



Bellydance with Nicola

Dance Class Protocols & Etiquette

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When attending lessons, DO:

- practice often (at least 3 times per week) if you think you want to perform and you want to become competent and proficient (which is not the same as being good, or being artful, or being professional grade)
- take your own notes in class. Hand-outs are a luxury and are very unusual in dance classes. Don't expect them.
- expect to get out what you put in--money, time, effort, discipline. However, you could work your heart out for years and years, and you still might not have what it takes. Go to class because you love it, not because you think you'll tour with "The Superstars".
- do your own research from a variety of sources--internet sites, talking to other teachers and performers other than the one you are in class with, buying and reading books, subscribing to newsletters - attend workshops at least once a year, preferably in another city, so you get a sense of the wider world of the dance and learn what upper level content is
- drink lots of water
- avoid chewing gum or sucking candies--it's distracting and dangerous
- attend a variety of shows, locally and elsewhere
- invest in regular private lessons
- ask direct questions regarding feedback on your dancing
- expect your teacher to be honest about her abilities, to identify her

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style, to describe her path to training, to be continually pursuing professional development, to participate regularly in hosting and dancing in events such as stage shows and workshops, to refer you to people and resources

- spend time and money on resources--music, video, magazines, and so on--you need to have your own library
- avoid asking to borrow materials from your teacher, unless you have a close relationship. Lucky you if she is generous and offers them for you to borrow. DO NOT PRESUME TO PIRATE HER MATERIALS SIMPLY BECAUSE SHE HAS AGREED TO LEND THEM. You are including her in an illegal act that she should not and probably has not consented to. Be responsible and considerate by supporting other artists.
- keep quiet and listen while your teacher is instructing
- be polite in your regular class and when dropping in or trying a new instructor
- when switching instructors, talk to the new one to find out which level you should be in. Levels are inconsistent. It is polite to drop down a level with a new teacher.
- get second opinions from other teachers if you are not convinced your teacher is right
- demonstrate patience with your teacher, other students, and with yourself--it's not her job to turn you into Shakira, nor will everyone in your class be the same as you in learning style or needs

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- be on time and attend regularly
- avoid smoking or intoxicants before class or recitals
- avoid wearing lots of fragrance
- realize that you can't and won't get a lot of individual attention in a group class (that is the purpose of a private lesson)
- focus on your long-term learning
- attend classes in studios--Winnipeg is one of the only cities where most classes are subsidized, large, and city-run; in many places, qualified teachers will only teach out of studios. But, not every studio class is taught by a really qualified, experienced instructor. Anyone can rent a studio and run a class.

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