

THE PORTLAND BALLET STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2020-21

STUDENTS AND PARENTS SHOULD READ THIS HANDBOOK TOGETHER BEFORE ACCEPTING THE TERMS OF ENROLLMENT.

The Portland Ballet (TPB) is committed to providing the finest quality professional dance instruction in an environment that is challenging, disciplined, and rigorous while at the same time safe, healthy, and nurturing.

It is central to the philosophy of The Portland Ballet to demand of each student the very best effort of which he or she is capable and to give in return the care and attention the student deserves, whether or not a professional career in dance is planned.

TPB will be offering Curriculum and Career Track programs via Zoom for the 2020 Fall Semester with the goal of returning to in-person instruction as soon as it is safe to do so. TPB will update dancers and families on plans for the Spring Semester as circumstances develop. Curriculum Ballet and Career Track programs must be purchased for Fall Semester (September - January) and tuition is not refundable. Students and parents should be sure that they will complete the program before registering. Students who withdraw from the program are still obligated to pay for the remainder of the year.

CLASS LEVELS

The ballet curriculum consists of eight levels of training: Pre-Ballet, Elementary, Levels 1-6, and Career Track (CT). These levels have been carefully designed to meet the physical and psychological needs of the student at each stage of development. Students move through the curriculum according to ability and age and are evaluated for level advancement by the Artistic Director and faculty members.

CLASS PLACEMENT

All current students will be placed based on the 2019-20 year's progress and placement will be sent following the formal audition in August. Current students are **not** required to attend the audition. New students must attend the **mandatory** placement audition unless they attend the Summer Ballet Intensive or Young Dancer Summer.

Great consideration is taken in the placement process as well as in the construction of class schedules and the assignment of teachers. Each level contains students within a particular stage of development. Students are placed according to their current stage of ability, physical and psychological development, and age.

Dance is an exacting, athletic art-form requiring mastery of many seemingly basic yet fundamental steps and movements. Students progress safely and with less injury by spending an appropriate length of time mastering the fundamentals rather than rushing ahead to the complex and faster-paced steps of a more advanced level.

Each class level follows a carefully planned curriculum and syllabus requiring students to attend a specific number of hours in class each week throughout the school year. We strongly advise against seeking outside training or private lessons, as they will conflict with the curriculum and syllabus of The Portland Ballet. Any proposal for outside training or lessons must be brought to the Artistic Director for consideration. TPB Scholarship students agree not to participate in any outside training.

TUITION POLICIES

Students registered for Pre-Ballet through Level 6 and the Career Track (CT) enroll for the entire fall semester (September - January). TPB offers two payment options:

Payment (by credit card) may be made (a) once upfront or (b) monthly. The first payment is due no later than August 28th, for either upfront or monthly payments.

Upfront tuition must be received by August 28th and must be made by credit card.

For those who elect to pay monthly, payment must be made no later than August 28, 2020. Thereafter, TPB will automatically charge the credit card on the first day of each month. Monthly installment payments are charged automatically to a secure credit card on file. Declined credit card payments are subject to a \$25.00 fee. TPB accepts Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express.

Late payments received after the 10th day of each month are subject to a \$25.00 late fee. Payments more than 30 days late will incur a \$100.00 late fee.

Unsubstantiated credit card disputes will result in a \$25.00 fee. If a financial situation arises, please contact our Registrar before contacting your bank. These disputes affect our credit rating and may result in increased tuition. In the event that a third party is responsible for tuition payments, please ensure that they are aware of the payment amount and schedule. Credit card charges will appear on bank statements as “Ballet Portland”.

Tuition is **not refundable**. Students who do not participate in class or withdraw before the end of the school year are obligated for the full semester’s fees. Students are eligible for pro-rated tuition if they must withdraw from classes due to a prolonged illness, severe injury (verified by a physician’s written orders), or other unforeseen circumstances upon approval of the Executive Director.

Students with outstanding accounts cannot attend any classes at TPB or enroll in future programs until their account is made current.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Financial Aid support is granted on a year-by-year basis to eligible families. Scholarship applications for the 2020 - 2021 Curriculum Year must be submitted, online, by the August 21, 2020, deadline. Applicants will receive the results of the application by August 28, 2020. There is a \$39.00 application fee payable to TADS at the time of application. If the application fee creates a barrier, please email registration@theportlandballet.org for a fee waiver. Scholarship applications can be turned in only after a student has received acceptance and placement information from TPB. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered until all other applications have been awarded, provided funds are still available. Financial assistance is determined through TADS, a secure financial aid assessment service used by many other ballet academies around the country. TADS has been assessing scholarship applications for more than forty years.

