

Tap Dance Zone



for Tippy Tappers

Tap dance was born in the United States during the 19th century, and today is popular all around the world. The name comes from the tapping sound made when the small metal plates on the dancer's shoes touch a hard floor. This lively, rhythmic tapping makes the performer not just a dancer, but also a percussive musician.

At Janis Anderson School of Dancing we recently launched tap classes with the ISTD.

Here is some of the basic things you need to know about tap dance;

1. **Tap shoes** are a vital part and they need to be fitted correctly to get the most out of the tap shoe. Make sure the tap shoe is flexible and supportive of the foot. There is no need to have heel taps in the lower grades but they are needed as the child progresses.
2. **Posture** it is vital you need to stand tall with your weight slightly forward over your toes. Pull in the tummy muscles and tuck under your seat muscles, arms relaxed and chin and eyeline well lifted.
3. **Relaxation** is another vital skill, relax knees and ankles make the tap sound so much better!
4. **Tap tone and Accent** this is the light and shade to our tapping, there is no need to thrash the floor tapping quietly with the odd louder moments makes tap more interesting to the ear and doesn't wreck the WI hall floor!
5. **Time** is the beat of the music which we dance to.
6. **Tempo** the speed at which the music is played

7. **Rhythm** in tap we call our creative time, this is where we can create patterns with tap steps to make unusual and intricate rhythms.
8. **Timesteps** (ahhhhh) timesteps in tap are as important as a plie in ballet, or a scale to music. They are a series of steps to a repetitive rhythm, these develop throughout the grades from shuffle timesteps to pick-up timesteps and many more.
9. **Tacit** this is where the music or the dancer is silent for a bar of music or more. When the music goes silent the dancer is expected to keep the rhythm going and be exactly on time when the music starts up again, very difficult sometimes.
10. **Artistry** the most important thing for me, the way you perform or in other words, smile and enjoy it!

Please now click to your grade/level and find out all you need to know for your exams and practicing - [Primary](#) - [Grade 1](#) - [Grade 2](#) - [Grade 3](#) - [Adult](#)

Primary Tappers

Parallel arm swings

These are the ones that are like train tracks 2 straight arms swinging forwards and backwards together.

Opposition arm swings

Soldier arms start with one arm at the front and one arm at the back and swing them but remember not too high!

Rythm section

Quarter notes

4 Claps in time with the music

4 Taps in time with the music

Quarter notes and Accented Eight noted

1 and 2 clap

1 and 2 dance

This one is like an echo and it travels from side to side. Try to think of a good word that goes to that rhythm like sugar puffs

1 and 2

Grade One Tappers

Rhythm Section

&1 &2 &3 &4 5 6 7 &8

This is your set rhythm you have to clap this twice through and then dance it twice.

Compound Steps

Tap steps and Tap springs – 4 of each

Tap step ball change

Tap step heel beat

Tap heel ball

Shuffle hop step - travelling backwards

Pick-up steps to quarter notes – travelling backwards

Shuffle ball change x3 and a stamp

Grade Two Tappers

Rhythm Section

1 2 3 4 &5 &6 &7 &8 1 2 3 4 5&a6 &7 (miss 8)

This is your set rhythm you have to clap this twice through and then dance it twice.

Compound Steps

Pick-up steps – accented eighth noted

Pick-up hop steps

Pick-up spring steps

Shuffle ball change, shuffle hop step

Tap step heel

Tap step ball change – 4 times quiet 4 times loud

Timestep

Single

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L

2 Step/Spring R

&3& Forward TapL. Ball Change L.R.

4&5 Shuffle L. Hop R

6 Step/Spring L

&7& Forward TapR. Ball Change R.L.

Break

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L.

2 Step/Spring R

&3& Shuffle Step L.

4&5 Shuffle Step R.

&6&7 Shuffle L. Ball Change L.R.

