

Let us Dance!

Dancers enjoy one of life's most satisfying gifts. Dancing is a fun, uplifting, experience that is great exercise for your mind and body. Anyone can learn to dance, at almost any age. Dancing relieves stress, improves balance, builds confidence, is easy to stick with, and is a great way to meet new friends.

Why don't more people dance? Well, when the time might be right to try it, most people are too shy or afraid to try learning to dance. Certainly, learning to dance can be embarrassing because we humans are rarely born with much natural dance ability. Fortunately for us, other dancers and dance instructors weren't born with it either, and they are generally eager to help us dance - if we're willing.

If you want to get into dancing, or want to improve... here is a list of things that could help:

1. Take dance classes - to get the feel of dance and learn the RIGHT way to dance. If you teach yourself you will probably not get it right and you will likely form some hard to get rid of bad habits. Besides, dance classes are usually fun, friendly, social activities.

2. Practice - all the time, everyday if you can, with or without mirrors. Videotape yourself, if possible, so you can see if what you're doing looks good or not to you (but also seek other opinions). Getting out and dancing often is also a great way to practice and retain what you already know. After all, why learn to dance if you aren't going to go out dancing?

3. Listen to music - concentrate on the beats, rhythm, breaks and lyrics to help you move and flow with the music instead of always doing memorized patterns. Listen to, follow, enjoy the music when you dance. You'll love it!

4. Freestyle dance - as much as you can. Listen to the music and dance to it however you choose to interpret it. You can do this alone in the privacy of you home. Close your eyes and let your creativity take over! Exaggerate your movements - in synch with your music.

5. Specialize first - Concentrate on one or two styles of dance at a time. When you get better at them, you can more easily add other styles, while continuing to improve your skills in the first dance styles.

For **beyond beginner** dancers:

6. Be versatile - if you've been dancing for a while, and have trained in a few styles, versatility can lead to a higher level of capability.

7. Socialize with other dancers - easier said than done, but dance classes, clubs and such are a great way to do this. Once you start hanging around other dancers their passion and enthusiasm will keep motivating you to stick with it. If you can, dance with a variety of partners.

8. Don't be afraid to dance - at parties and clubs; who cares if people are watching you. Focus on having a good time and maybe some others will join in. Dancing is fun!

9. Join a dance club - the best way to improve and stay motivated. Make sure you are friendly to everyone and they will likely return the favor. Ask others to dance. And yes, it's entirely acceptable in today's dance world for ladies to ask men to dance. So if you're sitting, it's your fault!

10. Watch dance videos - it's a great way to keep motivated. Youtube is loaded with dance lessons, exhibitions, competitions, etc. But, there are also a lot of bad examples that you'll want to avoid

watching! Basic searches will get you started. You'll be able to tell when you've found good quality videos that are worth watching. In addition, dance clubs often have video libraries that members can borrow from.

In summary, don't worry, every dancer had to start at the beginning. Learning to dance wasn't a cake walk for anyone. But with dance lessons, patience, determination and practice you'll be dancing in no time. You are the only thing that's holding you back from dancing and enjoying one of life's most satisfying gifts.