Once a scholarship is awarded, scholarship students and parents must sign a scholarship contract. It details the responsibilities and obligations specific to scholarship students. If any of these responsibilities and obligations are not fulfilled, full tuition will be automatically charged to the credit card on file.

EVALUATIONS

In January 2021, faculty members conduct individual Zoom conferences with dancers and submit evaluations for Curriculum Ballet dancers in Levels 1 through Career Track. Each dancer will complete a goal sheet to begin the evaluation process. The students and one of their teachers will discuss together the three most critical areas of focus in a virtual, one-on-one 15-minute conference.

Additionally, Level 6 and Career Track students may schedule an evaluation conference with the Assistant Artistic Director or Artistic Director to discuss their progress and goals. Parents may attend these conferences.

CONFERENCES

Parents may schedule personal conferences with the Artistic Director by making a request by emailing registration@theportlandballet.org. **Please avoid “catching” the Artistic Director or teachers after class for quick conferences.** These discussions deserve our full attention and are more effective when conducted in a private atmosphere.

DRESS CODE

TPB’s dress code is designed to encourage unity and discipline among our students. Students who do not meet the required dress code or whose uniform is dirty or torn will be asked to observe class.

Students are required to adhere to the following dress code:

Level	Leotard Style	Color	Tights Style	Color	Ballet Slippers	Color
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Pre-Ballet	Motion Wear 2105	Pink 472	Body Wrappers C30 Footed Total Stretch	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Elementary	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers C30 Footed Total Stretch	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 1	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers C30 Footed Total Stretch	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 2	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers C30 Footed Total Stretch	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 3 Level 3P	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers Adult TotalSTRETCH™ Supremely Soft Convertible Tights A45	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 4	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers Adult TotalSTRETCH™ Supremely Soft Convertible Tights A45	Ballet Pink	Leather full soled Bloch 205	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 5	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers Adult TotalSTRETCH™ Supremely Soft Convertible Tights A45	Ballet Pink	Leather or canvas full or split soled	Pink with sewn elastic
Level 6	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers Adult TotalSTRETCH™ Supremely Soft Convertible Tights A45	Ballet Pink	Leather or canvas full or split soled	Pink with sewn elastic
Career Track	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Body Wrappers Adult TotalSTRETCH™ Supremely Soft Convertible Tights A45	Ballet Pink	Leather or canvas full or split soled	Pink with sewn elastic
Boys Pre-Ballet, Men 1, & Men 2	Cap Sleeve Leotard	White	Body Wrappers Tights - M90	Black	Leather full soled with white ankle socks	Black with sewn elastic
Men 3 & 4	Fitted T-Shirt	White	Body Wrappers Tights - M90	Black	Leather full soled with black sewn elastic	Black with sewn elastic
Men 5 & 6	Fitted T-Shirt	White	Body Wrappers Tights - M90	Black	Leather or canvas full or split soled with sewn black elastic	Black with sewn elastic

Modern (girls)	Simple, camisole leotard	Black	Tights	Black or Pink	No shoes	
Modern (boys)	T-shirt/tank top	Any color	Tights	Black	No shoes	

Career Track Dancers: for evening classes, dancers must wear curriculum uniform assigned to their level.

THE ELLOVÉ TECHNIQUE

Level 4/Men4, Level 5/Men 5, Level 6/Men 6, & CT students have The Ellové Technique (instead of “core”) as part of their schedule. It is a required class for all dancers Level IV and up according to your schedule. You will need to provide your own **yoga mat** for these classes.

ATTIRE

No warm-up shirts, leg warmers, pants etc., may be worn during class. **Dancewear is to be kept laundered and in good repair.** Please mark clothing and shoes with the student’s name. **Pre-Ballet through Level 6 dancers are not to wear underwear beneath their leotards and tights.**

Girls: All ballet slippers must have sewn (not tied) elastics. Pointe shoes (when applicable) must have sewn ribbons and elastics. Hair must be pulled back into a neat bun with a hairnet the same color as natural hair color. Dancers must not have “whispies” and may not wear hair accessories like bun covers or headbands. Short hair must be fastened securely away from the face. No jewelry is to be worn in class including rings, watches, plastic bracelets, and hair elastics around the wrists. Note: Level 3 - 6 girls can wear small earrings at the discretion of your teacher. **Short black skirts are allowed for Variations and Pointe classes only.** On Saturdays, girls in the L5/6 class may wear simply styled and colored leotards.

Boys: All ballet slippers must have sewn (not tied) elastics. Dance belts are required for boys 12 years old and up. On Saturdays, men in the noon L5/6 class may wear colored tights and/or a plain, fitted, colored t-shirt (without logos or other text).

