

USA DANCE, INC.



PARENT HANDBOOK

Presented by the National Junior Parents Committee

2018



USA Dance Parent Handbook

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1. Welcome to the World of Competitive DanceSport

- ✓ Congratulations to the whole family! Throughout this Handbook we will refer to the young competitor as a Youth DanceSport Athlete, or YDA.
- ✓ Be sure to check out the attachment sections at the end of this handbook. It has numerous tools that will be helpful while navigating this World of Competitive DanceSport.

2. Registering for the Competition

2.1. Registration Process

- The YDA needs his or her own USA Dance membership. Parents may obtain a membership on the USA Dance website: <http://usadance.org/membership/>
- Children under the age of 19 should register for a DanceSport Minor membership. This process should begin as early as possible, because it takes time to obtain a USA Dance number.
- Once the YDA has a USA Dance number, the YDA can be registered for competitions. The link for registration is usually found on the competition website. Most larger competitions use the O2CM system. (<http://register.o2cm.com>).
- First-time visitors to the registration sites should create a personal profile to allow for easy access in the future. With your selected log-in information, you can register the YDA to dance the Events that you and the YDA's coach have planned.
- The registration process can be confusing to newcomers. If you need help registering, call or email the competition organizer. The organizer will be glad to help you register properly.
- If possible, check competition websites at least 3-4 months in advance of the competition date to find out if there is an early registration discount. Some competitions offer discounts if registrations are paid before a certain date. In addition, pay attention to prices for spectators. Some competitions offer deals if you buy tickets for spectators in advance, and some offer bulk discounts with a minimum number of spectator tickets purchased. Anyone wanting to watch the competition in person must purchase a spectator ticket including the YDA, their partner, and the coach.
- Pay attention to the deadlines for registration and payment to avoid any additional charges or late fees.
- If the competition is at a location that requires the YDA and any supporting family to travel and you want to stay at the host hotel, book your reservations early and use the group rate that the organizers of the competition have negotiated. The group rate is often 20-30% less than the standard hotel rate.

2.2. Rules, Guidelines, Penalties

- The complete set of USA Dance rules can be found at <http://usadance.org/dancesport/athlete-information/>.
- National Qualifying Events, National Championships, and Registered Competitions all follow USA Dance rules and guidelines.

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- A competition's website will list an abridged version of the USA Dance rules to ensure compliance and to highlight any specific rules applicable to the competition.
- Read through the USA Dance rules carefully and frequently to better understand them as well as to ensure compliance. There are penalties for failing to comply with applicable rules at each competition.
- As the YDA attends increasingly more competitions, you both will become more familiar with, and be able to fully understand the rules, their enforcement, and what is expected.
- Different rules apply based on the YDA's age, gender and level of competition. Ask the YDA's coach any questions you have about specific rules and whether they apply to the YDA.
- Competition organizers are also available to answer any questions you have about their competition, applicable rules, penalties, or other obligations.

2.3. Entry

- Typically, the YDA's coach will offer guidance and make recommendations on which dances and in which proficiency levels the YDA should compete.
- Pay particular attention to the coach's recommendation of the number of dances to be danced and the number of Styles to be danced. Dancing more than one Style can mean the YDA will have to dance on more than one day.

2.4. Age

- Age categories are described in Rule 4.7.4.2 from the USA Dance rule book.

❖ CATEGORY	❖ AGE IN YEARS
❖ Pre-Teen I	❖ 9 or less
❖ Pre-Teen II	❖ 10 or 11
❖ Junior I	❖ 12 or 13
❖ Junior II	❖ 14 or 15
❖ Youth	❖ 16, 17 or 18
❖ Under 21	❖ 16 to 20
❖ Adult	❖ 19 or greater

- Age above references the birth year in comparison to the month of the selected competition.
- National Qualifying Events and National Championships follow the age rules identified in the chart below without exception. "Registered" Competitions may adjust the age classifications. Any adjustments in age categories will be specified in that competition's website.
- There are many competitions that may be considered for your YDA. The term "Registered" just clarifies that the considered competition is a part an organization. "Unregistered" would refer to a competition where the organizer has chosen to not affiliate with an organization. The words "Registered" and "Sanctioned" as well as "Unregistered" and "Not Sanctioned" can be used interchangeably.

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- Occasionally a competition organizer or Judge may request to see a birth certificate for proof of age, especially if a YDA looks mature for his or her age.

2.5. Confirm the Registration

- After completing the registration process, the organizer should send a confirmation packet, including a summary of all dances the YDA is registered to dance, the spectator tickets ordered and the amount paid. If no confirmation is received within a reasonable time following registration, contact the organizer.
- If the confirmation is confusing, ask the YDA's coach to confirm that the dances, the age group, and proficiency level are correctly entered.
- Although times may differ by competition, usually any changes can be readily made up to about two weeks before the competition. Any changes after that time may be difficult to accomplish or may be refused. Staying on top of the registration process will ensure the YDA competes in the correct categories and dances, the organizers will appreciate your efforts, and the competition in general will run more smoothly.
- Review the spectator tickets carefully to be sure they correspond to the events danced by the YDA.

2.6. Admission Tickets

- Each competition handles admission to the ballroom differently. Carefully review the admission policies for each competition to correctly order admission tickets. Some competitions include admission for the dancing couple as part of the overall fee; others do not, requiring the dancing couple to pay admission separately.
- The tickets are usually priced differently depending on the time of day (Matinee/Evening), age of attendee (Adult/Child), and importance of events during the session (Professional Show/Major Event). Be aware of the need to purchase multiple sessions if the YDA is dancing during more than one session and across multiple days. Some competitions also offer early payment discounts on spectator tickets as well as the overall competition package.
- **BRING CASH TO THE COMPETITION.** Many competitions and some vendors only take cash as payment during the event.

3. Programs

3.1. Choreographed Routines or Lead-Follow

- There are two approaches to developing the material the YDA will use to dance in a competition: Routine/Program/Choreography or Lead/Follow.
- The YDA's coach will explain the approach he or she prefers to take with respect to teaching the YDA the skills necessary to compete. Different coaches will have different methods of teaching and will approach competitive dance based on their personal experience. Both approaches can be appropriate and effective for the YDA. It will be up to the coach to determine what method is best for the YDA. If the YDA and her partner have different coaches, it will be essential for the couple to work with the coaches to determine a single approach.

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- The Routine approach develops a pre-established series of steps or figures that will be danced sequentially every time in the same order. The steps and figures are developed by the coach and will be age- and level-appropriate.
- The Lead-Follow approach allows the YDA to lead or follow their partner based on the leader's choice of steps made in the moment. This approach is developed by the coach identifying a small number of steps or figures that are practiced with regularity but not necessarily in the same order each time. This approach gives the YDA some spontaneity in the dance, and teaches familiarity with the selection of steps that easily flow from one to the other. The steps and figures will be chosen by the coach based on age- and level-appropriateness.

3.2. Memorization

- To be successful, both approaches equally require the YDA to memorize the steps and figures that are part of their competitive program. Even though Lead-Follow does not have an established order of steps, the YDA can still memorize the steps and figures that are to be included in the competition program and know the leads that initiate each step.
- Practicing the material is the foundation for ensuring the YDA has memorized and is in full command of the Routine or Lead-Follow program. The YDA may also need to write the material down or speak it out loud to support the process of memorization, but there is no substitute for developing muscle memory, which requires repetition in physical practice.
- It is essential that the YDA has fully memorized the material applicable to a competition before the competition date. A recommendation of having material memorized 2 weeks prior to competition is suggested.

3.3. Competition Preparation

- Repetition is the key to successful competition preparation. Ensure that the YDA has plenty of time to engage in repetitive practice. The goal of competition preparation is to give the YDA the ability to develop strong muscle memory of the step, the figure, and the technique of how to dance it through repetitive practice. This repetitive practice needs to occur both as a single dancer as well as with the partner. Learning the material as a single dancer is every bit as important as the rehearsal time with the partner. A partnership cannot function if the individual has not prepared his or her part.
- Partner practice can also be considered as "rehearsal" for the competition. This is usually the last phase of competition preparation in which the couple work together to prepare the overall presentation of the competitive material.

4. Coaches

4.1. Competition Plan

- Before deciding on a competition, schedule a time to meet with the YDA's coach to discuss the best options for competing for the YDA. Some areas have several competitions to choose from, and others are more limited or may require some travel. Develop a competition plan that determines the best competitions for the YDA within the next year. Determine priorities for each competition identified and

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begin looking at competition websites 3-4 months in advance to be able to take advantage of any early pricing benefits. Discuss with the YDA's coach the timetable for the YDA's competition readiness, which may determine which competition will be selected. Once selected, develop a competition preparation timeline that will give the YDA at least two months of preparation prior to the competition.

