

RECITAL HINTS

Are you a little unsure about what to expect at the upcoming recital? If so, relax. We asked the members of the Dance Company Parents Association (the people whose kids have been dancing at our studio for years) to share some pointers on staying organized (and staying sane) during recital week. Here's what they told us from A to Zzzzzz.

Accessories	Use a re-sealable bag to hold any accessories (hairpiece, gloves, etc.) for each dance. If you have four dances, use four different bags. Use a Sharpie to write the name of the dance on the bag, plus a list of each accessory item. The list serves as a checklist before you leave home for the recital, when getting dressed, and when repacking items after each dance is complete.
Autograph Book	Some kids like to use their free time during recital week to collect autographs from their classmates, friends and fellow stars. Do not use pens and markers while in costume.
Calm	Calm begins with the parents. Let's all try to be a model of calm and keep the volume and urgency levels set on "low" all week. There is no challenge that can't be worked out. We always find a way, and it's an easier road if we all remain calm along the way.
Cameras	Remember that the use of cameras is absolutely prohibited during the recital. It's distracting to your fellow audience members and, frankly, it's very inconsiderate. Bring a camera during rehearsal week and get all the stage and candid shots you'd like. Since these are dress rehearsals, your pictures should look just like you took them during the show. When you distribute recital tickets to your family and friends, please remind them that photography isn't permitted during the show.
Class Mothers	Class mothers are a gift from Heaven. Explain to your children ahead of time how long the rehearsal and recital days could be, and that they need to stay with their class mother and behave. The rehearsals and the recital run so much smoother and faster when everyone stays together.
Clothing Rack	Reasonably durable clothing racks with wheels can be purchased at stores such as Wal-Mart. If your child is in several dances and/or plans to dance again next year, it's a smart investment that keeps you organized, prevents wrinkles, and provides a little dressing privacy. Hang costumes on the rack in the order they will be needed in the show.
Costumes	Put all costumes and their accessories into garment bags -- one costume per bag. This keeps the costume clean and everything organized together. Put your accessory bag inside the garment bag.
Director	It happens every year. Someone thinks they know better, they do it their own way instead of the recommended way, and it messes things up for others or delays things for everyone. Chris is the Director. He has learned a few things by doing this show for over 40 years, and we do things his way because they work. Please listen to him.

Dressing Rooms	Please respect others' space and property in the dressing rooms, and coach your children to do likewise. More time will be spent in the dressing rooms than on stage or in the auditorium, so let's all do our best to make it a pleasant place.
Drinks	Try to stick with bottled water or juice in a box (no glass). Colored fruit juices and dance costumes DO NOT go together! Also, the less the sugar, the more attentive the children may be.
Extra Everything	<p>Now is not the time to get a run in your tights without a backup. Have at least one extra pair on hand of each color that you need. Also bring extra hair gel, hair nets, bobby pins and hair spray with you. A few less obvious things that have come in handy for others include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby wipes/Shout wipes (to fix makeup mistakes or dirty hands); • Baby powder (for itchy costumes); • Safety pins (for emergency costume repairs); • Clear nail Polish (to repair minor holes/runs in tights when there isn't time to change them); • Tylenol, Advil, Motrin or your pain reliever of choice; • Extra contact lenses (because the show can't be stopped to search the stage for one); and • Band-Aids (the "invisible" kind -- stage is not the place for Sponge Bob Band-Aids).
Fan Clubs	Family members and friends don't belong backstage or in the dressing rooms during rehearsals or the recital. The same applies during intermission and after the show. There is a lot of backstage activity in a limited space, and dressing rooms are a private area. Please remind your family and guests to be respectful of these areas. If they wish to greet a performer after the show or present flowers, they should do so in the lobby areas.
Flowers and Gifts	Students often exchange small good luck gifts with their friends and classmates during recital week. If you do so, keep it reasonable, and keep it small. (See previous note regarding flowers and gifts from others.)
Hair and Makeup:	<p>Part I: Due to the hot weather, some prefer to wait until they get to the dressing room to apply the makeup. You can save time by doing the hair at home, but you may wish to leave the makeup until you arrive.</p> <p>Part II: Get the right makeup that you are directed to get. Makeup is as important to the look as the costume. Everyone should strive to look as identical as possible -- costume, makeup and hair.</p>
Have Fun	Parents tell us that once they get over the initial uncertainty, they actually love the dress rehearsals -- the fun, the excitement, and the talent. You are welcome to take all the pictures you'd like and to capture the rehearsals on video tape. (If you get some good photos, please share them with us for the CCDS web site!)
Keeping Your Cool:	<p>Part I: Dressing rooms can get very warm on those June afternoons. Coordinate with your class mother to ensure you have a couple small fans (and extension cords) in your dressing room to keep the air moving.</p> <p>Part II: If you or your child is on the verge of a meltdown (it can happen to 6 or 16 year olds), please find a quiet place to work it out (outside, the restroom, etc.). Sorry kids, but mom is in charge.</p>
Label Everything	Put your child's name on everything. These are busy days and it is easy to lose a piece to a costume, shoes, accessories, etc.

