



## Introduction to Pointe Work

*Dancing en pointe is an exciting time for a young ballerina. Dancing en pointe also requires a dancer to have strong technique, alignment, and muscular strength. As you begin your journey it's important to set expectation and understand the costs and commitment.*



### Requirements for Demi/Pre-Pointe work:

- Dancing en pointe is for experienced dancers. A dancer should not expect to go en pointe in the first few years of training. Most often, a dancer needs to be training consistently for more than 5 years, multiple days a week.
- Even trained, experienced dancers should not expect to go en pointe until they are about 12 or 13 years old.
- No dancer will be considered for pointe work if they are not in the En Avant program (*\*student MUST be taking at least 2 ballet technique classes/week*).
- Once a dancer has been approved to go en Full pointe, they will be required to take an additional ballet class specifically for pointe. This class is usually 30-45 minutes in addition to a full ballet technique class.
- As a dancer gets more advanced and begins dancing en pointe in center, 3 ballet technique classes will be required weekly in addition to the class(es) designated specifically for pointe.
- Pointe work is demanding. Dancers must show consistency and commitment.
- Student must display proper strength, stability, and particular control of specific movement transitions including releve with proper metatarsal articulation. Student must have proper alignment and distribution of weight without pronation or supination.
- The Dance Connection ballet staff has the final word regarding approval.

Committing to your child dancing on pointe will be a financial investment in their future as a dancer, more-so from when they were in simple flat shoes. Parents should take note and prepare for this financial commitment.

## Demi-Pointe Work

### **What to expect when starting Demi-pointe work:**

*A demi-pointe shoe is a shankless shoe is to be used as a transition from slippers to pointe shoes. It helps develop the muscles needed for later pointe work but should NEVER be used to go en-pointe.*

- Dancers around age 11 may begin to wear Demi-pointe shoes if approved by their ballet teacher. We reserve the right to remove any student from demi-pointe shoes for any amount of time if we see potentially harmful issues begin to occur. Supplementary exercises may be given to do at home until the problems are corrected.
- Students should never attempt to go on full pointe in demi-pointes as injury is at risk! They may walk in them at home to break them in but never dance or go up on the box as these shoes do not have a support system in them!

- Student must display proper strength and control of legs, feet, core, back and port de bras as well as of turnout and maintaining it in movement, releve & roll through, and metatarsal articulation.
- Demi- pointe shoes can be ordered online as the student will not require a fitting as in a true pointe shoe. However, parents must have a meeting before wearing the shoes to discuss procedures, etiquette, and check the fit.

### **Demi-Pointe Brands:**

- **Bloch**
  - o Tensus (tapered/medium vamp) - *\*most popular*
- **Capezio**
  - o T Point (tapered/low vamp)
  - o Point B (wider/low vamp)
- **Grishko/Nikolay**
  - o Exam (2007 based: tapered/higher vamp)
  - o Elite (wide/medium vamp)
- **Freed**
  - o Classic Demi (medium taper/ medium vamp)



*\*Miss Lauren can help you in picking out what is best after foot exam!*

*\*Students May wear a Very thin toe pad but it is not necessary. Students will likely only need toe tape unless the foot is very boney or the skin is very thin.*

### **Essentials for Demi-Point Class** (*\*please be aware of cost of SHOES & SUPPLIES*)

- Demi pointe shoes (*\*approved by Miss Lauren*)
- Ribbon and elastic to crisscross
- Toe tape
- Pointe shoe sewing kit & thimble
- Lighter or candle to melt edges of ribbon to prevent fray (*\*parental supervision required!*)
- Aerated bag
- Toenail clippers
- Medium strength Thera-band
- Convertible pink tights (*\*or flesh tone to match*)
- Thin toe pad (*\*optional*)

*\*Students must sew their own shoes! Your ribbons and elastics are sewn to your foot shape and preference. If you are old enough to wear pointe shoes, you are old enough to sew them yourself!*

## First pair of “real” Pointe shoes

### **What to expect when starting Pointe work:** *(on a full shank/ “Real” pointe shoe)*

- When a student is ready to go on full pointe our pointework staff will coordinate with you for an appointment at a reputable pointe shoe fitter. A teacher will accompany you. These fittings can take up to 2 hours.
- Your first pair of pointe shoes must be approved by your teacher. They must fit in a very specific way. “Room to grow” is not an option with pointe shoes.
- Students must take at least 2 ballet classes to start en pointe at the barre. We also recommend one supplementary class (this can be a third Ballet class, a Jazz class or even Hip-Hop).
- The first few classes (2-3 classes) after the pointe shoes are purchased will be parent/students meeting, sewing point shoes and how to break the shoes in. Students should not expect to go up en pointe immediately after the shoes are purchased.
- Student who are new to pointework should Never go up on pointe unless under the supervision of a teacher (no dancing in them at home until you get permission!)
- Pointe classes typically last 30-45 minutes. These are usually scheduled on the same day as ballet technique classes.
- When a dancer first gets her pointe shoes, she should expect to stay at the barre for at least a year.
- Once a dancer starts dancing “center” (away from the barre) she will be required to take 3 technique classes. This is in addition to the 1-2 pointe classes she will be taking.

### **Essentials for pointework:** parents should plan for of the cost of pointe shoes when their child starts pointework.

- Pointe shoes
- Ribbons and elastic to crisscross
- Toe pads
- Pointe shoe Sewing kit & thimble
- Medium strength thera-band
- Aerated bag
- Toe nail clippers
- Lighter or candle to melt edges of ribbon to prevent fray (*parental supervision recommended*)
- Convertible pink tights (\*or flesh tone to match)
- Other items such as toe spacers, toe tape, moleskin, lambs wool, jet glue, tennis ball, ankle brace, placement belt, rosin, and marbles may be required as per the child’s individual needs.



### **The following is a list of requirements for passing up to Pointe:**

- Physical Requirements in and out of pointe shoes
- Maintain turnout while dancing
- Maintain proper alignment in positions and while moving
- Show awareness of proper ankle and foot alignment, avoiding pronation or supination

- including weight over triangle of the foot en pointe
- Properly roll through the foot and use plie in takeoff and landing of jumps/Control of releve and eleve
- Properly use plie alignment while dancing
- Proper core, back, and arm strength
- Can Pique with a straight leg
- Can perform repeated Releve in the center without tiring & while maintaining alignment
- Can balance on one foot with the body correctly positioned over the supporting leg
- Maintain proper alignment in pirouettes, particularly even hips
- Proper plantar flexion (pointing of the foot with extended toe)
- Foot strength test

### **Pointe work is a commitment.**

Advancing to pointe work is a serious step and should be treated as such by students, teachers, and parents. Pointe work builds upon ballet technique and every struggle, problem, weakness, and deficiency is amplified with this new layer of difficulty. With this in mind, please remember the following:

- Pointe work is an evolution and extension of effective ballet training. It is NOT the end result of a particular number of years in ballet class, being a certain age, or even of an intense desire to dance en pointe.
- Pointe work is not a right.
- Pointe is not for everyone.
- Approval for pointework is based on both your child's discipline and their physiology. While hard work and discipline can overcome many physiological disadvantages, there are some that might be impossible to overcome.
- Dancing en pointe is only a requirement for ballet dancers who are pre-professionals or professional.
- Choosing not to dance en pointe (because you are not planning to be a professional ballet dancer) does not make you less of a dancer. It's actually a very mature decision!
- Pointe work can be a positive experience for those ready to devote themselves to quality ballet training.



**Thank you for your time, trust, and commitment. Do not hesitate to reach out with questions.**

Sincerely,

**The Dance Connection Faculty**

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