

BOULDERBALLET

COMPANY & SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Boulder Ballet School!

Thank you for choosing to study with us. The mission of our school is to train students who wish to pursue dance as a career, as well as those who dance for fun. How far a student progresses in our program is the responsibility of the student and will be affected by many factors including natural talent, body type, discipline, intelligence, focus, and work ethic.

Although many of our students will not progress to professional careers in dance, we take the care and nurturing of our students seriously and will do our very best to provide an excellent and enjoyable dance experience for all. It is our firm belief that ballet training provides valuable life lessons and abilities that extend well beyond the art of ballet.

We have the highest standards of professionalism for our instructional staff and expect our students to behave in a manner befitting a professional-track ballet school. To fulfill these expectations, we ask that you read and abide by the guidelines presented in this handbook.

Sincerely,

Ana Claire
School Director

Boulder Ballet Company & School
The Dairy Center for the Arts
2590 Walnut Street, Suite 10, Boulder, CO 80302
Tel: 303.443.0028
E-mail: info@boulderballet.org
Website: www.boulderballet.org

1. Dress Code

Creative Movement, Pre Ballet and Boyz Dance students may wear comfortable clothing they can move in. Ballet slippers are strongly recommended as they work best on our studio floors.

Levels 1 – 7

Dancers not dressed appropriately for class will be given one warning. Subsequent incidences will result in being asked to sit out.

Girls

- ~ Pink tights **under** a black leotard (Level 7 dancers may wear a solid colored leotard of their choice).
- ~ Pink **leather** ballet slippers (canvas shoes do not exercise the feet as well). Split sole shoes are permitted for Levels 5 and above.
- ~ Warm-ups allowed, but must be taken off after pliés. No t-shirts.
- ~ No skirts, except in pointe classes with teacher permission.
- ~ No dangly jewelry.
- ~ Hair must be in a bun if at all possible; bangs must be pulled off the face.

Boys Ballet

- ~ Black tights and a plain white t-shirt, tucked in.
- ~ Either black or white **leather** ballet slippers (canvas shoes do not exercise the feet as well).
- ~ Boys aged 13 and up should wear a dance belt instead of underwear (available at Boulder Body Wear).
- ~ Warm-ups allowed, but must be taken off after pliés.
- ~ Shorts allowed - must come down to mid thigh.

Please label all shoes and dancewear to facilitate recovery of lost items!

2. Respect the Studios, Hallways and Lobbies

Boulder Ballet shares the Dairy building with other arts organizations. Please be respectful of others and allow easy passage through hallways

for everyone. **While waiting for your class, please use the Dairy main lobby as a lounge rather than sitting in the hallways.** You may come into the hallway outside of your studio 10-minutes prior to the start of class. **When it is time for your class, please bring your bags and personal items with you into the studio rather than leaving them in the hallways.** Clean up after yourselves and properly dispose of water bottles, food containers, wrappers, band-aids, tape, etc. Food and drinks other than water are not permitted in any of the studios and must be consumed in the lobby, office or hallways.

3. Respect the Teacher

Arrive at class ready to dance. That means having your toes taped as necessary for pointe class, having your hair ready and being warmed up. All eyes and attention must be on the teacher when s/he is speaking. Do not talk during class - it is disrespectful to the teacher and your classmates. **Ask permission to leave the classroom.**

4. Respect the Other Students

Observe your classmates as they dance - much can be learned by observing fellow students. Compliment and encourage your classmates when they do well. Ballet is difficult, and support among peers is important. Avoid gossip and negative comments that could erode our dance community. No put downs, harassment, or foul language will be tolerated; if it occurs, disciplinary action will be taken.

5. Respect Yourself

Arrive on time and ready to focus on ballet. Come to class consistently. Haphazard attendance results in haphazard progress and you will fall behind your classmates. Simply being at class isn't adequate – substantial improvement requires working in class to your full potential. **It is your responsibility to attend class, work hard, listen carefully, and actively incorporate corrections in order to improve.**

6. Corrections

When a teacher corrects you, it is an opportunity for you to improve and should not be taken as personal criticism. Listen carefully to all general comments from the teacher to the class as well as comments directed specifically to you. Ballet is a demanding (and rewarding!) art, and it is the teacher's job to push you to new limits. **This may include gentle physical contact as the most effective way to place a student in the correct position.** If you do not want to be pushed so hard, tell your teacher and she/he will respect your wishes.

7. Evaluations

Levels 1 through 7 will receive written evaluations at the end of each semester reviewing what you've accomplished and identifying the specific areas in which you need to improve. If you have questions about the evaluation, please talk with your teacher. They are there to help you improve.

8. Nutrition

Your body is your tool. Treat it well. Ballet is an athletic art and dancers must be in excellent physical condition. Crash dieting may lead to eating disorders and is extremely dangerous because it will undermine the dancer's overall health. Adequate nutrition, hydration and rest are crucial. Take the time to learn how to properly fuel your body. Boulder Ballet recommends the book *Diet for Dancers: A Complete Guide to Nutrition and Weight Control* by Robin D. Chmelar and Sally Sevey Fitt. This book supports a realistic approach to weight control and a sustainable nutritional plan. Ascertain your optimal shape and weight, which will be unique, and strive to maintain it in a healthy way.

