



A YEARLY PLANNER
FOR DANCE TEACHERS.

A Dance Teacher's Way





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Designed By: Abdenasser Nejraoui

This book belongs to:

Name :

E-mail :

Class :

Studio :



Introduction



When I was a child, I would teach dance to my imaginary dance class. I would use the same corrections my teachers mentioned in class. When I started my teaching career, I wasn't nervous. I knew exactly what needed to be said and how to act....or so I thought.

If you're a dance teacher, you know how unpredictable class can become. It's like having a child, but you have 15 children with different personalities and learning styles. No matter what, I was always prepared for class. I always felt comfort in knowing I was prepared for anything.

For ten years I taught throughout Central and Northern Virginia. My vast experience ranged from multiple dance schools, to workshops, and outreach programs. I had to adapt to different means of communication, operations, and leadership styles. Which brought me to the idea for this planner.

Too often my colleagues would gawk at my organization and lesson planning. As the years progressed, I thought: "perhaps I should create something that could help everyone get on the same page, or at least provide an easier way to plan a class." Thus, began the creation of this book.

I think the hardest part of teaching dance is the longevity. I used to dance so hard when I started teaching in my early 20s. Being older and realizing I'd been dancing for 26 years, moving at that energy level became painful. When I stopped dancing hard my teaching went downhill. I relied on how I looked to inspire my students to move well. To remedy this, I became extremely articulate. That was the year I got injured...which brings me to the next reason for this book.

If you've been injured, you know what happens. You lose hope for a bit. You become scared and cautious. The thing that inspired you so, now feels like it let you down and there is absolutely no inspiration. We need to be inspired! It's not enough for us to find a cool song or read an inspirational post. We deserve more and I hope this book provides that for you.

Lastly, I want to dedicate this book to my teachers. Anyone who had me as a student, would probably agree, I was a handful. Dance was my outlet from my family situation, and without it and the patience of my teachers, I wouldn't be who I am today. Thank you, Thank you, THANK YOU!

Xoxo, Joye



Getting Started



This planner is straightforward. I plan my year based on the seasons (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer). Within these four seasons, there are sub-sections that pertain to the season. For example, the section "Assessment" is in the Fall and Spring. I used to give my students assessments at the beginning and end of the year to gauge their improvement. In turn, it would help me plan for the Summer or the following year.

Listed below are the seasons and the sub-sections associated with the time. The last section of the planner, you'll find the Appendix. There you will find the end of the year performance/recital help.

| SEASONS | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| FALL | WINTER | SPRING | SUMMER |
| <i>Preparation Reminders The Goal The Plan Assessment Research / Notes Inspiration</i> | <i>Preparation Reminders The Goal The Plan Research/Notes Inspiration</i> | <i>Preparation Reminders The Goal / The Plan Assessment Research / Notes Recital! Inspiration</i> | <i>Preparation Reminders The Goal Research / Notes Inspiration</i> |

FALL

Holidays:

Labor Day, Halloween, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Veteran's Day.



Preparation



*It's the beginning of the year!
Here are a couple questions I like to ask myself
before I start the year.*

How's enrollment in my class?

When it comes to planning a class, this question is vital. The amount that can be accomplished with five dancers is significantly different than what can be done in a class of 20. In preparing for class, take this into account as to not get overwhelmed if not everything is accomplished the first day of class.

Did I pick out appropriate music?

With all the avenues to find music, there is no excuse to have music that is explicit. When speaking appropriate, I am also referring to the music in correlation with the style of dance. While sometimes it's ok to play fun music in a ballet class, you don't want to start off the year acting too flexible. In regards to music, remember to have a variety. I taught every style of dance, so I had quite the selection. Try to play at least one song that the students will know. It is also fun, especially for little ones, to have music that correlates to holidays (for example, a spooky Halloween song).



Preparation



What should I wear?

Depending on when you start classes, it could be uncomfortable to wear full-on dance attire. Allow yourself to look put together without having to suffer.