- In preparation for the competition, schedule times to discuss with the YDA's coach the following topics: costume details; Routines or Lead-Follow approach and how to monitor the YDA's practice; the categories, Styles and number of dances in which the YDA will compete; the coach's involvement during the competition (if the coach is not the Pro-Am partner); and the parents' involvement during the competition. It is also very important to discuss with the YDA's coach his or her processes, preparation strategies, beliefs, goals and expectations for the competition. Each coach should be able to articulate his or her expectations for the event, as well as the philosophy of the purpose of the competition in the development of the YDA's dance experience. Let the coach guide the process as much as possible.

4.2. Goals & Expectations

- The most important role a parent plays in this journey is to ensure the YDA and his or her coach communicate with one another about goals and expectations, and to monitor the YDA's approach toward and achievement of these goals and expectations.
- While it is important that the parents share their desires with the coach, it is more important that the YDA learn to do so as well. Parents are in the position to be great facilitators between their YDAs and the coach. Although parents are essential to the process, the journey is the YDA's, and as the journey unfolds, it is important that the YDA learn to work with and trust his or her coach.
- To help the parent facilitator determine if the goals are attainable, apply the SMART goal formula: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.
- The difference between goals and expectations also needs to be clearly understood by everyone in the process. Goals give the YDA clear objectives to achieve as he or she prepares for and participates in the competition. Expectations establish non-negotiable actions or behaviors that are expected of the YDA by his or her coach, parents, and themselves.
- Expectations should be established early in the coach-YDA relationship and develop as the relationship and the YDA mature. Expectations are ongoing, and provide structure for the YDA throughout this journey. Goals are re-set after each competition to identify the next level of growth to be achieved in the YDA's dancing.

5. Costume Information

- ✓ See the attachment section of this handbook for links that will help in this process.

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5.1. Costume: Girls

○ Choosing the Style

- Before choosing a new costume for any competition, whether the YDA's first or when a change makes sense for the YDA, review all the costume regulations for the YDA's level and age division.
- The costume for competitors plays an important role in the way the couple looks on the dance floor. A good costume choice can complement the couple's strengths, increase the appreciation of their dance by the audience, and help the couple attract the attention of the judges.
- The first element, and potentially the most important one, is the color of the costume. The color combination is often the first thing the judges see of the couple. This can set the judges' first impression even before they begin dancing.
- These elements must be considered when deciding the best color for a couple:
 - Fashion/Style Trend
 - Features/Complexion of Face
 - Hair/Eye Color
 - Posture/Figure
 - Partner's Look
- The color that fits the YDA best should be chosen, even if it is not his or her favorite color. Each person has his or her own unique color palates, making the choice of color highly unique to the individual.
- Over time, the YDA will develop his or her own style, learn the benefits and disadvantages of different colors, and learn the color palette that fits the YDA's developing style. This process is refined with time.
- For the youngest competitors and for all beginners, the choice of color and style should be made keeping in mind the visibility of the couple on the dance floor and the effect the color has on the skin tone of both dancers.

○ Choosing the Color

- The regulations for Juvenile/Pre-teen girls limit their choice of dress to a simple, one-color dress for all Styles of dance.
- Juveniles and Pre-teens are not allowed to use makeup, color their hair, or style their hair in complex configurations.
- When choosing the color of the competitive dress, keep in mind the effect the color may have on the partnership. Whatever color the YDA chooses should be coordinated with her partner and include any effect the color may have on his appearance or complexion. For instance, the color of the dress could reflect poorly on his complexion color.
- Coordination of colors will be especially important as the YDA couple advances into the older age categories and the couple begins to wear more coordinated clothing. Always keep the partner in mind when making color choices.
- RED
One of the most common colors among Juvenile competitors is red. It looks good on almost everyone, no matter the hair color or body type. Because it is a popular color, however, the YDA might lose the opportunity to be seen even

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when wearing red. If red is still the choice, then consider an unusual shade or style that fits the regulations but also allows the dress to stand out.

- ORANGE

Orange color also looks good on many. It tends to give girls the illusion of additional volume, and it looks especially good on many brunettes. But orange can mix badly with many skin tones, resulting in a green tint in certain complexions. Choose orange with care.

- YELLOW

For blondes with a variety of skin tones and eye color, warm shades of yellow, yellow-orange, orange and peach can be good choices.

- PINK

Pink is the second most popular color. This color looks great on most and can accentuate a girl's shape. Generally, the lighter the color, the more the color will show a girl's figure. The wide variety of shades of pink, from marshmallow to florescent pink, are all popular.

- CRIMSON & VIOLET

Crimson and violet colors are a great choice for energetic girls with a bright, expressive appearance. Like orange, however, these colors can also have a negative effect on certain skin tones and should only be selected if they do not detract from the YDA's natural skin tone.

- GREEN & BLUE

All shades of green and blue are also quite popular. Classic emerald is the most universal shade of green, and many believe that it looks good on everyone. Other shades of green need to be selected carefully to ensure the shade does not have a negative effect on the YDA's skin tone appearance on the dance floor. In general, all shades of blue look very good on the dance floor. Especially popular and versatile is bright royal blue.

- DARK COLORS

Dark colors, such as cherry, dark blue, dark purple and dark emerald, will look elegant in the crowd of colorful bright dresses, and are popular due to their natural slimming effect.

- BLACK & WHITE

Black and white colors, even though they are considered conservative by many, can look exquisite and spectacular with the right design. An all-white dress is not very practical, however, because it must be perfectly clean at all times and should be covered between rounds to avoid stains. If a white dress is not properly cleaned and maintained, the couple will look poorly groomed.

- BEIGE & BROWN

Beiges and browns are not popular color choices for Juvenile or Pre-teen regulation dresses. These colors will blend in with the floor. The YDA wearing a simple dress of beige or brown is likely to be overlooked. However, if everyone else is wearing bright colors, the choice of these colors could be effective.

- STYLES/COLORS of SHOES

The majority of shoes come in shades of tan. There are some styles of shoes that can be found in colors. Please ensure that if you would like to try a colored

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shoe for your YDA, the color should be a match to their dress color. However, before choosing a shoe that has a color, consult the YDA's coach on this subject.

- Where to Find
 - There are multiple options available to find appropriate dance costumes for all ages, levels and Styles.
 - Competition dresses can be purchased from a variety of online sources or at many dance studios. They may also be custom made by a dress-maker.
 - When buying a dress on-line, make sure to take careful and precise measurements according to a size chart that should be available on the manufacturer's web-site. If there is no size chart, find another vendor that offers a size chart. Otherwise be aware that trying to purchase based on standard sizes can result in setbacks.
 - Look for a vendor who offers easy returns and exchanges with no restocking fees.
 - It is likely to take some time and several tries to find the right dress. Not every dress will fit as represented, and not every color will look the same in person as it looked online.
 - The best place to begin your search is to ask your YDA's coach for recommendations of vendors or local dressmakers.
 - If you can't find the right dress or just prefer it made, it is highly recommended that a professional ballroom dressmaker be hired, even for a basic Juvenile costume. No matter how good standard dressmakers may be with regular clothes, they are not familiar with the fabrics, fitting styles and other secrets and specifics of making good-fitting competitive dance dresses.
 - Many creative parents choose to make the YDA's dresses themselves. This can be a great endeavor and provide a lot of fun so long as the rules and regulations for the YDA's dance level and age division are carefully followed.

5.2. Costume: Boys

- General
 - Costumes for boys might seem more straightforward, but there are still specific details that apply to boys' costumes.
 - Be familiar with all rules and regulations applicable to the YDA's dance level and age division. Juvenile and Pre-teen boy costumes, and costumes for young men competing at syllabus level only are relatively simple.
 - Begin with getting recommendations from the YDA's coach regarding size, fit and reliable vendors or local dressmakers to ensure the young man has the best fit possible.
 - Before ordering from any online vendor, ensure that vendor has a size chart. Measure the YDA carefully according to the size chart to ensure the best fit. If the vendor doesn't offer a size chart, find another vendor.
 - Look for a vendor who offers easy returns and exchanges with no restocking fees. It is likely to take some time and several attempts to find the right costume – not every pair of pants or shirt will fit as represented and not every piece will look as good on the YDA as it looks on a web-site picture.

