

# Dare to Dance!

When you hear music playing, do you long to get up and dance, but stick to clapping along because you think you have two left feet? Well, it's time to think again, because most basic dance steps are surprisingly easy to learn. What's more, with so many different dance styles out there, there's certain to be one that's right for you.

## Why dance?

People learn to dance for many different reasons, but whether you're a complete beginner or a budding professional, dance classes can be very rewarding. For some, they're simply great fun. Others take dance lessons so that they can learn spectacular skills to show off to all their friends.

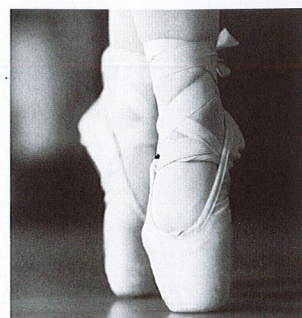
Another benefit of dancing — and one that people often overlook — is that it can be a great way to get fit. It gets the heart pumping and helps to build muscle. It can also help you improve your flexibility, meaning you'll be touching your toes in no time.

## Which style of dance is right for me?

Before you choose a dance style, there are a few things to consider, including the sort of music you enjoy and whether you'd prefer to dance with a partner or individually. However, the most important thing is to start your dancing journey with an open mind — don't give up if the first style you try isn't the perfect fit.

### Ballet

When you think of ballet, you might imagine pink leotards and tutus, but many ballet dancers train as hard as athletes. They perform impressive leaps and high-flying lifts, while making it all look completely effortless. Ballet can also really help you pick up other forms of dance, so it's a great place for beginners to start.



## Hip-hop

Hip-hop dancing has become hugely popular, partly because it is often performed in music videos. Breakdancing is a form of hip-hop which often involves doing moves close to the ground, such as headspins (not to be tried at home!). 'Locking' is another form of hip-hop, where the dancer freezes in position between moves. Some hip-hop dancers are self-taught, but classes are also available.



## Ballroom and Latin

Ballroom and Latin dancing were once seen as old-fashioned. However, thanks to celebrity dance competitions on television, classes for these dance types are now springing up all over the place. These types of dance involve performing a series of steps with a partner, some in hold and some apart. You might have heard of the waltz and the quickstep, or classic Latin styles like samba and salsa, but there are also many more styles to try.



## Ali's story: Tap Dancing



"I always thought I was too clumsy to be a dancer, but then my best friend dragged me along to a tap class. Rhythm is really important for tap dancing, and because I play the drums I already had a good sense of rhythm. I enjoy making all the different sounds on the floor with my tap shoes — it feels a bit like playing the drums.

"I'm looking forward to giving my first performance soon, although I'm a bit nervous!"

Once you've found the dance style that's right for you, learning to dance is sure to be challenging, interesting and, above all, enjoyable. Your feet won't stop moving once you've caught the dancing bug!