*If you're like me, and teach multiple styles in one night, stick with leggings, joggers, tank, or t-shirt. If its really hot then, bring a sweater in case your studio loves to blast the air conditioner. (*If they do, remind them that they are putting everyone at risk by doing so, its not safe!)*

Is my immune system strong enough to be around kids?

We all know that with the beginning of the school year, we enter the change of the season, and the start of the spread of germs. First, I usually start taking airborne before the start of my first class. With the progression of the season, I up the amount I take until the first outbreak of the cold/ flu.

The days where I would teach 4-5 hours, I would always bring a snack. Bananas, granola bars, and dark chocolate worked the best for me. Whatever you choose, don't make it something unhealthy, because it sets a bad example for the kids (after all, dance is a "sport" and one has to be comparatively healthy to be successful in the long run).

Note that Halloween is the start of what I like to call "The Candy Season." From Halloween to Easter (the entire school year), holidays happen where candy is a main part of the celebration.

For your own health, try to avoid eating too much, but feel free to buy some for your classes. Students love love love a surprise and sweet treat.



Fall



Here you can put anything that you need to remember for class.

You'll probably add to it as weeks pass.

*There are no lines because you're an artist and don't need to be shackled down
with the confines of lines!*

Reminders

Example:

Remember to bring a sweater!



the Goal



It has come to my attention that in a dance studio setting not many teachers set specific goals for their classes. How is dance supposed to be taken seriously if we cannot show an end result that isn't limited to an end of the year recital?

*What do you want your students to accomplish? Is it age appropriate?
If you need help with goal setting use the acronym SMART
(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound).*



EXAMPLE: By October, know basics of locking (Hip-Hop).

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the Plan



WARM-UP

CONDITIONING

CENTER



the Plan



ACROSS THE FLOOR

CLASS ACTIVITIES, GAMES, TEAM BUILDING.



CHOREOGRAPHY



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Assessment



[Each style and level of dance requires benchmarks that every student should be able to meet. Enter the steps that your students should've mastered before entering the next level. Other factors like, flexibility or musicality, should be included in the assessment. Use the rating scale to gauge their ability.]

| Step / Ability | Rating | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | <div>• Novice</div> | <div>•• Proficient</div> | <div>••• Mastered</div> |
| | <div>• Novice</div> | <div>•• Proficient</div> | <div>••• Mastered</div> |
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Research/ Notes



Perhaps you're teaching a class that might require special attention, but you don't know where to start? Use this section to record any notes pertaining to the class. Perhaps you need to further your education on handling the class. Use this section for recording your findings.

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The Calendar



WEEKLY (FALL)

On the next pages you will find a weekly calendar. Here you can put any notes specific to the week (i.e. costume orders due). This can also be used to make notes in reference to your lesson plans. Perhaps you need to modify a step for the following week. This section can serve as a reminder.

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

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Weekly Calendar



[September]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[October]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[November]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

Winter

Holidays:

Weekly Calendar Holidays: Hanukah, Kwanza, Christmas, New Years, Valentine's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr Day, Mardi Gras, Black History Month, Groundhog Day, Ash Wednesday, President's Day



Preparation



You're a quarter-way through the year and entering the half-way point until your year end performance. Here are some questions I like to address entering the Winter season.

*Have I taught my students all the steps for their level?
Are they retaining the information?*

Although you've set a goal, and plan to attain that goal, it's good to take a step back and honestly answer this question. If they aren't retaining information, think of another approach to teaching the information. If they were absorbing the information but are currently experiencing a block, don't worry! This is the time of the year when kids start to get restless. With the holidays approaching they become disconnected. If this seems to be the case, revisit this question when you get back from break. If they are still restless, try another approach.

Did I pick out appropriate music?

There are a lot of holidays in the Winter season. Try to find music that correlates with the holiday that doesn't offend anyone.



Preparation



What should I wear? What can my students wear?

