

Betty Ballerinas

The art of Ballet can trace its origins to the early seventeenth century, when dancers performed to entertain audiences between scenes of an opera. These short dances grew in popularity and importance until they became a form of theatre in their own right. In 1661, King Louis XIV of France founded the *Académie Royale de Musique et de Danse*, establishing Paris as the centre of academic ballet. This is where all the French words come from that we learn throughout Ballet training today. As ballet became more popular the Italians and the Russians became masters and it slowly developed in the UK too and today we enjoy going to see the famous ballets and it has even hit the UK movie scene with films like Billy Elliot. Children and Adults enjoy its structure and beautiful music everyday.

Janis Anderson has been teaching classical Ballet for 36 years and has continued to put children and young adults through ISTD examinations with great success.

Here is some of the basic things you need to know about classical ballet;

1. **Posture** (the way that you stand) - It is very important to stand correctly with your body weight centred. Hips and Shoulders in line and square to the front, legs have to be pulled up with the tummy in and seat tucked under. Shoulders relaxed and head erect.
2. **Arms** – ballet arms are very important as they need to have a feeling of sensitivity, a soft and gentle approach and they have to be placed probably in the set arm positions.
3. **Legs** – throughout the grades development of strength in the legs is worked very hard on, the exercises get harder and more demanding.
4. **Footwork** – there are 5 basic foot positions in ballet.
5. **Artistry** – this is a vital part of ballet, to fill out the music and express yourself, making everything look beautiful. Therefore we need lots of smiles!

Uniform

Primary to Grade 2 : Blue leotard and chiffon circular skirt. Pink socks and ballet shoes.

Grades 3 and 4 : Blue leotard and wrap-around skirt. Pink tights and ballet shoes.

Grades 5 and 6 : Purple leotard and wrap-around skirt. Pink tights and ballet shoes.

Blue cross-over cardigans or Janis Anderson T-shirts can be worn in class.

Please Note :

1. Ribbons are to be worn on ballet shoes for exams. Please wear elastics for class and show work.
2. Hair to be tied back for class, and no jewellery to be worn.

Please now click to your grade/level and find out all you need to know for your exams : [Primary](#) - [Grade 1](#) - [Grade 2](#) - [Grade 3](#) - [Grade 4](#) - [Grade 5](#) - [Grade 6](#)

Primary Ballet

All the way through a Primary exam the children are expected to hold their skirts out it is important that the arms are rounded and held forward slightly.

French Terms

Bras Bas –low arms

Port de bras –use of arms

Fondu –to bend on one leg while the other is straight and pointed (i.e. spring points)

Music Section

2 pieces are played or the examiner asks children to clap

Waltz – it has 3 beats, a 3/4 it is counted 1 2 3.

Polka – it has 2 beats, a 2/4 it is counted &1 &2

Grade One Ballet

French Terms

.Plie – bend

Demi – half

Battements – beat

Tendus – to stretch or point

Grande – big

Retires – draw up

En Croix – shape of a cross

Pose – to step

Petit Jetes – small spring from foot to foot

Temps Leve – to hop

Devant – Front

Derriere – Back

En Avant – Forward

De cote – to the side

Sautes – to spring

Changements – to change

Arm Positions



Bras Bas – Low arms



En Avant – both arms at belly button height rounded



En Courant – both arms above head picture framing your face..... smile!

Attitude – one arm is held up and the other to the side

A'la second – both arms held to the side rounded and held from the centre of spine.

Demi bras – both arms held forwards as if your giving somebody a big bouquet of flowers.

Music Section

3 pieces are played or the examiner asks children to clap

Waltz – it has 3 beats, a 3/4 it is counted 1 2 3. Soft and flowing.

Polka – it has 2 beats, a 2/4 it is counted &1 &2. Quick and lively.

March – it has 4 beats, a 4/4 it is counted 1 2 3 4. Strong and definite.

Grade Two Ballet

French Terms

All terms from previous grades and;

Assemble – to assemble, bring together

Soutenus – to sustain, keep

En de dans – inwards

En de hors – outwards

Ronds de jambe – round of the leg

Relevés – to snatch

Arabesque – a straight line

Demi detourne – half a turn

Chasse – to slide

Glissades – to glide

Pas de chat – step of a cat

Jete – to throw

Balance – to rock

Saubrasaut – spring in 3rd position without a change

Arm Positions



Bras croise – one arm rounded at the front and the other held out to second



Attitude grecque – a Greek arm line

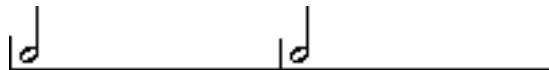
3rd Arabesque – two straight arms one low (waist height) and one high with eye line looking along.

Music Section

Semi breves holds for 4 whole counts



Minims holds for two counts, there are 2 minims to each bar



Crotchets on every beat, 4 crotchets to each bar



Quavers there are 8 quavers to a bar



Grade 3 Ballet

French terms

All terms from previous grades and;

Battement – to beat

Frappes – to strike

Developes – to unfold

En croix – in the shape of a cross

Releve on demi point – snatch up on half point

Port de Bras – carriage of the arms

Attitude – curved line

En l'air – in the air

A terre – on the ground

Chasses – to slide

En arriere – to travel backwards

En avant – to travel forwards

Pose – to step

Pas de Basque – step from the Basque land, Northern Spain (character step)

Sissone – a scissor like movement

Ouverte – open

Croise – crossed

Echappe – to escape

Coupe – to cut weight from one foot to another

Grade Four Ballet

French terms

All terms from previous grades and;

Fondus – to melt

Tendus – to point or stretch

Sur le cop de pied – on the neck of the foot

Epaulement – use of the shoulders

Relevés – to snatch

Passé – pass

Contretemps – against time

Demi – half

Temp lie – to link together

Petite Batterie – small beats

Pas de bourrees – a running step

Ballonnes – a balloon like spring

Grade Five Ballet

French terms

All terms from previous grades and;

Ronds de jambe en l'air – round of leg in the air

Frappes – to strike

Fouettes – to whip

En arriere – to travel backwards

En avant – to travel forwards

Fermée – to close

Overt – open

En tournant – to turn

Pirouettes – to spin

Jete – to throw or leap

Pas de Bouree – a running step

Compose – with a step

Entre chat – beat without changing feet

Grade Six Ballet

French terms

All terms from previous grades and;

Battement – to beat

En cloche – bell like

En ronde – round movement

Fouette rond de jambe en tournant – whipping movement with a turn

Releve – to snatch

Pirouette en de dans – inward turn

Pose turn – step and turn

Waltz – 3/4 time

Changement battue – beat and change feet

Entredat trois derriere – a beat landing on one foot at the back in retiere

Raccourci – to retrace

Sissone Fermees – scissor like movement closing in

(Note: Classical ballet diagrams above are reproduced courtesy of Don Gillan(Copyright), www.Stagebeauty.net)

