

Frequently Asked Questions Dance Series Master Classes

What is a Master Class?

A Master Class is an opportunity for students who have achieved a certain level of technique and skills to work with a “master” for a one-time class. A Master Class gives serious students a chance to learn from another professional besides their regular instructor.

How do I decide which level of class to sign up for?

Des Moines Performing Arts provides two criteria to help you select the most appropriate class: level of training/experience and age recommendations.

If you identify yourself as an intermediate or advanced dancer, you should sign up for the student-level class. These classes are recommended for serious dancers ages twelve and above and are often attended by dancers ranging from grade school to adulthood.

If you are a professional dancer or will very soon be entering a professional dance career and are at least sixteen years old, you may sign up for the professional/pre-professional class.

Is there a different level of quality of experience between the two classes?

No. Both levels of classes are taught by visiting “masters.” Each class is tailored to the level of dancer in the room. This includes not only the skills covered but the level of conversation and theory covered. In some cases, the student-level class may be more intense while the professional-level class may be more theory-based.

My child is under the age of 16. Can I sign him or her up for the professional/pre-professional level class?

Yes, but we strongly urge you to take into account the following considerations. These classes are intended for dancers who have danced professionally or dancers who are on the cusp of entering a professional dance career. Serious university students and a handful of upper high school students are at this point in their careers; very few students below that age qualify.

Secondly, your child may be one of the most advanced dancers in his or her studio and have full intentions of becoming a professional dancer. That does not mean, however, that they are pre-professional at this point in time. (In these circumstances, pre-professional means that a dancer is on the verge of entering a professional dance career.) Remember, the student-level class is defined as an opportunity for serious dancers with advanced skill.

If you still feel that your child should qualify for the professional/pre-professional-level class, we would be happy to discuss the matter with you. We will likely ask you to submit a letter of recommendation from your child’s dance instructor that outlines why he or she feels your dancer is ready for this level of class. To discuss, please contact Sarah at 515-246-2358.

What should I wear?

You should wear attire in which you feel comfortable moving and that fits the style of the company whose class you are taking. If Des Moines Performing Arts receives specific information about dress recommendations, we will email that information to all class registrants with as much advanced notice as possible.

Can parents observe?

In most cases, parents are not allowed to observe the class. We want the dancers to be able to focus solely on the experience and being open to what the “master” instructor is asking of them without the distraction of knowing that loved ones are watching them.

Can instructors observe?

Yes, instructors may observe the master classes for their own continuing professional development. You will be asked to pay the class registration fee. To arrange, please contact Sarah at 515-246-2358.