If you live somewhere that experiences all the seasons, you've probably started to bundle up. Remember not to wear anything that is baggy so your students can see how you place your body to properly execute movement. While appropriate dance attire should be required for students (per each style), being cold is a hazard. I usually allow my students to wear a dance sweater, tight fitting long-sleeve top, leg warmers, leggings, or yoga pants for the first 15 minutes of class. They should be warm by then and should remove any layers that refrain you from being able to see their alignment.

Holidays mean presents, should I get my students a present?

When I first started teaching dance, I used to write each of my students a Christmas card which had encouraging words and advice for improving in class. Once I hit over 100 students, I had to stop. However, I would try to do a nice gesture like a party, or a fun activity to celebrate the holidays.

How am I feeling?

*With the Winter comes a higher chance of getting sick.
Make sure you're eating properly and getting all your vitamins.
With the colder months, you also put yourself in jeopardy with higher chances of getting injured. Make sure you're staying warm, and doing enough conditioning outside of the classroom to prevent the chance of injuries.*



Preparation



Do I know what I am doing for their end of the year performance/ recital?

By now, you've probably been told what your recital theme will be and started picking out costumes, or have placed your order already. Everyone has a different method for creating their pieces but sometimes we get stuck so here are some suggestions:

- 1. Pick out a costume you like and let that inspire you.*
- 2. Take the recital theme and see how far you can take it.
For example, one year one of my themes was "Dedications and Memories." For my student's tap dance I decided to do a dance dedicated to the men who built the railroad (after being inspired from a documentary).*
- 3. What music is moving me right now? Could I continue to listen to it for the rest of the year?*
- 4. Is there a song I always wanted to do a dance to, and does it fit with the theme?*
- 5. Ask other instructors what they are doing to gauge what you can and cannot do.*

**Refer to APPENDIX for additional help.*



Winter



Reminders

Example:

Remember the kids might be restless and rambunctious. BE PATIENT!



the Goal



What do you want your students to accomplish? Is it age appropriate?
If you need help with goal setting use the acronym SMART
(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound).



EXAMPLE: *By December, ability to recall 3 types of arabesqus.*

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the Plan



WARM-UP

CONDITIONING

CENTER



the Plan



ACROSS THE FLOOR

CLASS ACTIVITIES, GAMES, TEAM BUILDING.



CHOREOGRAPHY



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Research/ Notes



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Weekly Calendar



[December]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[January]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[February]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[March]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

Spring

Holidays:

St. Patrick's Day, April Fools, Easter, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Graduations.



Preparation



You're nearing the end of the year! Try to remember that your students are in crunch time at school, so patience and fun is key to their success. However, since it's the end of the year, you will need to administer an assessment to document the progress of your class.

How much time do I have left?

It's important to keep track of the upcoming weeks. Some studios have parent observation, while others spend time sharing the "big" studio so the children can practice in a bigger space. Really plan out your class for proper time management. There is nothing worse than nearing the last two weeks of the year and realizing your class really needed more time.

How much time should I spend choreographing and cleaning?

As the year progresses, I usually split the class in two parts. The first half is focused on technique, and the second half is geared for choreography. However, there are some days where you need to spend more time on choreography, and that's okay, just make sure the class has a proper warm-up.



Preparation



Am I teaching in the summer? (i.e., camps, intensives, and choreography.)

*Keeping track of your upcoming schedule can be tricky.
If you gain more experience, other schools might invite you to teach for their
camps or intensives. My advice, teach where they'll pay you the most!
Summer is a great way to generate a lot of income in a short amount of time,
take advantage!*

Do I need to boost enrollment for the Summer? How do I boost enrollment?

*You could have a student that seemed to dislike dance for the entire year,
but for the last few weeks you made sure to give them special attention and
make class truly enjoyable. I guarantee the child signs up for the Summer!
If you're told you need to help boost enrollment for the Summer, then make sure
to remind the students (and parents) of classes.
Know when classes start, how long the session lasts, and any special offerings.
Really encourage the class and emphasize the importance of dancing
over the Summer!*



Spring



Reminders

Example:

Reserve time to clean dances!