Words you need to know;

Forward Brush – Like a forward tap but with a broader movement hinging from hip joint

Backwards Brush – Like a back tap but leg slightly bent and a brushing feel making leg travel all the way through.

Step – Transferring weight fully from one foot to the other on the balls of the feet.

Stamp – Heavy downward action, whole foot on floor make sure your knee is bending with the stamp do not let it jar.

Stomp – raise the heel slightly and push forward making a heavy heel beat with knee flexed.

Shuffle – forward and back tap &1 or less.

Tap Step – forward tap and step on the ball of foot.

Tap spring – forward tap and spring on ball of foot

Flap – Forward tap and then downward beat finishing either on flat foot or ball of foot with relaxation in knees

Ball Change – transfer of weight from one foot to the other

Pick Up step – Pick-up R. Step L.

Pick-up Hop – Pick-up R. Hop L. step back to repeat

Pick-up Spring – Pick-up R. Spring onto R. step back to repeat

4 Beat cramp roll – Spring onto R

Step L.

Heel Beat R

Heel Beat L.

Grade Three Tappers

Rhythm Section

&1&a2&3&a4 5 (miss 6) &7&8

This is your set rhythm you have to clap this twice through and then dance it twice.

Compound Steps

Pick-up hop step, Pick-up spring step - travelling backwards

Pick-up hop shuffle step, Pick-up spring shuffle step - travelling backwards

Shuffle spring continuously - travelling backwards

Pick-up step ball change – side to side

Tap step R, stamp LR Pick-up L, hop R, toe tap L, hop R repeat with other foot

Tap step R, heel LR, Pick-up L, heel R, toe tap L, heel R repeat with other foot

Taken to Even - Accented rhythms facing front.

Timesteps

Double

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L

&2 Tap Step R

&3& Forward TapL. Ball Change L.R.

4&5 Shuffle L. Hop R

&6 Tap Step L

&7& Forward TapR. Ball Change R.L.

Break

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L.

&2 Tap Step R

&3& Shuffle Step L.

4&5 Shuffle Step R.

&6&7 Shuffle L. Ball Change L.R.

Words you need to know;

All vocabulary from Grade Two plus;

Pick-up change – Pick-up on one foot and land on the other

3 beat riff forward – Forward catch heel and a heel beat on the underneath leg

5 beat cramp roll – Tap Spring onto R

Step L.

Heel Beat R

Heel Beat L.

Adult Tappers

Welcome to the adult tap section, I have put the obvious things on for you TIME STEPS the things we love to hate but please do not hesitate to see me and I will put anything else on that you may need or want to know!

Time Steps

Single

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L

2 **Step/Spring** R

&3& Forward TapL. Ball Change L.R.

4&5 Shuffle L. Hop R

6 Step/Spring L

&7& Forward TapR. Ball Change R.L.

Break

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L.

2 Step/Spring R

&3& Shuffle Step L.

4&5 Shuffle Step R.

&6&7 Shuffle L. Ball Change L.R.

Double

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L

&2 Tap Step R

&3& Forward TapL. Ball Change L.R.

4&5 Shuffle L. Hop R

&6 Tap Step L

&7& Forward TapR. Ball Change R.L.

Break

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L.

&2 Tap Step R

&3& Shuffle Step L.

4&5 Shuffle Step R.

&6&7 Shuffle L. Ball Change L.R.

Triple

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L

&a2 **Shuffle Step** R

&3& Forward TapL. Ball Change L.R.

4&5 Shuffle L. Hop R

&a6 **Shuffle Step** L

&7& Forward TapR. Ball Change R.L.

Break

8&1 Shuffle R. Hop L.

&a2 **Shuffle Step** R

&3& Shuffle Step L.

4&5 Shuffle Step R.

&6&7 Shuffle L. Ball Change L.R.

Here are some explanations of new steps that we are trying;

This one is that tricky one in our dance,

Tap step R,

Heel LR,

Pick-up L,

Heel R,

Toe tap L,

Heel R

Repeat with other foot