leg warmers, sweatpants, etc.
- Please keep nails clean and short, as well as free of polish. Clear nail polish and nude tones are acceptable.
- Please take care of ballet attire (e.g. using garment bags and line drying). Replace items that become worn and/or dirty. Dance wear is to be kept laundered and in good repair.
- Refrain from wearing ballet slippers and/or pointe shoes outside of the studio. Exceptions are made for restroom visits.
- Small, tasteful earrings and necklaces (as well as medical jewelry) are acceptable, however, please remove all other jewelry before class begins. This rule ensures the safety of all students, especially during combinations in center.

Code of Conduct

ACB is committed to providing an emotionally and physically safe environment. We do our best to ensure that all students experience classical ballet in a respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment.

There is zero tolerance for bullying, whether it is from parent-to-parent, from parent-to-dancer, or from dancer-to dancer. Bullying refers to verbal acts, physical acts, or other acts of harassment regardless of whether it occurs in classes, rehearsals, performances or anywhere in and around the studio or potential performance sites.

Name-calling, joking, cyberbullying, or making offensive remarks about a person's religion, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status will not be tolerated. If any behaviors associated with disrespect toward others is either reported or witnessed, the behavior will immediately be addressed and steps toward remediation will be implemented.

We ask that parents and students support ACB in setting and maintaining an aura of kindness, etiquette, and respect; the very pillars of our school. We strongly encourage our families and students get to know each other both inside and outside of training, as the bonds created often last a lifetime.

Facilities

Students and families are expected to treat the facilities ACB rents from Sherwood Dance Academy with utmost respect.

Guidelines:

- Barres are not to be hung on or sat on, as this could result in either an accident or breakage.
- Do not lean on or smudge the mirrors.
- The dressing room curtain allows for privacy during quick changes before and after class. Please do not pull on or treat the curtains as toys.
- Toys and books are provided in the lobby for the entertainment of siblings during class. Please return all toys to their proper places before leaving.
- Students and families are responsible for the disposal of their garbage.

Injuries

Classical ballet trainees may experience minor aches and pains. Most minor aches and pains subside within a reasonable amount of time. Please see a physician as soon as possible should a medical concern arise.

Students with an injury of any type, must report the injury to the instructor before taking class. This will help ensure safety, proper development, and healing of the student. With more extensive injuries, a note from a physician detailing the injury and whether or not a student is cleared to participate in class is required. The instructor will also meet with parents to ensure an appropriate recovery plan is in place.

Registration & Tuition

A \$25 registration fee is due upon registration. This fee is implemented yearly, per student, and is non-refundable.

ACB tuition is due each month by the end of the first week. Please contact Director, Elesia Ashkenazy for specific tuition information pertaining to the enrolled dancer's level. Tuition is non-refundable.

Accepted forms of payment: cash, check*, and Venmo. *A \$25 fee is assessed for any and all returned checks.

Attendance Policy

Strong attendance is imperative, as dance involves progressive learning, and regular attendance is essential to a student's progress. Absences and tardiness hold back the entire class. The instructor cannot jeopardize responsibilities to the rest of class for one student.

Please make every effort to have your child attend each class. If your dancer needs to miss a class, please call or text the Director at (718) 208-3435. This becomes especially important when we are preparing for Parent Observation Day and/or potential performances. Missed classes cannot be made up. There will be no refunds for missed classes.

If a student is absent from two classes in a given month, the instructor will notify the parent if a paid private lesson is necessary for the student to catch up. If a student's absence becomes an ongoing issue, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss appropriate options.

If a student is unable to dance, yet is feeling well enough to attend class, we invite them to participate via observation so that they will retain key elements of class. (This is commonplace in the case of an injury, for example, where the student must take a week or more off dance in order to facilitate proper healing.)

Students who are ill, have a fever, or are exhibiting contagious symptoms should stay home and rest. Cases of prolonged absence due to illness or injury should be discussed with the Director.

If a student misses four consecutive classes during any given month—without prior notice—the student will automatically be dropped from their enrolled class. The student may register again in the fall for the following training year.

ACB 2019-20 CALENDAR*

September 10

First Day of Classes

November 27 - 29

Thanksgiving Break** (classes resume Saturday, November 30th)

December 22 - January 1

Winter Break** (classes resume Thursday, January 2nd)

January 7 - 11

Parent Observation Day Week

March 23 - 30

Spring Break* (classes resume Tuesday, March 31st)

June 16 - 20 & June 20

Parent Observation Day Week & Last Day of Classes

June 30

First Day of Summer Term + ACB Summer Intensives

**Calendar subject to change. Please check online monthly.*

***Private and semi-private lessons are available during Thanksgiving, winter, and spring breaks.*