Unconventional hair dye and unnatural colors **is not** allowed at TPB during classes, rehearsals, or performances.

Please Note: Dance is an athletic activity and unscented deodorant must be worn by dancers at the appropriate age. Dancers are asked not to wear perfume, cologne, or body spray at TPB. All body hair should be maintained: facial hair (boys), under-arm hair and bikini lines (girls). Please do not wear body lotion to TPB as it causes dangerous slick spots on the dance floor.

PAS DE DEUX

There will be no Pas de Deux classes via Zoom.

POINTE CLASSES

Students en pointe are expected to have a small pointe shoe bag containing:

- Pointe shoes
- Toe tape
- Small scissors
- Band aids
- Safety pins
- Needle and thread
- Toe Spacers/lambs wool, paper towels or handy-wipes (NO OUCH POUCHES)
- Any additional items they may require

Toes need to be **pre-taped before technique classes.** *Please note: minimal or no padding is optimal for a properly fitting pointe shoe; also allowing the student to feel the floor. Dancers en pointe will be expected to change into their pointe shoes quickly (approximately 2 minutes). **At the store, for first time pointe shoe fittings, please wear a leotard and tights.**

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Ballet is the most physically demanding of all dance forms. Pointe work in particular is not only physically demanding but also requires that the student maintain an intense practice schedule and a body weight that is lower than average for most people. The reason for this is that ballet is an esthetic dance form that pays little attention to the ergonomic structure of the average human body. Just as with most athletic activities, not maintaining optimal physical conditioning and body weight can lead to very serious (sometimes crippling) injuries in the worst case, and to overall poor progress at the very least.

In order for TPB to accomplish the goal of teaching “correct ballet,” we require that students desiring to pursue pointe work maintain excellent attendance and proper physical conditioning, and that they be at a body weight that is considered safe by the TPB staff. In some cases, the Artistic Director may ask a dancer to make an appointment with Amy Benton, our Physical Therapist, for a pre-pointe screening. The appointment consists of a 45 minute evaluation with exercises and costs \$120. Follow-up recommendations will be made to the student and Artistic Director before the decision to put the student en pointe is made.

We have constructed the class schedule to give students the correct number of training hours required to excel in ballet. Proper physical conditioning will be maintained by regularly attending all classes scheduled for each level, cross-training, and stretching and doing other exercises at the studio and at home. We realize that maintaining the optimal body weight is more difficult for some than others. Metabolisms vary greatly from person to person as do family eating styles. For some students, it is a matter of limiting their intake of sweets, but for others, it may mean restructuring his or her diet and seeking the advice of a nutritionist. Maintaining a healthful body weight will help ensure correct ballet line, placement, technique, strength and stamina with fewer injuries. Students who are excessively light or heavy will be counseled and could be placed on school probation. On that note, students need to fuel their bodies well for classes.

OPEN BALLET CLASSES

TPB offers a variety of Open Ballet classes for intermediate to advanced students via Zoom. TPB encourages curriculum students Level 3 and up to attend these classes when their curriculum classes are not in session. The Open Ballet Schedule is available on our website.

ACADEMIC COORDINATION

Many schools grant physical education credit or exemption to students in exchange for dance instruction. Students may also arrange to obtain credit for Fine or Performing Arts Education. Please check with your academic advisor if this is of interest to you and contact the Studio Manager/Registrar if you require a letter from TPB.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

As part of their training, TPB students are expected to behave in a responsible and disciplined manner and to adhere to the TPB rules and regulations. TPB reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose conduct or attitude is found to be unsatisfactory.

ATTENDANCE

Students or their families must report **ALL** absences to TPB **PRIOR** to class time in order for the absence to be considered excused. Notification of such absences may be emailed in advance to absence@theportlandballet.org or called or texted in to 503.452.8448 prior to class. Dancers must report absences to the Front Desk Staff, not to the instructor directly. For our records, a reason must accompany any excused absence. If a reason is not provided, you may be contacted to provide a reason for the absence. Please note that TPB does not respond to texts.

Good attendance is critical to consistent progress and advancement in the curriculum programs. TPB supports its students and parents in their efforts to manage their time effectively. Academic achievement goes hand-in-hand with growth as a young dancer as both aspects of development require commitment and discipline. At the same time, TPB does not accept an overload of homework as an excuse for missing a class. Such an absence will be considered UNEXCUSED. Poor TPB attendance to class will jeopardize a student’s placement, promotion, SBI eligibility, or financial aid.

Excused absences may be made up **ONLY** in a lower level curriculum class. The student’s makeup sessions will be recorded in the attendance roll.