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- If you can't find the right pair of pants or shirt or prefer to have it made, it is highly recommended that a professional ballroom dressmaker be hired, even for a basic Juvenile costume. No matter how good standard dressmakers may be with regular clothes, they are not familiar with the fabrics, fitting styles and other secrets and specifics of making good-fitting competitive dance shirts and pants.
- Trying to make a gentleman's ballroom costume, even a basic one, at home is not recommended. The detailed fit and look that are essential to a proper-fitting dance costume for the YDA requires intricate detail and professional-level experience. We also do not recommend trying to alter regular clothing to meet dance standards. The material and the fit will not present well on the dance floor.
- The cut and fit of dance pants, shirts, vests, suits and tails is very different from regular clothes and, unless the item is originally made by professional ballroom tailor with special ballroom patterns, it cannot become a ballroom costume.

5.3. Grooming: Girls & Boys

- Costumes & Shoes:
 - Costumes must be clean with no stains, holes, or wrinkles on any part of the dress, including floats, if they are used.
 - The YDA should try on the costume before the competition to ensure it is the right size and fits well. Be mindful of growth spurts between competitions and don't get caught with a costume that is too small. Boys should always try on their pants prior to competition to ensure the hem is appropriate length.
 - Girls
 - Competition shoes must be clean and include heel protectors as appropriate. A new pair of competition shoes is highly recommended. Worn out practice shoes are not acceptable.
 - Boys
 - Competition shoes must be clean. A new pair of competition shoes is highly recommended, and patent leather for Standard and Smooth Styles is recommended. Worn out practice shoes are not acceptable.
- Hair:
 - Girls
 - Hair should be sleek and tight against the head if it is long enough. Use of gel or hairspray to get a smooth and shiny finish is acceptable for all ages.
 - The hair style should not move at all when the YDA moves her head during the competition. Any hair that might fall loose or fall out of the style should be tightly secured. Nothing should be in the hair that could fall off, fly away, or become loose during dancing.
 - Pony tails and braids are acceptable for Latin and Rhythm Style competition. Be sure the style or length does not result in hitting her partner's face while dancing.
 - Boys
 - Hair should be sleeked back against the scalp. The use of gel or hairspray to get a smooth and shiny finish is acceptable.

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- The hair style should not move when the YDA dances or moves his head.
- A pony tail is required if the young man's hair is long enough.
- Tan and Makeup:
 - Apply tan and makeup in a tasteful age-appropriate manner. Consult the USA Dance rules regarding make-up to ensure compliance with limits based on age.
 - Spray tan can be exceptionally messy. Be aware of the surroundings when applying spray tan, especially in a hotel room or dressing room with other costumes. Spray tan can ruin costumes, bedding, other apparel, or upholstery. Remind your YDA that tanning product and make-up both can rub off on to costumes and partners. Tanning cream may be more easily applied than spray tan, and there are many good products available that work well without the mess produced by sprays.
 - For boys, tan and makeup are not required. If they are used, however, they must be tastefully applied and age-appropriate.
- Fingernails:
 - Fingernails must be clean and trimmed. A simple manicure is the best option. Any nail color should be neutral or match the costume, and be age-appropriate.
- Hygiene:
 - Ballroom dancing involves being physically close to and touching another person. Therefore, personal hygiene is an essential part of preparation.
 - The YDA should shower and use antiperspirant/deodorant (fragrance-free is best choice) before the competition.
 - Avoid strong perfumes or fragrances – the mix of aromas from perfume, hair products, deodorant and makeup might make the YDA or her partner uncomfortable, especially if it triggers allergies or sensitivities.
 - Make a clean towel part of the competition supplies and use it between rounds to wipe off any sweat. Keep hands clean and dry, and always wash hands after using a bathroom.
 - Keep mints or breath-freshening gum handy to use before dance rounds and after meals or snacks to eliminate breath and food odors.

5.4. Costume Checks and Changes

- Pre-Competition Check Costume
 - For every competition, review the competition guidelines for the YDA's age, level and gender well before arriving. Direct any questions to the Organizer well in advance of the competition to ensure the YDA has a compliant costume to wear.
 - Costumes **WILL BE CHECKED AT THE EVENT**. There will be an official at the competition whose sole purpose is to ensure the costume is within the guidelines of the organization. **DO NOT ASSUME YOU CAN "GET BY" WITH WHAT YOU HAVE.**
 - Always have the YDA try on the costume weeks prior to the competition to ensure the fit has not changed. If the YDA has grown, this practice will ensure time to have the costume altered or a new one made. While it is possible to purchase costumes at competitions, the size selection is not guaranteed, and the price can be expensive.
 - For every competition, the YDA should plan to dance in the costume at least once to become more comfortable with the way the costume feels and moves.

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- Costume Changes
 - Competitions schedule the Genres differently according to time available, number of entries and sometimes other factors. For smaller competitions, multiple Styles are usually scheduled on the same calendar day. Usually only the larger competitions will separate Styles or Genres by calendar day.
 - If the YDA is dancing more than one Style or Genre and has a costume change for each Style or Genre, be sure to pack a day bag for the costume change if returning to the hotel is not feasible or the time between rounds does not allow the YDA to return to his or her room. Not all competitors will have costume changes even if dancing multiple Styles or Genres. The matter of additional costumes should be reviewed with the YDA's coach well prior to any competition.
 - If the YDA will have a costume change, details regarding actual heats are usually posted online a day or two before the competition. Accessing this information, and double-checking the final heat list upon arrival, will let you know whether a costume change in a short amount of time will be required.
 - Prior to any competition involving a costume change, have the YDA practice quick changes in anticipation of this possibility.

6. Competition

6.1. Planning your day:

- Determine your travel needs and schedule them well in advance. If traveling on the day of competition, allot plenty of time for traffic issues or other delays that are outside your control. Decide well in advance the time you must arrive at the venue. Determine how long it will take to travel under heavy traffic conditions; how much time is needed for parking; whether make-up, hair and tanning will be handled before or after arrival. If parking requires payment, ask whether the event will validate the parking coupon.
- Check the updated schedule and heat list beginning 3 days before the competition, and continue checking it daily until arrival. This information will give you essential details about exactly when the YDA will be competing. As the competition nears, the best role for parents is time management.

6.2. Check-in and Registration Details

- Allow at least 30 minutes for check-in, particularly if you did not receive the information below in a Registration Packet following your on-line registration:
 - Competition Number
 - Heat list
 - Passes/Tickets for the Ballroom
- The registration process may involve showing the YDA's USA Dance membership card, invoice or confirmation of payment, and possibly the YDA's birth certificate, especially if your youth has a very mature look.
- Ask for directions to the practice floor. Most competitions provide a practice floor for warm-ups.
- For parents of boys (or leaders): The Competition Number is exceptionally important. The couple cannot dance without a competition number. Alteration of

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the number is NOT ALLOWED. When the YDA boy or leader changes costumes, be sure to re-pin the number on the new shirt. Consider bringing tape to reinforce the paper number at the points where the pins attach to help keep it from ripping during dances.

- Ask about the location of changing rooms or bathrooms. The YDA should be on his or her way to change clothes immediately upon arrival and after check-in. Change clothes quickly to reduce any concerns about timing, and to allow for the opportunity to warm up. Learn the location of various important aspects of the competition, such as where to secure a program or ask administrative questions; the location of food vendors; the location of bathrooms and water fountains; the location of practice rooms and changing rooms relative to the Ballroom. Additionally, ask if the competition is running early, late or on time as soon as you arrive. This will tell you whether your time management plan requires an adjustment as soon as you arrive.

6.3. Getting Settled

- Once the YDA has changed into full costume and is competition ready in appearance, he or she will go through "costume clearance." Registration staff will direct you to the costume clearance area. It is so important to go through this review as soon as possible so that if there are issues, adjustments can be made. Allow between 5-10 minutes for this review to be completed depending on the number of competitors that require a costume review.
- If time permits, the YDA should head to the practice room for warm-ups. If the time is already within 40 minutes of the YDA's first heat, go directly to the Ballroom to warm up there. The YDA should be ready to dance 30 minutes before his or her first heat.
- Each competition will have various ways to provide information. Some may have diagrams or maps of the facilities in relation to the Ballroom. Some may use electronic displays. Heats are often displayed in electronic format. Ask the organizers how to determine the heat number in progress, whether by electronic projection or by relying on the announcer. Also ask the organizers about a Program Book if that is something of value. The Program Book provides comprehensive lists of heats, competitors, studios and often has other information that may be of interest. These books have a cost and are not automatically provided to competitors. Also, remember to bring lots of cash. As previously indicated, many competitions only accept cash on the day of competition.
- Follow all the rules of the event. Be aware that there are usually professional photographers and videographers at each competition. Do not take pictures or video dancers without permission. If you are the parent of a Juvenile or Pre-Teen, most events require you to purchase a video wrist-band to record your young dancers.
- Be aware of where you may be standing or congregating. For the sake of the competitors who may be trying to get to the On-Deck area, do not block entries or hallways.

