

Dance Class Etiquette - The 10 Golden Rules

By simply following these 'ten golden rules', everyone will have a great time and get the maximum benefit from their dance class or workshop.

1. Show respect for your teacher. In Eastern disciplines such as martial arts and yoga, the teacher is revered, worshipped and given great loyalty and respect.
2. Be on time. There is no excuse for being late. It disrupts other students and the teacher when someone arrives ten minutes late. How would you feel if your teacher arrived ten or fifteen minutes late? Find out what time the doors open and try to be in class at least 5 minutes early. This will give you time to change into your tights, use the bathroom and get a drink of water! If you are late, and we are only human so occasionally happen, quietly enter the room and position yourself on the floor.
3. Be considerate of students around you. People learn at different rates and in different ways. Be patient with others who may not grasp the movement as quickly as you do. Spend the extra time the teacher is taking with the 'slower' student, to refine the movement you have just learned. The general rule for most workshops is you arrive and position yourself on the dance floor. Do not force someone out of their spot because you want to be in the front row and arrived too late. Also keep in mind that many teachers will rotate students so that everyone has a fair opportunity to learn.
4. Wear suitable attire. Avoid wearing too much jewelry, coins or costume accessories to dance class. You will not be able to stretch properly. It is important to be comfortable and to be able to achieve a broad range of motion.
5. Keep talking and giggling to a minimum. This is probably my most flexible rule. Part of the fun of dance class is the giggling and laughing which often occurs. I tend to encourage laughter during my weekly classes. After all, feeling good is one of the benefits of the dance. However, when I attend a workshop, I try to keep talking and giggling in check. Avoid talking to other students during class. Keep your attention focused on the workshop teacher.
6. Avoid being a know it all. Do not openly challenge a teacher's expertise! Resist the urge to add your 2 cents every time you think you know the answer. The teacher's job is to teach -- it's not your job! Also, you may think your way of explaining a move works, when

in reality you may be explaining a different move or worse yet teaching bad habits. If you feel so compelled to help someone, do it some other time -- not during class or workshop time.

7. Take notes when sitting out of active participation. If for some reason, you absolutely can not continue the class -- you are too tired, too hungry, cramps, etc. -- by no means, leave. When students walk out the door, it shows a lack of respect for the teacher. Other students wonder where the dancer has gone. Sit in the corner and take notes. Do not converse with other students or start shopping. Do your shopping at the appropriate time. If you are able to return to class, do so quietly and take a spot in the back of the room.

8. Let the teacher teach. If you are a teacher, under no circumstances should you voice an opinion in another teacher's class, unless you are asked to do so. I know it is hard to resist helping the floundering girl next to you, but it is not your place. Let the teacher do the teaching. If the teacher asks for your opinion or expertise, concisely give it and then give your complete attention back to her! Sometimes you may feel you could explain the movement better than the teacher or in a different way. Go back and review Rule #6 above!

9. Keep an open mind and please do not complain. Be open to new ideas and possibilities. Try to focus on how your new teacher can expand your dance repertoire. Do not compare her to other teachers. Do not complain about a movement being too difficult. Instead, ask thoughtful questions so that you can understand the difficult movement. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Chances are other students are wondering the same thing.

10. Watch the teacher's performance or demonstration. If the teacher is kind enough to perform or demonstrate for the class, watch in silence.

By giving teacher's the respect they deserve - you get something back - your money's worth