Nail Polish	Nail polish is NOT permitted at recital. You may think those bright red nails look great, but we don't want the audience noticing one dancer's finger nails. To the greatest extent possible, everyone should look alike, so please, no nail polish.
Passing the Time	Rehearsal and recital days are very long days. Bring a deck of cards, a game, a book, or activities that will keep the kids busy while they are waiting to perform. TV's with a built in DVD player and some good movies are a great idea. This will keep a whole room quiet for a couple of hours. Also, board games that several people can play at one time are a good idea. Avoid markers, glitter and glue, for they can ruin a costume. For older kids, bring their iPod or a portable game system.
Patience	Bring plenty of patience. You will need every ounce of it.
Performance List	During rehearsal week, make a list of all of your child's dances and note the corresponding act number in the show. (They will be posted at rehearsal.) Type or write an 8-1/2" x 11" page with your child's name at the top followed by a list of their dances in order of show appearance with the number alongside (to help gage change time). Make several copies - - one for you to carry, one to tape on the wall in the dressing room (which is why your child's name should be on it), and an extra one to lose.
Planning	Recital isn't an "on that day" activity. Pull together all of your costumes, accessories, shoes and makeup several days in advance to give you a little cushion in case something isn't exactly right. Make a check list of your child's routines, listing their costume, color tights, shoes, and any accessories. Make sure you have all your supplies before arrival. The checklist helps when leaving to ensure that you have everything.
Questions	If you are unsure about something, please feel free to approach your class mother, the studio staff or a member of the studio's recital crew with your questions. Please be mindful that when teachers are on stage during rehearsals, it is for purposes of running through routines, so try to catch them with your questions when they are not busy teaching.
R-E-S-P-E-C-T	Heed Aretha's advice and give a little respect. Let's respect the teachers, the parents, the dancers, the audience members and other's belongings. If we all make a point to give a little respect, recital week will be a more pleasant experience for everyone.
Security	We take the security of your child seriously. We will have a staff of security personnel on duty during recital performances. For the safety of your child, they will not permit dancers out of the backstage area, nor will they permit anyone other than properly credentialed class parents into the backstage area.
Shoes	Give dance shoes a little extra attention before the recital to make sure they look nice, but check with the studio for guidance before using ANY polishes or cleaners on them.
Snacks	The best snacks during rehearsal week are "neat" snacks. The Dance Company moms suggest fruit rollups, goldfish crackers, grapes and 'Lunchables' as a few good examples. Remember: Don't pack anything messy.
Tickets	Be sure to get your recital tickets. Recital only happens once a year, so make it a big event for your child by bringing your entire family and inviting friends to the show. Grandparents love dance recitals.
Timing	Arrive at the rehearsals and the recital at the instructed time. You will need this time to get ready and receive instruction from the director and teachers, and the show WILL start whether you are ready or not. Dances will not be repeated during the show to accommodate late-arriving dancers.

Video Taping	Please instruct your family and friends to leave their video cameras at home on recital day. Remind them that the show is being professionally videotaped. The professional DVD will be far superior to what they might shoot from the audience -- no wiggles, no backs of heads of audience members, and no disruption to those around you. You and your family members are welcome to bring your video cameras, tripods, and still cameras to rehearsals, but not to the recital itself.
Watching the Show	If you are the class mother, you can watch your child's dance from the stage wings. If you are not the class mother, you shouldn't add to the congestion backstage. Stay in your seat and be considerate of those around you. Don't hop up and run out after your child performs. That's really an insult to the children who are performing next.
Zzzzzz	A pillow and blanket can come in handy backstage during rehearsals and the recital if your child wants to lay down for a little bit. Plus, the blanket keeps their costume clean when they are sitting on the floor playing.