



Pre-Pointe and Pointe Information and Policy



Over the Moon Yoga & Dance Education

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Physical Requirements and Basic Guidelines for Starting Pointe



1. **Consistent and correct placement and alignment:**

Be well placed in class work, including the ability to maintain neutral a neutral pelvis.

Be able to correctly hold the legs, including external rotation of the hips (turnout).

Have a strong stability in balancing both on flat and demi pointe.

Have a good awareness of the torso and pelvis, including sufficient core strength.



2. **Ability to achieve a 90-degree angle at the big toe & metatarsal joint on demi pointe.**

Without this degree of flexibility, you cannot rise smoothly onto pointe, or lower down from full pointe.



3. **Ability to achieve a straight line (180 degree) through the ankle joint and forefoot to the toes in the pointe position.**

This will ensure correct weight placement and alignment of the body are possible when dancing en pointe.



4. **Strong lower legs, feet and core muscles.**

Along with good body awareness and a well-developed understanding of how to correctly align their body for dance.

OTM Pointe Policy

- 1. In addition to the Pointe class, students must attend a minimum of two ballet technique classes per week (on two different days of the week).** Without doing multiple classes a week it is not possible to develop and maintain the level of Classical Ballet technique, strength and stamina required to safely dance en pointe.
- 2. Students must attend the pre-pointe conditioning classes and complete homework exercises.** Students will participate in a carefully designed Pre-Pointe Program (by invitation) and be required to do strengthening work out of class prior to being invited to progress onto pointe. Participation in these classes will help students fully understand the requirements for passing their pre pointe assessment and help them develop the required strength and flexibility. The exercises and theory covered in these classes will not only prepare students for their pre pointe assessment and pointe work but will improve their technique as well.
- 3. Students must demonstrate a mature and focused approach in class.** The ballet teacher will decide whether the student has sufficient maturity and focus to progress to pre-pointe and pointe work.
- 4. Students must pass a pre-pointe physiotherapy assessment.** A pre-pointe assessment consists of a series of tests/exercises similar to what we will cover in class. The physiotherapist will then determine if there is sufficient strength, mobility and control in the feet, legs and torso to dance en pointe. Students are required to arrange their own physiotherapy assessment with a suitably quality practitioner. If the required level of strength and flexibility is not demonstrated to allow the safe progression onto pointe the physiotherapist will recommend a series of exercises to help develop the deficient areas, and a follow up session will be required. Details of the dance physiotherapists who conduct pre pointe assessments will be given to the students at the appropriate stage.

These 4 requirements will ensure that students can progress safely onto pointe.

- Once students have received notification from the physiotherapist and their class teacher that they are ready to commence pointe work students will receive information about pointe shoes! **Please do not purchase pointe shoes without speaking with your teacher first and under no circumstances are the students to practice pointe work at home.**
- Students and families must respect and abide by the advice, recommendations and decisions of the teacher and physiotherapist with regard to pointe work. Families need to pass on the advice/recommendations/decisions of the physiotherapist to the ballet teacher.
- Students must not attempt exercises outside their capability, or without being instructed. The teacher will instruct the student on the exercises they are permitted to do. Some exercises may need to be done at home, and it is vital that students only practice exercises that the ballet teacher has stated they are allowed to practice.
- **The only exception** to the two-class policy, is where a student is studying full-time dance and is participating in technique classes either in university or college. Students must provide information about these classes.

FAQ – Starting Pointe Work

Dancing en pointe is an amazing feat of strength, skill and artistry! Starting pointe work is an exciting and rewarding time for dance students.

When is the best time to start pointe work?

There are many risks associated with pointe work and so careful and thorough preparation is required to minimise these risks before a student can consider starting pointe work. **Starting en pointe before a student is physically and technically ready is potentially very harmful.**

All ballet classes provide technical preparation and physical strengthening for pointe work. More specific preparatory work begins during Degree 1, with the aim that most students will be ready to begin pointe work by the end of Degree 2. However, students need to understand that **there is no set age or grade level that determines if a student is ready to start pointe work.** Not all students within the same class level will be ready to begin pointe work at the same time, and some students may never be able to dance en pointe due to their physical makeup.

If a student is ready and able, do they have to dance en pointe?

It is not compulsory for students to dance en pointe. Students can still participate in classes as normal working on demi pointe rather than full pointe.

What are the requirements for starting pointe work?

There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration when determining if a student is ready to begin pointe work. These include:

- Skeletal maturity. *Bones must be sufficiently mature to withstand the pressures of pointe work. There is risk of permanently damaging the growth plates if the bones are too soft.*
- Mental maturity (focus and concentration levels during dance classes).
- Flexibility.
- Strength.
- Technical proficiency. *Any weakness in technique or strength will be exaggerated in pointe work.*
- Number of years of training.

Associated Costs of Pointe Work

Pre-pointe theory book \$55

Physiotherapy assessment fees \$120-\$170

Pointe shoes \$120-\$170

TheraBand \$20-50

Exercise Ball \$20-50

All costs are approximate and subject to change.

Further Information and Resources

Visit the Over the Moon website for additional resources. <https://www.overthemoonstudio.com/ballet> and <https://www.overthemoonstudio.com/point-prepointe> including [the official IADMS guidelines document](#) for Pre-Pointe & Pointe training.