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- Competitions can run early or late, so do not assume that the time on the heat list will always be the time of the event. Be in the Ballroom at least 40 minutes before the YDA's first heat. Depending on the arrangements made regarding whose responsibility it is to get the YDA to the On-Deck area, comply with those arrangements. If the parent oversees watching the heat schedule, ensure your YDA is at the On-Deck area at least 3-4 heats in advance. Only dancers and coaches are allowed to remain in the On-Deck area.
- As spectators, take your seat so as not to block others' views. If seats are reserved, honor the system and only sit in your seat. If your ticket is for general seating, do not sit in reserved or prime seats for which special tickets may have been issued.
- Although they may seem to be an eternity while on the Floor, each heat is fairly short, and competitions move through each heat quickly to stay on time. In between groups of heats, make sure your YDA and his or her partner remain close together and close to the person in charge of maintaining the heat list until they have completed all dances and the awards have been presented.

6.4. Ballroom

- Pre-Dancing
 - Some form of ticket or receipt will be required for both spectators and YDAs to enter the Ballroom. This varies with the competition. It is possible that dancers may have a different entrance from spectators. Be sure everyone in your group has the correct ticket, stamp or other authorization for entry.
 - If seats are assigned, honor the assignment and sit only at the seat indicated on the ticket. If seats are not assigned, find any unassigned seat and leave some belongings in the seat to indicate that it is taken. Once a seat has been totally vacated and all belongings removed, it becomes available again to anyone. If the dancers enter from a different location from spectators, consider arranging a quick meeting place to find one another again inside the Ballroom. Again, arrive early and claim a good seat as soon as possible.
 - Spend some time observing the On-Deck area, the way the heats are called, the process of dancers lining up, and the signage indicating which heat is currently on the floor, and locating the On-Deck Captain and observing his or her work so that you can assist with monitoring the YDA's location and availability to dance at the appropriate time. Familiarity with every system will help make future competitions easier to manage.
 - Once you are in the Ballroom, settled in a seat and have a grasp of the process, you will understand the need for the YDA to be ready to dance 30 minutes ahead of his or her first heat, and to begin lining up at least 3-4 heats ahead. Heats move very quickly. The order of heats can also change to fit circumstances in the moment. Being aware of the progress of heats and being ready to dance early will avoid stress arising from a change in the order.
 - Inevitably someone will need a bathroom break before dancing. Being aware of the time and the flow of heats will allow you to gauge if there is

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time for a quick break. It is always best to allow for a bathroom break before dancing if that is possible.

- A competition day can be very long and exhausting, so plan for a quiet evening the night before the competition to have a better experience, increase endurance, and handle the stress. If possible, do not make travel plans so tight that a delayed arrival results in a late night before dancing.
 - Regardless of the size of the competition, there is a great deal of excitement the day of the event. Avoid adding to this excitement by arriving at the venue early. Plan for more time than usually necessary for details such as parking, checking the dancers in, purchasing tickets, changing into costumes, coordinating with the partner and his/her coach, pinning the number on the leader's back, finding a seat in the Ballroom, and enjoying some of the competition going on prior to the YDA's individual heats, if possible. This plan will set the tone for a more relaxed day for everyone connected with your YDA's dance experience.
 - Make a plan with the YDA's coach regarding whether the coach, the parent, or other helpers will be in charge of getting each YDA to the On-Deck area. Managing heats and making sure dancers are ready to go is an essential part of managing the day's stress levels. Be clear on whose responsibility this will be to avoid unnecessary confusion.
 - Being on time means arriving early!
- Post-Dancing
 - Timing of the award ceremonies differs with each competition. Some competitions interject award ceremonies after a certain number of heats have been completed. Others wait until all dancing has finished before handing out awards. This information is available through the Program Book, or the On-Deck Captain will know when awards will be issued.
 - Once the YDA has completed dancing, do not leave the Ballroom until you are aware of when the awards will be announced. Your YDA will not want to miss the opportunity to receive the fruits of his or her hard work. This will also be a great time to take pictures of your YDA and his or her partner and coach. Awards are always a bright spot in the day.
 - USA Dance encourages you to share your best shots on social media, particularly on USA Dance social media sites as follows:
 - A) Facebook Group: USA Dance Junior Competitors (URL needed)
 - B) Facebook Page: USA Dance Junior Competitors
<https://www.facebook.com/USADjuniors/>
 - Once all dances have been danced and all awards received, the competition is concluded for your YDA. Consider watching a few rounds with your YDA to see how some of the older competitors dance, what they wear as costumes, and to gain more understanding of the sport. When you decide to leave the venue, be sure to take all your belongings with you.

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- Individual results will be posted online on the competition website. The size of the competition may determine when the results will be posted. Look for the “Results” tab on the individual competition website.
- Congratulations. You are now a competition veteran. The next one will be easier and even more fun! Start planning now!

6.5. What do the judges Look For?

- All competitors are divided by age, proficiency, and Style into individual dance heats. Each heat lasts between 1 minute and 1 minute 45 seconds. All competitors assigned to an individual heat will take the floor at the same time to dance for the judges.
- The judging system, nicknamed “at a glance” judging, is formatted so that the judges compare the couples on the floor in relation to each other at the same time.
- During each heat, the Judges will assess technical elements, musicality, partnership skills and individual expressions of the couple.
- Each Judge will place a mark on his or her paper or tablet corresponding to the number that is located on the leader’s back. Single proficiency couples will have a separate number on each of their back.
- The mark will differ depending on whether the heat is part of multiple elimination rounds or a single dance round, also known as a Final. In multiple elimination rounds, a mark with the letter “R” meaning recall will be given to the couples that the Judge wants to see dance again in the next round. The couples that advance are those who have been marked with an R from the highest number of Judges. In a Final (up to 8 couples), the Judge will mark a number, the highest being 1, representing the Judge’s choice of the best dancers in relation to the other dancers on the floor. In the Final, each couple will receive a number from each Judge. The couple’s end result is based on the accumulation of marks by each of the Judges on the floor.
- Due to the subjective nature of this judging system, there are always multiple judges adjudicating each event. Having multiple Judges ensures that a couple’s end result is based on the cumulative scores from the entire panel rather than the opinion of a single Judge.
- It is important to emphasize with the YDA that the couple’s marks or results are NOT representative of the quality or ability inherent in the couple. Rather the results represent that panel of Judges’ perception of how that couple danced in relation to all other couples on the floor on that day, in the round that was judged.

7. Health & Wellness

The information provided in this section is generalized for all junior athletes participating in ballroom dance. For specific questions regarding the needs of the individual YDA, please consult with your health professionals.

7.1. Nutrition

- During long periods of activity, athletes will need a food source that will enable them to maintain their energy.
- Most athletes, dancers especially, do not like eating heavy meals the day of a competition. Rather, smaller, frequent snacks that include a variety of nutrients is a better way to maintain energy throughout a long period of activity.

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- Some recommendations including trail mixes, energy bars, dried fruit and nuts, high grade dark chocolate, cheese and crackers, nut butter and crackers, smoothies, and other similar foods that replenish the essential nutrients of the body. It is best to avoid food items with large amounts of refined sugars and caffeine.
- Maintaining good nutrition is critical for our junior athletes.
- It is important for them to not only eat good meals during the day, but also ensure they are properly hydrated and have enough energy to maintain the level of dancing activity.
- Proper nutrition will also help prevent injuries.

7.2. Hydration

- During a competition, hydration is essential to keep the YDAs focused, energized and feeling at their best. Hydration is a habit that may require reinforcement from parents and coaches. Juveniles and Pre-teens may not realize how important it is to continue to drink fluids while they are dancing.
- Once the YDA enters puberty, hydration becomes even more important. Mature bodies sweat more than younger bodies, reducing not only available moisture in the system, but also losing salts and minerals.
- Eating small snacks and drinking water generally will suffice to provide both nutrition and hydration. If your YDA does not like to eat at all, then consider providing a drink that contains salts and minerals such as Gatorade or Powerade.
- Energy drinks, highly processed sugar drinks such as sodas, and drinks with caffeine are not recommended during the competition day.

7.3. Sportsmanship

- Both competitors and spectators are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship. This allows everyone to have a positive experience overall.
- Good sportsmanship means showing respect for yourself, other dancers, the coaches, judges, officials, organizers, vendors, and everyone at the event. It means following the rules and treating others the way you want and expect to be treated.
- Remember, the community of DanceSport competitors, Judges and organizers comprise a rather small group of people. As the YDA competes at increasing numbers of competitions, the people at these events will become familiar faces, some might become future coaches or partners, and others may become friends. Inappropriate conduct at any competition is not likely to be quickly forgotten.
- Every dancer at a competition is on a journey similar to yours and that of your YDA. Everyone has worked hard to get to this event, so be kind and courteous to others both on and off the Floor.
- Feel free to generate support for your favorite couple as they dance by yelling out their numbers to encourage them and show your support.
- When your YDA wins, be a gracious and generous winner. Acknowledge your child's victories without putting down the opponents.
- When other competitors win, congratulate them for their beautiful dance.