Change front to back, dance away from mirror.



the Goal



What do you want your students to accomplish? Is it age appropriate?
If you need help with goal setting use the acronym SMART
(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound).



EXAMPLE: *By February, ability to hold a balance on releve*

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CHOREOGRAPHY



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Assessment



[Each style and level of dance requires benchmarks that every student should be able to meet. Enter the steps that your students should've mastered before entering the next level. Other factors like, flexibility or musicality, should be included in the assessment. Use the rating scale to gauge their ability.]

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Research/ Notes



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WEEKLY
(Spring)

[illegible]



Weekly Calendar



[April]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[May]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[June]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

Summer

Holidays:

Independence Day, Father's Day, Ramadan.



Preparation



Alas, the year is over! You've had a successful end of the year, and while you deserve a long break, it's Summertime! Summertime is the easiest time of the year to make a decent income. Camps, intensives, and choreography generates a lot of additional income, so be on the look out for these opportunities! If you're teaching regular class, take a more relaxed approach in class. Allow for brushing up on technique, that helps with general movement, and have fun with choreography and activities.

How can I change the environment to entice the students to want to continue dance?

After teaching for about three years, I realized that if I could make summer classes enjoyable (on many levels) than the student would more than likely register for classes in the Fall. Wanting everyone to dance, I took many approaches to engaging the student.

The main mindset you need to have is that it is the Summer. Your students need a break from the same rigid information flow and there are other ways to teach the information that keeps them wanting more.



Preparation



Am I teaching all Summer?

I taught almost nonstop for 6 years. From the constant need to generate income and employers' overlapping schedules, and personal needs, I found myself teaching without a substantial break. I finally put my foot down and made sure I took a break, so TAKE A BREAK! Your mind and body will thank you!

Am I being inspired?

You are a creative being. You need to fill yourself with inspiration. Go out of your way to go to a museum, show, or engage in a non-dance related activity.

The more you fill up, the more you'll have to pull from for the upcoming performance year.

What am I teaching in the Fall?

Make sure you're keeping up with the Fall schedule. Some of my previous employers did not always deliver schedules in a timely manner. It made it hard to plan my schedule for the year. If you aren't asked about your availability, at the latest, by the beginning of the Summer, start asking your employer. Continue to ask until you get answers. You're not being annoying, you're being responsible.



Summer



Here you can put anything that you need to remember for class.

You'll probably add to it as weeks pass.

*There are no lines because you're an artist and don't need to be shackled down
with the confines of lines!*

Reminders

Example:

Remember to enjoy your Summer!



the Goal



*For the Summer, make goals such as:
get an entire class to register for class in the Fall.*

*What do you want your students to accomplish? Is it age appropriate?
If you need help with goal setting use the acronym SMART
(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound).*



EXAMPLE: By August, have your students wanting to learn MORE!

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the Plan



WARM-UP

CONDITIONING

CENTER



the Plan



ACROSS THE FLOOR

CLASS ACTIVITIES, GAMES, TEAM BUILDING.



CHOREOGRAPHY



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Research/ Notes



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Weekly Calendar



[July]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:



Weekly Calendar



[August]

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

The ***APPENDIX***



APPENDIX



THE **PERFORMANCE/** RECITAL



Performance Info



Day/ Time/ Location:

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Theme:

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Deadlines:

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The Piece?



USE THIS SPACE TO BRAINSTORM,
OR KEEP TRACK OF POSSIBLE SONGS OR CONCEPTS.

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Dance/ Piece Info



Class Day/Time:

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Title of Piece:

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Music (Title/Author):

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Costume Name/Color:

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Props:

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Lighting Ideas:

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Class Roster



D Class / Day/ Time: *e*

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Class Line-Up



Write the order of how the students should be arranged backstage, which would make their entrance (whether its entering with music, or taking places in a blackout) easier.