Dancers may not join class late or leave class early without the teacher's permission. If a dancer joins class more than **ten** minutes late, the teacher will have the dancer watch the remainder of the class, and take notes. Injuries can result when a student has not had a proper warm up. A late arrival also disrupts the class.

INJURIES

Dance is a strenuous athletic activity. Due to building muscle tissue and stretching tendons, students of ballet will experience minor aches and pains from time to time. Most minor aches and pains are normal and will go away in time.

If a pain is particularly sharp, causes swelling or bruising, please notify your instructor and the moderator immediately to avoid worsening or chronic injury. Once a month, TPB's physical therapist Amy Benton will provide PT screenings at TPB. Dancers in Level 3 and up may ask for a **Physical Therapy Request Form** to arrange an assessment with Dr. Benton. The form must be completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and returned to TPB Administrative Staff. Once seen, the physical therapist may recommend that the injured student seek further care from an outside physical therapist or doctor. The TPB physical therapist, as well as TPB office staff, will be able to recommend practitioners if needed.

All student accidents and injuries in and out of class must be reported to the Front Desk staff and the dancer's teacher immediately. TPB staff will document the student's condition and any medical guidelines for activity. A doctor's note is required to return to class after severe injuries.

Students sustaining an injury, either in or outside of class, should do the following:

- Notify the front desk immediately so that proper documentation can be made.
- Have your doctor fax or email a report on your injury to TPB office in order to facilitate your recovery. Fax - 503.452.1171
- TPB must receive written permission from your doctor allowing you to resume classes.
- Any dancer with an injury requiring limited participation in class or a significant leave of absence from TPB must meet with the Artistic Director via Zoom to set up a recovery plan before returning to classes.

Students who are injured and are therefore unable to participate in all of class must sit and observe the remainder of class. Students who stop participation may not resume class until the next day at the earliest.

WATER & RESTROOM VISITS

TPB recognizes that water intake is a crucial element of athletic activity and we encourage students to make sure they are drinking a sufficient amount. There are to be no restroom visits during barre or center. Your option will be to use the restroom before class or between barre and center if absolutely necessary. Visits to the restroom during class disrupt the class and cause the dancer to miss valuable instruction time. Dancers (and parents of younger dancers) must regulate their water intake so that restroom visits can be scheduled before or after class only.

AT HOME DANCE SPACE

The following recommendations will help dancers create the best at-home environment possible for their virtual ballet classes. Remember, if you don't have enough space to execute combinations or if your instructor cannot see your full body you will limit what you can get out of your ballet classes.

Find a space in your home at least 6' x 8' and make sure there is nothing breakable nearby.

A proper dance floor is very important to help prevent injuries while taking classes from home. Depending on the flooring in your home, you may need to make different adjustments. If you are on cement or a very hard floor, we recommend these steps: First, lay down a carpet pad on the hard surface. Then, lay an OSB board on top, and finally use gaff tape to tape marley to the OSB board. If you will be dancing on thin carpeting, you may be able to place marley directly on carpet. If you will be dancing on wood flooring that has some give, you may be able to place marley directly down as well. Alvas sells marley flooring by the piece and is currently taking orders. **Dancers en pointe must not dance on carpet.**

While chairs or other similar household items can be a barre substitute, to get the most out of your virtual ballet classes we recommend investing in a proper ballet barre.

If you will be using a tablet, TPB highly recommends investing in a tripod so that your tablet can be placed at a proper height for your instructors to see your full body. If your instructor cannot see your full body, they cannot correct you appropriately and you will not progress as quickly in your classes. Before your Zoom class, check the position and angle of your device to ensure it's in the best place possible. Your tablet should be in landscape mode (sideways). When possible, TPB also recommends screen sharing your device to a TV so dancers have a larger image to look at.

Run an internet speed test in the room you plan to use as your at-home studio. You can do this [HERE](#). If speeds are slow, Zoom will freeze and dancers may have difficulty fully participating in class. Wifi extenders can be purchased to help remedy this issue.

Other Tips:

- ❖ Make sure your space has front lighting near the camera so instructors can see you.
- ❖ Consider investing in Bluetooth headphones to hear your instructor and music better.

ZOOM CLASS ETIQUETTE

During the first week of classes, moderators will be giving a brief orientation to review Zoom Class Etiquette.

Dancer's usernames must reflect their first and last name. Generic usernames, such as "iPad 3" or "USER" will not be admitted into class.

Students are required to have their video on for the entire class. Students who have their video off will be removed from the class. They will be marked as unexcused from class and their parents will be notified.