7.4. Anticipating Stress

- The first competition, from the decision to compete through the completion of the event, will be a learning experience. Expect to make a few mistakes or hit a few snags during the

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first competition. You will be well prepared by reviewing this manual, but a general manual cannot cover every potential situation. No one has all the answers at their first competition.

- Over communicate with the organizer, coaches, other parents, and the Officials prior to or at the event. ANY question that may come to mind is a good question.
- Parents know their children best. Be aware of behavioral changes in your YDA in the weeks and days leading up to and during the event. Stress can manifest in different ways. Each YDA will process the competition stress differently and uniquely. Work with the coach and the YDA to come up with strategies to help the YDA focus on the dancing and having fun, rather than focusing on the outcome alone. For the YDA to perceive this as fun, the parents should project it as fun. If parents are stressed, YDAs will become even more stressed.
- Some competitions are very large, while others are smaller. The larger the competition, the more sensation is available to distract and potentially unnerve the YDA. Regardless, the first competition will seem daunting until it is finished. Each successive competition will be easier to navigate as the family becomes accustomed to the process as well as the event.

7.5. Benefits

- The health benefits of ballroom dance have increasingly been the subject of research and studies in recent years.
- According to these studies, ballroom dance is considered a “moderate” activity level of exercise. Thus, the YDA will benefit greatly from engaging in ballroom dance, and by doing so will experience the benefits of this level of exercise. Some of the important benefits arising from moderate activity levels of exercise include the following:
 - Strengthening bones and muscles
 - Improving coordination
 - Increasing flexibility
 - Improving posture
 - Helping to maintain weight
- Bones and muscles are strengthened in response to the amount of force and stress applied to them. Because dance involves the entire body, every movement and every action applies force and stress to all parts of the body, which result in the development of strength in bones and muscles for the YDA.
- Dance steps and movements require balance, which in turn requires the coordination of multiple muscles. Thus, ballroom dance will enhance both the balance and coordination of a growing body.
- Although flexibility is most often associated with female dancers, male dancers will also become more flexible over time as they progress in their dance skills. Increased flexibility not only improves dancing skills, it can help prevent injury when participating in other activities.
- Excellent posture is often a key characteristic of a dancer, which in turn ensures the skeleton, operates as closely as possible to its intended purpose. Proper posture helps in both maintaining balance and preventing injury while dancing, as well as engaging in other activities. Moreover, maintaining good posture will help counteract many of the back and neck problems that arise from the heavy use of computers and hand-held technology.
- As an aerobic activity, ballroom dance can help a YDA maintain a proper weight in two different ways. First, some reports have estimated that 30 minutes of ballroom dancing can burn 200-400 calories, which in turn helps to maintain a healthy weight. Secondly, the

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increased activity associated with consistently engaging in dance helps to maintain a higher resting metabolic rate, which also contributes to good weight management.

7.6. Injury

- Ballroom dance is not characteristically associated with high-impact injuries arising in many sports. In general, most of the injuries experienced are related to repetitive movements.
- The most common injuries are tendonitis, muscle strain, and muscle cramps. Preventative measures can reduce the probability of sustaining these injuries.
- If the YDA complains of pain, the situation should be evaluated by a physician as soon as possible to prevent any injury from becoming worse. It is important to pay attention to any unusual pain resulting from dance because any muscle or joint can be affected by repetitive motion. Additionally, the coach should be informed of the complaint immediately. It is possible that the pain comes from improper body alignment. The coach can evaluate the location of the pain against the YDA's technique to determine a potential source.
- The best way to prevent injuries during dancing is to require the YDA to engage in warm up and cool down activities with each dance session.
- Warming up (including stretching) will increase the blood flow to the muscles, bringing more oxygen to them. Warming up will also increase the temperature of the muscles, which will increase the flexibility of the muscle.
- Likewise, cooling down at the end of a dance session will help to dissipate the heat away from the muscles and help the lymphatic system remove any waste generated by the increased activity, such as lactic acid, thereby helping to prevent muscle cramps.
- Coaches usually will have warm-up and cool-down exercises during a group class. It is important for the YDA also to develop the habit of warming up and cooling down during any practice, individual lesson, or competition.

8. Packing & Travel Preparation

- ✓ See the attachment section of this handbook for a link to pre-made packing lists.

8.1. Ballroom Necessities for Competition Day

- Hydration and Nutrition
 - All competitions provide cold water for the participants in the Ballroom. All other drinks and snacks are up to you to provide for your YDA and yourself. To avoid paying for costly hotel snacks or drinks, we recommend that you bring your own snacks and any additional or favorite drinks that the YDA will need during the day. Please see the section on Health, above, for ideas of what to bring.
- First-Aid and Foot Care
 - First Aid and foot care is also a big concern for all day competitions. It is a good idea to keep a plastic box filled with the following items:
 - 3" x 75" stretch gauze bandage
 - Tylenol or your preferred pain reliever
 - Antibiotic ointment or antibiotic-infused band-aids
 - Waterproof band-aids

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- Bandage tape
- Biofreeze pain relief gel;
- Neosporin + Pain Relief ointment
- Moleskin foam padding

- Miscellaneous Items:

- Black Ties
- Safety pins of varying sizes
- Needle and Thread (black, white, costume color)
- Small scissors
- Extra black buttons
- Extra black socks
- Extra black belt
- Earring backs

8.2. Packing List

- For Boys:

- Costumes and accessories, depending on dance style and level
- Dance shoes
- Extra shirt
- Socks and underwear (bring extra)
- Sweater, jacket or sweatshirt for between the rounds
- Practice wear
- Practice shoes
- Hair spray, mousse or gel
- Hair brush and comb
- Makeup (if desired): foundation, powder, blush
- Makeup remover

- For Girls:

- Costumes and accessories, depending on dance style and level
- Dance shoes
- Tights, socks, underwear (bring extra)
- Sweater, jacket or sweatshirt for between the rounds
- Legwarmers and comfortable slippers or booties
- Practice wear
- Practice shoes
- Hair spray, mousse or gel
- Hair brushes, combs, hot iron or curler for styling
- Hair elastics, clips, pins, bobby pins and nets
- Makeup (foundation, powder, blush, eye liner, eye shadows, mascara, lip liner, lipstick)
- Eyelashes and lash glue (bring extras)

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- Jewelry and hair accessories allowed by costume regulations (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, hair “bling”)
- Makeup remover
- Miscellaneous:
 - Hand sanitizer or wipes
 - Your choice of snacks
 - Your choice of drinks, including bottled water if the YDA does not respond well to very cold water when overheated
 - Q-tips; nail clippers or manicure scissors
 - If your YDA wears contact lenses, make sure you have an extra set
 - Shoe brush, super glue, extra shoelaces and heel protectors
 - Antistatic spray
 - Stain remover: Tide ToGo Stain Pen might save your day
 - Small towel, paper towels or napkins; tissues

8.3. Tips & Helpful Best Practices

- Don't Forget to Bring
 - Current USA Dance/WDSF membership card
 - Your dancer's ID or a copy of birth certificate
 - Your competition registration/payment receipt
 - Your camera and some cash for any cash-only concession snacks your YDA might want
- Travel Tips
 - When traveling by airline, pack as much of the essential competition costume items in a carry-on bag as possible to avoid problems associated with lost luggage.
 - It is a good practice to pack two sets of shoes and costumes for each style. Not only does it allow for a costume change between rounds, but it is also great to have a backup if your costume is damaged or is not in compliance with costume requirements.
 - Consider investing in a small handheld fabric steamer and bring it to competitions. Hotel irons are usually of poor quality and can potentially damage delicate costumes. An alternative to a hand-held steamer is to run hot water in a hotel shower and hang the costumes in the bathroom to help eliminate travel wrinkles.

