

eXit SPACE

SCHOOL OF DANCE

Basic Tap Course Syllabus Summer Series – 2022

Class Meetings: *Mondays 5:30-6:30pm June 20 – August 15*
theNEST Studio B – 6600 1st Ave NE Seattle, WA 98115

Instructor Details: *Kara Beadle (they/them), ADP & YDP Faculty*
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Course Description

Tap is an American dance form that originated through the communication of enslaved Africans and Irish indentured servants, blending the percussive dances of their cultures. Enslaved Africans learned to embed traditional African rhythms with European instrumentation and court dance structures, ultimately using clapping, patting, and percussive footwork as rhythmic substitutes for drums on plantations. Later, through experimentation of innovative rhythms, acrobatic feats, and personal style alongside the indentured Irish, Black Americans developed the foundations of what we know as tap dance today, epitomized by the works of Gregory Hines, Savion Glover, Chloe Arnold, and Michelle Dorance.

Against the backdrop of a historical framework and as new students to tap dance at eXit SPACE, you will be guided through the structure of a dance class and the etiquette required from all dancers while in a studio. Warm-up exercises designed to re-pattern movement habits, build balance and strength, and introduce different rhythmic patterns will prepare the student to move more fully, while movement combinations center and across the floor will allow for an in-depth study on specific tap steps and their expressed rhythms and sounds while advancing coordination, musicality, and self-expression. Throughout class, students will be encouraged to use their whole body to feel the sounds their feet are making and find their own groove within the given steps.

Course objectives

(Adapted from St. Olaf College dance dept. syllabus)

At the end of the session, dancers should have increased understanding of the following concepts:

1. **Body Awareness:** Explore elements of your unique body, its function and ability.
2. **Coordination:** The ability to efficiently link movement patterning via body/brain connection, shift weight between feet, and effectively balance while performing steps.
3. **Movement/Sound Clarity:** The ability to consistently demonstrate accurate execution of intended movements and sounds with energy, shape, and rhythm.
4. **Conditioning:** Gaining balance, strength, and endurance.
5. **Memory & Recall:** Increased ability to learn and perform movement combinations in a limited timeframe.
6. **Artistry:** The ability to integrate technical skills with intuition, personal presence, and musicality.
7. **Tap Dance Vocabulary:** Establish a functional language for tap dance description as well as a basic understanding of – but not limited to – the following:
 1. One sound steps: step, touch, stomp, stamp, knock, heel dig, toe tap, brush, scuff, spank
 2. Two sound steps: shuffle, flap,
 3. Three sound steps: crawl
 4. Four sound steps: cramproll, paradiddle
 5. How these steps combine and build on each other

2. **Basic Rhythmic Patterning:** The ability to hear changes in rhythmic patterns such as quarter notes, eighth notes, triplets, and sixteenth notes.
1. **Rhythmic Structuring:** String movement phrases together on the spot using rhythmic patterns and movement vocabulary.
2. **Historical & Cultural Context:** A general understanding of the roots and pioneers of tap dance as well as the movement and rhythmic structures of the traditional dance: The Shim Sham.
3. **Safety:** The ability to execute movement functionally, anatomically aligned, and with spatial awareness so as to reduce the risk for injury.
4. **Have FUN:** This class is for you! Ask questions, offer feedback, and know that above all else, the goal is for you to enjoy yourself.

Class Etiquette

Dance classes across the board rely on a fundamental set of etiquette expectations in order to maximize student experience, safety, and class progression:

1. **Be prepared:** Please wear tap shoes and comfortable clothing you can easily move in similar to workout wear or yoga attire (no jeans, please). Tap shoes can be purchased at Center Stage in the University District or online at DiscountDance.com. We ask that dancers tie their hair back and bring a water bottle to class each week.
2. **Arrive on time:** Please arrive several minutes before the start of class and avoid entering late. This is for your own safety and to minimize distractions for students who do arrive on time.
3. **Take care of our floor:** There are no street shoes allowed on the dance floor. Please check your tap shoes before class to make sure you don't have loose screws.
4. **No food:** Gum, candy, and food are not allowed in the studio. Dancers chewing gum will be asked to spit it out.
5. **Get consent:** Please get consent before filming, photographing, or making physical contact with another dancer. If you would like a part of class on video in order to practice, please ask and we will arrange to record it after class with those willing/interested in participating. Please do not share any videos on social media unless you have received explicit consent from everyone filmed.

Injury, Disability, and Physical Integration

eXit SPACE believes that dance is for everybody and every body; your teacher is committed to creating a safe space for students of all physical abilities to explore the joy of movement through tap dance. If you require modifications or physical transpositions due to injury, disability, or comfort that are not immediately offered, please don't be afraid to ask! Most of the time, a series of options will be provided for any given exercise. For some of the people joining us in class, please also bear in mind that the most accessible space is a **scent free** space. Please help us create an equitable environment by arriving smelling like only yourself.

Absences & Makeups

Dancers are permitted a maximum of two makeup classes per session to be used within the current session or the session to follow. Makeups are permitted in any basic class or any level-appropriate one-hour drop-in class at eXit SPACE or theNEST. Makeups do not have to be scheduled in advance, but please check in with office staff prior to class so they know you're attending as a Basic makeup.

Recommended Reading

- *Tap Dance Dictionary* by Mark Knowles
- *Tap Dancing America: A Cultural History* by Constance Valis Hill
- *What The Eye Hears: A History of Tap Dancing* by Brian Seibert

Welcome to eXit SPACE!