Student must log into class 5-10 minutes before their class begins. Logging in right at the start of class time causes a disruption for the instructor and the rest of the class and prevents class from starting on time.

Talking during class is not permitted. Excessive talking amongst dancers is distracting and disrespectful to teachers and classmates. Excessive talking or misuse of Zoom software is distracting and disrespectful to teachers and classmates. It may result in the teacher asking them to sit and observe class. The chat feature should be used for questions and technical support only. Dancers may not share their screen and may not use virtual backgrounds.

Before class, dancers (and parents of younger dancers) must ensure that the dance space is as free of distractions as possible. Distractions include, but are not limited to, pets, furniture, televisions, etc. When possible, pets should be removed from the dance space. Dancers are not to play with pets during class.

Moderators will open Zoom classes approximately 10 minutes before their start time. Moderators will be present in the first 10 minutes of the Zoom class. If dancers encounter technical issues, please use the chat function to notify the moderator, if they are still present, **and** the instructor.

The Portland Ballet is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. This includes interactions between TPB students via email, phone, text, internet, & social media which all are considered cyberbullying.

Our school works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Any act of discrimination, violence, or bullying will be taken very seriously and dealt with by the administrative staff. Consequences will be dependent on the individual act. We request that all incidents be reported directly to The Portland Ballet's administrative staff.

Any act of cyberbullying will be grounds for review and possible disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, text/instant messaging, and email, including blocking or reporting users as a malicious act.

Each student at The Portland Ballet has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

Conversation before Zoom classes must be appropriate to be heard by all children and adults in the school. Gossip, vulgarity, and explicit language are not appropriate studio conversation. Students unable to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner will be asked to leave the program.

Students should not sit down to “rest” during dance classes. This causes the muscles to cool down and may result in injury by resuming exercise when cold.

SMOKING, DRUGS, AND ALCOHOL

Any student found using drugs, consuming alcohol, or attending classes/rehearsals under the influence of drugs or alcohol will face expulsion. These prohibitions include providing drugs or alcohol to another student.

COMMUNICATION

Email is TPB’s **PRIMARY** method of communication. Please make sure we have the best email on file. You may need to look in your spam folder and add us to your "primary" inbox or your contacts to receive regular communications. If email is not a convenient method of communication for you, please read our **website** carefully and often. These are all important resources for students and parents. Time changes, important notices, and announcements are updated regularly, and the answers to many of your questions can be found there.

TPB has a password protected PARENT PORTAL on our website. Access to the portal will be given with placement information at the beginning of the year. This website will include enrollment information, forms, and schedules. Please check it regularly.

Parents are asked to direct any comments, concerns, or questions to the Studio Manager/Registrar who will then contact the Assistant Artistic Director, Artistic Director, Executive Director, or appropriate teacher.

The Front Desk staff are not allowed to give out student or teacher phone numbers and other personal contact information. We ask that phone numbers be exchanged on an individual basis only.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

If a student is in need of a recommendation letter, **TWO WEEKS NOTICE** is required. Be aware that many students request letters of recommendation at the same time of year. Insufficient notice will result in short letters or none at all.

LIMITED IN-PERSON PRIVATE LESSONS

While TPB’s classes are held via Zoom, TPB will occasionally offer a limited number of in-person private or semi-private lessons for dancers L3+. TPB defines a semi-private lesson as up to three dancers maximum and one instructor. All in-person private or semi-private lessons must adhere to TPB’s studio use protocols. Lesson availability and studio use protocols will be announced via email.

No talking, cameras, camcorders, cell phones, or loud pagers are allowed during classes.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

TPB will not be holding the 2020 Thanksgiving Production due to COVID-19. TPB is in a holding pattern with regards to all other performances including *Current/Classic* and the 2020-21 Academy Showcase.

CAREER TRACK DANCERS

Career Track Weekly Schedule:

Monday - Friday: 12:30-2:30pm class and evening curriculum classes based on level placement.

If you require audition support, please contact registration@theporltandballet.org.

All Career Track dancers agree to

- follow guidelines in TPB Handbook
- not participate in any outside training or performances without permission from Artistic Director
- meet with the Assistant Artistic Director or Artistic Director for personal evaluation meetings
- adhere to the dress code requirements for leotards, tights, footwear, and hair
- set an example for other students at TPB
- take pointe during center of all Career Track classes unless excused for injury prevention reasons or directed by the instructor
- be present at all scheduled classes
- schedule medical/dental appointments **outside** Career Track schedule

Career Track dancers preparing to audition for companies and/or conservatory programs will receive video audition support as part of the Career Track program. CT dancers should communicate their video needs directly to the Studio Manager/Registrar and Artistic Director.