9. Definitions & Terms

9.1. Competition

- Ballroom – the main room where the competition is held
- Inside Ballroom (IB) – area inside the main Ballroom
- Outside Ballroom (OB) – area outside the main Ballroom

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- Stage – the part of the Ballroom behind the dance floor where Officials are stationed (IB)
- On Deck – area competitors use to enter and exit the floor (IB)
- Floor – hardwood area used for the competitive dancing (IB)
- Changing Room – area designated for changing into costumes (OB)
- Practice Room – area designated for preparing for event (OB)
- Vendor Area – area where products and services can be purchased (OB)
- Registration Desk – area where competitors check in upon arrival (OB)

9.2. Personnel

- Organizer – the person running & hosting the competition
- Registrar – the person inputting the entries into the system
- Scrutineer – the person inputting the judge's scores into the system
- Official – a person working or employed by the event
- Judge – the person assessing and determining the placement
- Chairman of Judges – a Judge that is overseeing the other Judges
- Invigilator – the person ensuring all rules are followed during the event
- Videographer – the person taking a video recording of individual dancers who have placed orders for this service
- Photographer – the person taking pictures for sale
- Competitor – the person that is entering the event
- On Deck Captain – the person managing the flow of the competitors
- Doorman – the person taking tickets at the entry to the Ballroom
- Vendor – a person at the event that is selling services or products

9.3. Registering

- Entry – the event in which the competitor is competing
- Marks – the result a competitor receives in an event
- Scoresheet – the composite list of an event with all marks displayed
- Number – the number used by judging (worn on the Leader's back)
- Heat List – a printed/mobile list of entries sorted by competitor
- Entry Invoice – an itemized list of fees due and fees paid
- Program – a printed copy of all events and competitors for the event
- Registration Packet – collection of heat list, entry invoice, & number
- Checking in – the process of confirming arrival and pick-up of Registration Packet
- Session – the group of events that are scheduled during the matinee (daytime) or evening timeframes
- Ticket/Wristband – the means by which entry to the Ballroom will be granted

9.4. Dance Classification

- Genre – the category of dance composition characterized by a particular Style
- Style – a distinctive manner of categorizing dance based on compositional similarities
- International Latin – Cha Cha, Samba, Rumba, Paso Doble, Jive
- International Standard – Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot, Quickstep
- American Smooth – Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, Viennese Waltz
- American Rhythm – Cha Cha, Rumba, Swing, Bolero, Mambo

9.5. Age Classifications

- Juvenile – 12 & under years of age

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- Junior – 13 – 16 years of age
- Youth – 17 & 18 years of age
- Under 21 – 19 & 20 years of age

9.6. Level Classification

- Bronze – Beginner Closed Syllabus Level
- Silver – Intermediate Closed Syllabus Level
- Gold – Advanced Closed Syllabus Level
- Novice – Beginner Open Syllabus Level
- Pre-Championship – Intermediate Open Syllabus Level
- Championship – Advanced Open Syllabus Level
- Rising Star – Between Intermediate & Advanced Open Syllabus Level

9.7. People Classification

- Amateur – dancer who does not make a living from teaching ballroom dance
- Student – SAME as Amateur
- Teacher – dancer who makes a living from teaching ballroom dance
- Professional – SAME as Teacher
- Pro-Am – an event in which a Professional acts as a partner for an Amateur
- Teacher-Student – SAME as Pro-Am
- Mixed Proficiency – Two Amateurs of different levels that compete together

9.8. Miscellaneous

- Open Syllabus – choreography that is not required to follow the syllabus
- Closed Syllabus – choreography that is require to follow the syllabus at the specific level of proficiency
- Routine/Program – material used to compete
- Step/Figures – elements combined together to form Routines/Programs

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10. Attachments

10.1. Competition Prep & Packing Checklists

FOR HER – Interactive checklist that allows you to check off items as you pack them

USA Dance Competition Checklist	
FOR HER: GENERAL	FOR HER: MAKE-UP & HAIR
Don <input type="checkbox"/> Description	Don <input type="checkbox"/> Description
General	Make-up & Hair
Costumes and accessories	Hair spray, mousse or gel
Dance shoes	Hair brushes, combs, iron or curler for styling
Tights, socks & underwear	Hair elastics, clips, pins, bobby pins and nets
Sweater, jacket or sweatshirt while in ballroom	Eyelashes and lash glue (bring extras)
Legwarmers and comfortable slippers/booties	Makeup: foundation, powder & blush
Exercise or practice wear	Makeup: eye-liner, eye shadows, & mascara
Practice shoes	Makeup: lip-liner & lipstick
Hair and makeup supplies for touch-ups	Makeup: remover & wipes

FOR HIM – Interactive checklist that allows you to check off items as you pack them

USA Dance Competition Checklist	
FOR HIM: GENERAL	FOR HIM: MAKE-UP & HAIR
Done <input type="checkbox"/> Description	Done <input type="checkbox"/> Description
General	Make-up & Hair
Costumes and accessories	Hair spray, mousse or gel
Dance shoes	Hair brush and comb;
Extra shirt	Makeup foundation
Socks and underwear	Makeup powder
Sweater, jacket or sweatshirt while in ballroom	Makeup blush
Exercise or practice wear	Makeup remover
Practice shoes	
Hair and makeup supplies for touch-up	

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MISC. – Interactive checklist that allows you to check off items as you pack them

MISCELLANEOUS		FIRST AID, HYDRATION, & DIET	
Done	Description	Done	Description
MISCELLANEOUS		FIRST AID	
	Black Ties		3" x 75" stretch gauze bandage
	Safety pins		Tylenol or your preferred pain reliever
	Needle and Thread (black, white, red)		Antibiotic, waterproof band-aids
	Small scissors		Bandage tape
	Extra black buttons		Biofreeze pain relief gel
	Extra black socks		Neosporin+pain relief
	Extra black belt		Moleskin/foam padding
	Earring backs		
DON'T FORGET		HYDRATION & DIET	
	USA Dance/WDSF membership card		Bottle of Water
	Child's ID or a copy of birth certificate		Liquids w/Electrolytes
	Competition registration/payment receipt		Fruits
	Your camera and some cash		Non-Greasy Snack (energy, cereal, power bars)
			Nuts

FOR PARENT - Interactive checklist that allows you to check off items as you pack them

USA Dance Competition Checklist			
FOR PARENTS: SUPPLY BAG			
Done	Description	Done	Description
SUPPLY BAG		SUPPLY BAG	
	Hand sanitizer or wipes		Emergency costume repair supplies
	Snacks		Antistatic spray
	Bottled Water		Extra socks or tights
	White Grape Juice Boxes		Stain Remover: Tide "To Go" Pen
	First Aid Supplies		Small towel, napkins, and/or tissues
	Contact Lens/Personal Child Items		Hair & Make-up Touch-up Supplies

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10.2. Costume Rules by Organization

JUVENILE & PRE-TEEN GIRL Costume Rules/Guidelines

Juvenile & Pre-Teen Girl

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSF
General	Skirt/Top	Skirt/Top	Bo Skirt/W Top	Bo Skirt/W Top
	Dress w/attached UG	Dress w/attached UG	C1nS dress w/attached UG	C1nS dress w/attached UG
	Leo Top/Full Skirt	Leo Top/Full Skirt	C1nS leo w/SC Skirt	C1nS leo w/SC Skirt
			Gloves NA	
Skirt	Plain/Pleated w/1-3 half circles	Plain/Pleated w/1-3 half circles	Plain/Pleated w/1-1.5 full circles	Plain/Pleated w/1-3 half circles
	US no larger/longer than top layer	US no larger/longer than top layer	US no larger/longer than top layer	US no larger/longer than top layer
	US & OS same color	US & OS same color	US & OS same color	US & OS same color
	Godets/extra panels NA	Godets/extra panels NA	Godets/extra panels NA	Godets/extra panels NA
	Uneven hem lines, frills, ect. NA	Uneven hem lines, frills, ect. NA	Uneven hem lines, frills, ect. NA	Uneven hem lines, frills, ect. NA
	Length min: 3in above knee cap	Length min: 3in above knee cap	Length min: 4in above knee cap	Length min: 4in above knee cap
	Length max: 3in below knee cap	Length max: 3in below knee cap	Length max: below knee cap	Length max: below knee cap
	At least one layer must be solid	At least one layer must be solid	At least one layer must be solid	At least one layer must be solid
		Anything that will stiffen the hem NA	Anything that will stiffen the hem NA	
Bodice	Necklines NR	Necklines NR	Necklines NR	Necklines NR
	Neckline edging/trim NA	Neckline edging/trim NA	Neckline edging/trim NA	Neckline edging/trim NA
	Belting from waist down 2in allowed	Belting from waist down 2in allowed	Belting from waist down 2in allowed	Belting from waist down 2in allowed
	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NA	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NA	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NA	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NA
Sleeves	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR
	Finger Loops NA	Finger Loops NA	Finger Loops NA	Finger Loops NA
	Edging/Trimming NA	Edging/Trimming NA	Edging/Trimming NA	Edging/Trimming NA
Socks	W Ankle w/ or w/o lace required	W Ankle w/ or w/o lace required	C Short Socks	C Short Socks
	S or Pink/W Panty Hose required	S or Pink/W Panty Hose required	Tights: SC	Tights: SC
	Fishnets NA	Fishnets NA	Mesh/Fishnet NA	Mesh/Fishnet NA
Shoes	If dance shoe, block style heel	If dance shoe, block style heel	If dance shoe, block style heel	If dance shoe, block style heel
	Heel height max 1.5in	Heel height max 1.5in	Heel height max 1.5in	Heel height max 1.5in
	MD on buckle is allowed	MD on buckle is allowed		
	If shoe comes w/glitter, allowed	If shoe comes w/glitter, allowed		
Materials	C1nS	C1nS	C1nS	C1nS
	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool
	No glitter, metallic thread, ect.	No glitter, metallic thread, ect.	No glitter, metallic thread, ect.	No glitter, metallic thread, ect.
	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric
	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects
	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects
	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations
	Decoration Jewellery NA	Decoration Jewellery NA	Decoration Jewellery NA	Decoration Jewellery NA
Sheer colored must be lined	Sheer colored must be lined	Sheer colored must be lined	Sheer colored must be lined	
Make-up	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hairstyle	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail

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JUNIOR GIRL SYLLABUS Costume Rules/Guidelines

Junior Girl Syllabus

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSE
General	Standard - Cocktail Dress	Standard - Cocktail Dress	CnS Dress	Standard - Competition Dress
	Latin - Leotards/Wrap Skirts	Latin - Leotards/Wrap Skirts	Blouse tucked into a Skirt	Latin - Competition Dress
	Latin - Party/Cocktail Dress	Latin - Party/Cocktail Dress	Standard - Floats/Gloves NA	Latin - Two Piece allowed (No bikini top)
Skirt	Ballgown NA	Ballgown NA	Skirt coverage includes buttocks	Skirt coverage includes buttocks
	Length min: 3in above knee cap	Length min: 3in above knee cap	Standard - knee length min	Standard - knee length min
	Length max: 3in below knee cap	Length max: 3in below knee cap	Latin - 4in above min. length	Latin - 4in above min. length
	At least one layer must be solid	At least one layer must be solid	Latin - below knee cap max. length	Latin - below knee cap max. length
		Regular cut dance trunks required		
	Coverage of legs to mid thigh required			
Bodice	Necklines NR	Necklines NR	Necklines NR	Necklines NR
	Neckline edging/trim (Light)	Neckline edging/trim (Light)	Neckline edging/trim NR	Neckline edging/trim NA
	Edging/Trimming on Bodice (Light)	Edging/Trimming on Bodice (Light)	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NR	Edging/Trimming on Bodice NA
		Straps Min. 1ch in width		
		Halter tops/designs NA		
		Back TOP: 5 in above waist		
	Skin from point/inches from sides covered			
Sleeves	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR	Sleeve lengths NR
	Finger Loops NA	Finger Loops NA	Edging/Trimming NR	Edging/Trimming NA
	Edging/Trimming (Light)	Edging/Trimming (Light)		
Socks	S or Pink/W Panty Hose required	S or Pink/W Panty Hose required	C Short Socks/Tights OA	C Short Socks/Tights OA
	Fishnets require if not panty hose	Fishnets require if not panty hose	Mesh/Fishnet NA	Mesh/Fishnet NA
Shoes	Standard - NR	Standard - NR	Heel height max 3in	Heel height max 3in
	Latin - NR	Latin - NR		
Materials	C1nS	C1nS	C1nS	C1nS
	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cut-outs NA	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool
	All Adornment/Embellishments (Light)	All Adornment/Embellishments (Light)	Decoration w/Light Effects NA	Decoration w/Light Effects NA
	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	Decoration Non Light Effects Allowed	Decoration Non Light Effects Allowed
	Decoration Jewellery NA	Sheer Fabric on arms allowed	Basic Materials w/Light Effects NA	Basic Materials w/Light Effects NA
	Sheer colored must be lined	Sheer Fabric in front of bust line up allowed	Decoration Jewellery NA	Decoration Jewellery NA
		Sheer Fabric in the back TOP 5in from waist	Sheer colored must be lined	Sheer colored must be lined
	Decoration Jewellery NA			
	Sheer colored must be lined			
Make-up	NR	NR	NR	NR
Hairstyle	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail
			Personal Jewelry Allowed	Personal Jewelry Allowed
			Hair Decoration Non-Light Effects AO	Hair Decoration Non-Light Effects AO

USA Dance Parent Handbook

JUNIOR GIRL OPEN Costume Rules/Guidelines

Junior Girl Open

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSF
General	Standard - Ballgown	Standard - Ball-gown	Standard - Ball-gown	Standard - Ball-gown
	Latin - Costume	Latin - Costome (Unitards NA)	Latin - Costume	Latin - Costume
Skirt	NR	Regular cut dance trunks required	PA/IA must have full coverage	PA/IA must have full coverage
		Skirts broken from trunk line down	UG CnS if top layer is sheer	UG CnS if top layer is sheer
		Skirts may have a slit from trunk line down	UGC if top layer is opaque	UGC if top layer is opaque
		Coverage of legs to mid thigh required	HL/PL side coverage min 2in	HL/PL side coverage min 2in
Bodice	NR	Straps Min. 1ch in width	CnS Bodice	CnS Bodice
		Halter tops/designs NA	If S, bra must be heavily decorated	If S, bra must be heavily decorated
		Back TOP: 5 in above waist	Max distance between bra cups: 2in	Max distance between bra cups: 2in
		Skin from point/inches from sides covered		
Sleeves	NR	NR	NR	NR
Socks	NR	Standard - NR	NR	NR
		Latin - Fishnets Required		
Shoes	NR	NR	NR	NR
Materials	NR	C1nS	NR	NR
		Cut-outs NA		
		Sheer Fabric on arms allowed		
		Sheer Fabric in front of bust line up allowed Sheer Fabric in the back TOP 5in from waist		
Make-up	NR	NR	NR	NR
Hairstyle	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	Long hair: worn up/pony tail	NR	NR

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JUVENILE & PRE-TEEN BOY Costume Rules/Guidelines

Juvenile & Pre-Teen Boy

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSF
Trousers	B	B	Bo	Bo
	Satin Stripes Allowed	Satin Stripes Allowed	No Satin Stripes	Satin Stripes Allowed
	High Waist Optional	High Waist Optional		
	Underfoot Strap Optional	Underfoot Strap Optional		
Shirts	WLS (no wing collars)	WLS (no wing collars)	WLS (no wing collars) OA	WLS (no wing collars)
	Bo LS (no wing collars)	Bo LS (no wing collars)	No pleats or ribbing	W/Bo Polo Neck
	No pleats or ribbing	No pleats or ribbing	Sleeves at wrist length	No pleats or ribbing
	Sleeves at wrist length	Sleeves at wrist length	Tail, Tux Shirts NA	Sleeves at wrist length
	Tail, Tux Shirts NA	Tail, Tux Shirts NA	Turtle/Mock-Turtle NA	Tail, Tux Shirts NA
	Turtle/Mock-Turtle NA	Turtle/Mock-Turtle NA	Untucked Shirt	Turtle/Mock-Turtle NA
	Untucked Shirt	Untucked Shirt		Untucked Shirt
Vests	B	B	NA	NA
	No sweaters or jackets	No sweaters or jackets		
Tie	Bo	Bo	Bo	Bo
	Straight or Bow acceptable	Straight or Bow acceptable	Straight or Bow acceptable	Straight or Bow acceptable
Socks	B	B	Bo	Bo
Shoes	Bo	Bo	Bo	Bo
	Heel height max 1.5in	Heel height max 1.5in	Heel Height max 1.5in	Heel Height max 1in
Materials	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics
	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool
	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric
	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects
	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects
	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations
Make-up	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hairstyle	Long hair in pony tail	Long hair in pony tail	Long hair in pony tail	Long hair in pony tail