Enters First





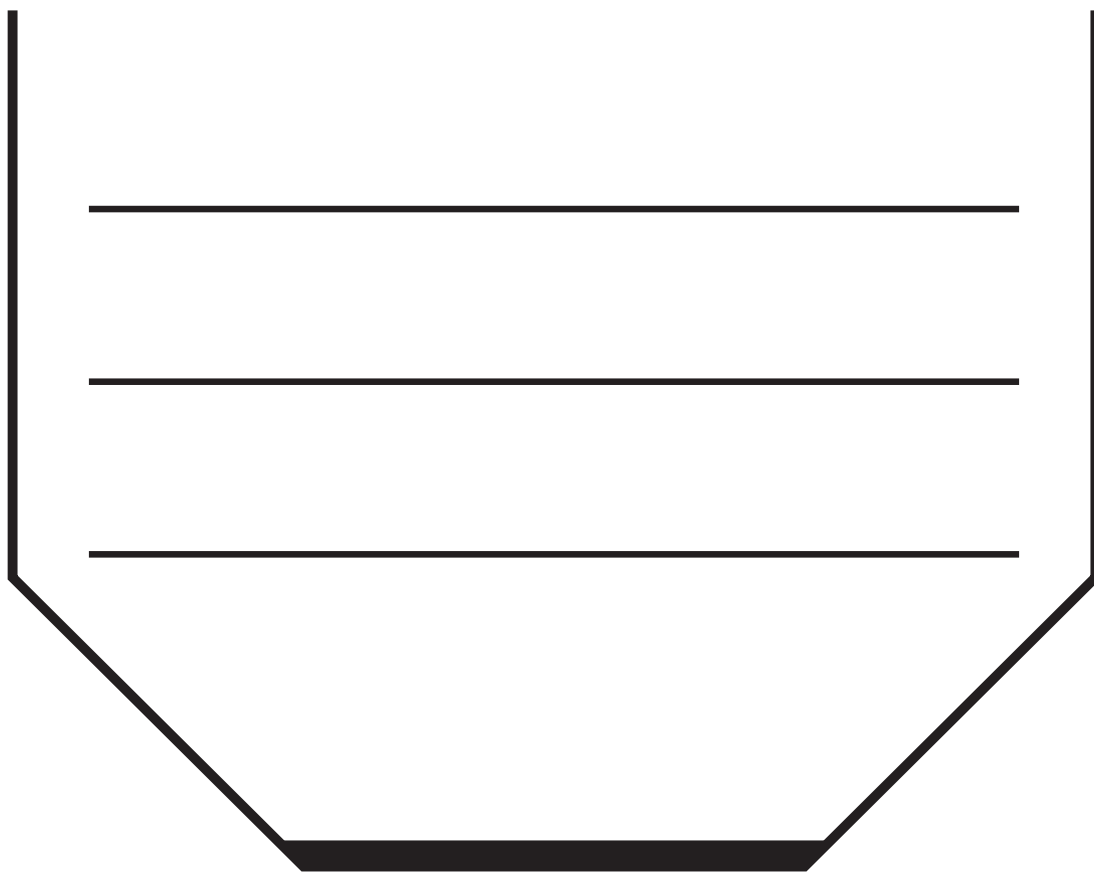
Enters Last



Stage Layout



If your class has a starting pose, or your students start on a colored line or number, label them here. Also label the side dancers enter/exit, if they start or end offstage.



CURTAIN



Stage Directions



- *Dancers Start (Circle One):*

Onstage..... *Onstage*

- *Dancers End (Circle One):*

Onstage..... *Onstage*

- *Prop Notes:*

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- *Lighting Cues:*

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Costume Notes



- *Costume Company:*

- *Costume Name:*

- *Style #:*

- *Costume Color:*

- *Accessories:*

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- *Tight Color:*

- *Shoe Style/ Color:*

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CHOREOGRAPHY



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