9. Injuries & Illness

If you are injured, you can still learn by watching class and taking notes. During the first 48-hours following injury, ice the area for

20-minute intervals up to four times per day. Then alternate between 20 minutes of ice and 30 minutes of heat up to four times per day. Do not allow direct contact between ice and skin. It is also beneficial to elevate the injured area whenever possible to reduce swelling. During recovery, it is usually beneficial to strengthen the injured area by doing special exercises recommended by your teacher. Consult a doctor and/or physical therapist if the injury persists.

If you are out sick, please call the office at 303.443.0028, ext. 201. Classes may be made up during the current semester in the same or a lower level class by informing the teacher why you are there.

10. Hints to Make Ballet Class More Enjoyable

- ~ Bring a water bottle to class.
- ~ Go to the bathroom before class.
- ~ Keep your dance journal up to date (corrections, goals, aspirations, accomplishments etc.).
- ~ Make sure you have the proper shoes and they are in working order.
- ~ Tape your toes before pointe class, since taking class time to fix and re-fix shoes slows your progress.

11. Know the Score

To dance at your highest level, we recommend that dancers go to performances, watch videos, read books. Explore the field you want to participate in; knowledge is power.

12. Auditioning for Ballets

Paying tuition and attending classes doesn't insure being cast in an auditioned ballet. **Casting decisions are made solely by the directors of each production and will not be discussed.** Casting is based on the individual traits of a dancer, not their class level or age. Not all students in a particular level or age category may be cast in similar roles, or even cast at all. Remember that your attitude in class and in rehearsal does affect future casting decisions.

13. Lost and Found

There are blue plastic boxes in studios 1 and 2 for lost and found items. Lost items will regularly be donated to Goodwill. *We can only guarantee that items will be held for five days after they are placed in a lost and found box. Labeling your shoes and clothing will greatly increase the chance of items being returned.*

Valuable items will generally be held in the Boulder Ballet office. Call or visit during office hours to retrieve valuable items.

Items left outside of our studios or in the Dairy Performance Space may be placed in the Dairy lost and found. Talk to a Dairy staff person at the box office window during business hours to search the Dairy lost and found.

14. Parent Observation

Generally we require that parents remain outside of the studio during class to avoid distractions and enable the teacher to maintain focus and discipline. There are instances with small children starting classes in which a parent may be present in the studio at first to reassure a student, but as soon as possible should leave the studio to enable class focus.

The first semester will conclude with a Parent Observation Week during which parents are invited to observe classes and ask questions.

15. Communication

We encourage students and parents to communicate any concerns or questions through the following avenues:

- ~ Talk to your teacher.
- ~ Contact the school director, Ana Claire - ana@boulderballet.org.
- ~ E-mail suggestions or general questions to info@boulderballet.org.

16. Conferences

Should we feel that further discussion is required after initial communication, we may schedule a conference with the student, parent(s), and the school director. Conferences are generally scheduled for Friday afternoons, but other arrangements can be made if necessary. Conference availability is limited.

17. Disruptive Behavior

It is possible for one disruptive student to ruin an entire class or rehearsal. When a teacher has to spend significant time and energy on disciplining one student, the experience of every student is diminished. Our policy is a three-step process:

1. The teacher warns the disruptive student and attempts to improve the situation in the studio.
2. After two warnings/attempts to improve the situation, the teacher or school director will talk with the parent(s) to seek a solution.
3. If the above steps fail the student may be asked to postpone training until their behavior has matured. There will be no refund of tuition in this circumstance.

18. News, Updates and Schedules

Please check for news and updates by visiting our website - www.boulderballet.org. There are news pages for both school and company. Newsletters will be sent regularly via e-mail.

Rehearsal schedules can be accessed on our website boulderballet.org on the Student Information page.

The End of Year Showcase (recital) schedule and information can also be found on the above listed web page in the spring.

SUPPORT BOULDER BALLET

Boulder Ballet Company and School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As with all such ballet organizations, we subsist on a combination of tuition, ticket sales, grants, donations, in-kind support, and volunteers.

Pas de Deux Membership Program

Pas de Deux membership is an exciting way to experience our professional company behind the scenes while supporting our performances and outreach throughout Colorado.

Membership begins at \$50. Depending on the level of support, members receive a number of benefits: our e-newsletter with information about upcoming events and offers; recognition in our concert programs; invitations to attend rehearsals; and receptions with the dancers, choreographers and artistic directors. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Please call or visit our website for details about our membership program.

Corporate Sponsorships

If you are connected with a company that may be interested in sponsoring Boulder Ballet either through a tax-deductible contribution or in-kind support we can provide information on this process and the benefits to the sponsor.

Volunteers

Boulder Ballet needs volunteers in a variety of areas including costume construction, ushering, ticket sales, poster distribution, backstage management and more. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact info@boulderballet.org or call 303.443.0028, ext. 201.



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