USA Dance Parent Handbook

JUNIOR BOY SYLLABUS Costume Rules/Guidelines

Junior Boys Syllabus

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSF
Trousers	NR Dress Pants	NR Dress Pants	Standard - Bo	Standard - Bo
	Tail Suits NA	Tail Suits NA	Latin - Bo (Satin Stripe Allowed)	Latin - CnS (Satin Stripe Allowed)
Shirts	Standard - NR Plain Shirt	NR Plain Shirt	W LS (no wing collars) OA	Standard - W LS Shirt
	Latin - NR Plain/Ruffled	TOP: Sternum	No pleats or ribbing	Standard - W/Bo LS polo
			Sleeves at wrist length	Latin - C (Tucked in/outside)
			Tail, Tux Shirts NA	Latin - TOP: Sternum
			Turtle/Mock-Turtle NA	
		Untucked Shirt		
Vests	NR	NR	Bo (Optional)	Bo (Optional)
	Optional Cummerbund/Vest	Optional Cummerbund/Vest		
Tie	NR	NR	W/Bo Bow Tie	Standard - Bo w/Plain Shirt
			Bo Tie	Standard - W w/Wing Collar
				Latin - NR
Socks	NR	NR	Bo	Bo
Shoes	NR	NR	Bo	NR
			Heel Height max 1.5in	
Materials	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics	Plain Fabrics
	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool	Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool
	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric	No Satin or Shiny Fabric
	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects	No Light Effects
	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects	No Non-Light Effects
	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations	No Decorations
Make-up	NR	NR	NR	NA
Hairstyle	NR	NR	Long hair in pony tail	Long hair in pony tail

USA Dance Parent Handbook

JUNIOR BOY OPEN Costume Rules/Guidelines

Junior Boy Open

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USA Dance	WDSF
Trousers	Latin - Latin Pants NR Standard - Tail Suit Pants Bo	Latin - Latin Pants NR Standard - Tail Suit Pants Bo	Latin - Latin Pants NR Standard - Tail Suit Pants Bo	Latin - Latin Pants NR Standard - Tail Suit Pants Bo
Shirts	Latin - Latin Shirt NR	Latin - Latin Shirt	Latin - Latin Shirt	Latin - C & NR
	Standard - Tail Suit Top	Latin - TOP: Sternum Standard - Tail Suit Top	Standard - Tail Suit Top	Standard - Tail Suit Top W OA
Vests	Latin - NR	Latin - NR	Latin - NR	Latin - NR
	Standard - Tail Suit Coat Bo	Standard - Tail Suit Coat Bo	Standard - Tail Suit Coat Bo	Standard - Tail Suit Coat Bo
Tie	Latin - NR	Latin - NR	Latin - NR	Latin - NR
	Standard - W Bow Tie	Standard - W Bow Tie	Standard - W Bow Tie	Standard - W Bow Tie
Socks	NR	NR	NR	NR
Shoes	NR	NR	NR	NR
Materials	Latin - NR	Latin - Sheer Fabric on Sleeves OA	Latin - NR	Latin - NR
	Standard - Tail Suit Material	Standard - Tail Suit Material	Standard - Tail Suit Material	Standard - Tail Suit Material
Make-up	NR	NR	NR	NR
Hairstyle	NR	NR	NR	Long hair in pony tail

DEFINITIONS & INCLUSIVES for terminology and verbiage

Definitions & Inclusive

Definition of Terms	
NR	No Restriction
NA	Not Allowed
OA	Only Allowed
IA	Intimacy Area
SA	Shape Area
HL	Hip Line
PL	Panty Line
TOP	Men's Top Opening Point
Bo	Black Only
B	Black or Midnight Blue
W	White
S	Skin Color
SwD	Skin with Decoration
C	Any Color
CnS	Any Color except Skin Color
CInS	One Color except Skin Color
LS	Long Sleeve
UG	Undergarment
US	Underskirt
OS	Outerskirt
MD	Manufacturer's Decorations
SC	Same Color

General Inclusive	
Make-up	includes face make-up, artificial tan, nails, and eye lashes
Decoration Jewellery	jewellery designed to be a part of a dance dress
Basic Material	creates shape of the dress
Decoration	anything fixed on the basic material, hair, skin
Light Effects	rhinestones, sequins, beads, pearls, ect.
Non-Light Effects	fringe, feathers, flowers, bows, lace, ribbons, ect.
Necklines	boat, high neck, v-neck, sweetheart, 'peter pan', and regular
HL	panties top line
PL	Panties bottom line
TOP	point, to which top or shirt can be opened
SA	minimum area which MUST be covered.
IA	body zones, which must be covered by materials

Age Categories	
Pre-teen 1/2 (NDCA/USAD)	9 or younger/10-11 yrs old
Juvenile 1/2 (WDSF Only)	9 or younger/10-11 yrs old
Junior 1/2 (ALL)	12-13 yrs old/14-15 yrs old

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10.3. Costuming Guidelines Sorting Tool

USER SHEET – Select Age, Gender, Level, & Organizations and Sheet will Auto-Sort

Interactive Workbook: <http://usadance.org/dancesport/forms-and-resources/jraq9nwhf8/>

Costume Rules/Guidelines Sorting Tool

Child's Age	9	(Select from Drop-Down)
Child's Age Category	Pre-Teen I / Juvenile I	
Child's Gender	Boy	(Select from Drop-Down)
Syllabus or Open?	Open	(Select from Drop-Down)*
Child's Age Category	Pre-Teen / Juvenile	
NDCA	No	(Select Yes or No for Organization Info)
BYU Nationals	No	(Select Yes or No for Organization Info)
USADance	Yes	(Select Yes or No for Organization Info)
WDSF	Yes	(Select Yes or No for Organization Info)
*Highlighted fields below denotes uniformity between organizations		*Only Applicable to Juniors

	NDCA	BYU Nationals	USADance	WDSF
Trousers			Black Only No Satin Stripes	Black Only No Satin Stripes (Duplicate)
Shirts			White Long-Sleeve (no wing collars) only No pleats or ribbing Sleeves at wrist length Tail, tux shirts not allowed Turtle / mock-turtle not allowed Untucked shirt not allowed	White Long-Sleeve (no wing collars) White or Black Polo Neck No pleats or ribbing Sleeves at wrist length Tail, tux shirts not allowed Turtle / mock-turtle not allowed
Vests			Not Allowed	Not Allowed (Duplicate)
Tie			Black only	Black only
Socks			Straight or bow acceptable	Straight or bow acceptable (Duplicate)
Shoes			Black only Max 1.5" heel height	Black only Max 1" heel height
Materials			Plain fabrics Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool No Satin or Shiny Fabric No Light Effects No Non-Light Effects No Decorations	Plain fabrics Cotton, Poly, Blend, Wool No Satin or Shiny Fabric No Light Effects No Non-Light Effects No Decorations (Duplicate)
Makeup			Not Allowed	Not Allowed (Duplicate)
Hairstyle			Long hair must be in ponytail	Long hair must be in ponytail (Duplicate)

USA Dance Parent Handbook

DEFINITIONS & INCLUSIVES for terminology and verbiage

Definitions & Inclusive

Definition of Terms	
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PL	Panty Line
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B	Black or Midnight Blue
W	White
S	Skin Color
SwD	Skin with Decoration
C	Any Color
CnS	Any Color except Skin Color
C1nS	One Color except Skin Color
LS	Long Sleeve
UG	Undergarment
US	Underskirt
OS	Outerskirt
MD	Manufacturer's Decorations
SC	Same Color

General Inclusive	
Make-up	includes face make-up, artificial tan, nails, and eye lashes
Decoration Jewellery	jewellery designed to be a part of a dance dress
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10.4. Class/Proficiency Information

INFORMATION & DESCRIPTIONS of Class/Proficiency

Medal(UK/NA)	Standard	Latin	Class(UK/NA)	Class(Int'l)	Skill	Standard	Latin
Bronze	W, T, Q	C, S, R	E	E	Beginner	W, Q	C, J
Silver	W, T, F, Q	C, S, R, J	D	D	Novice	W, T, Q	C, R, J
Gold	W, T, VW, F, Q	C, S, R, P, J	C	C	Intermediate	W, T, Q	C, R, J
-	-	-	-	B	Advanced	W, T, F, Q	S, C, R, J
-	-	-	B	A	Pre-Championship	W, T, F, Q	S, C, R, J
Open	W, T, VW, F, Q	C, S, R, P, J	A	S	Championship	W, T, VW, F, Q	S, C, R, P, J

Standard		Latin	
W	Waltz	C	Cha Cha
T	Tango	S	Samba
VW	Viennese Waltz	R	Rumba
F	Foxtrot	P	Paso Doble
Q	Quickstep	J	Jive

Beginner	Those NEW to dancing who have no competition experience
Novice	Competitors that are just beginning to actively compete
Intermediate	Competitors more seasoned in the competitive arena
Pre-Championship	Competitors that compete at a high level
Championship	Competitors that compete at an advance level

Notes:	
1.	Some countries organize the class system on a points accrual system
2.	Each country's WDSF affiliate retains full autonomy in reference to class progression
3.	The Medal System dances a restrictive syllabus until completion of the the gold level
4.	All Classes except E have "open"(outside the syllabus) material that is allowed

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10.5. USA Dance Costume Catalog by DSI London



(NOT PICTURED – Available girl/boy options, color choices, size chart)