DPDA

DES PLAINES DANCE ACADEMY

2026 - 2027



Parent/Student Manual

Where DANCE is fun for everyone!

WELCOME TO THE DPDA



Hello DPDA Families,

WELCOME! We are thrilled that you will be joining us for the **2026-2027 Des Plaines Dance Academy season**. Whether you are stepping into the studio for the very first time or returning for another year of dance, we are excited to share a season filled with learning, growth, friendship, and fun. Since 1971, the Des Plaines Park District has provided quality instruction and recitals, at a fraction of the cost that you would pay at a private studio.

Our Mission
To enrich lives through inclusive dance opportunities where dance is fun, inspiring, and for everyone. We strive to create a welcoming environment where every dancer feels supported, encouraged, and inspired to reach their personal goals.

Our Philosophy
We believe dance is for everyone. Every dancer brings unique strengths, interests, and experiences to the studio, and our goal is to provide a positive and inclusive environment where all students can learn, grow, and succeed.

While we emphasize strong technique and proper form, dance is about more than learning steps. Through movement, creativity, and self-expression, our students build confidence, teamwork, respect, and lifelong skills that extend beyond the studio. Our dedicated instructors are committed to helping every dancer feel successful while fostering a lifelong love of dance.

Preparing for Your Dance Academy Experience
This manual has been designed to provide participants and families with the information needed to have a successful season. Please take time to review the contents carefully and refer back to it throughout the year as questions arise.

Together, our dancers, families, instructors, assistants, and staff help create a welcoming community where everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and enjoy the many benefits of dance.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the program or information contained in this manual, please contact the DPDA Hotline at 847-391-5094 or email Natalie.Sanchez@dpparks.org.

We look forward to dancing with you this season!

Natalie Sanchez - Recreation Supervisor
Where Dance is Fun for Everyone!

DPDA
DES PLAINES DANCE ACADEMY

WHY THE DANCE ACADEMY:

- Affordable tuition: a fraction of the cost of private studios. Payment plans available.
- Expanded Learning Opportunities: optional Pop up classes throughout the season
- Helping Hands Teacher Assistant Program: students gain leadership expirence
- Costume-Inclusive Pricing: Recital costume included in registration.
- A Place for Every Dancer: a variety of dance genres for all ages
- No membership fee: training without the additional fees
- Professionally trained Dance Staff.
- Staff is CPR Certified.





THE DES PLAINES DANCE ACADEMY CONSISTS OF 4 DIFFERENT CATEGORIES:

Each program is specifically designed to accommodate every individual's desire to dance!

Performance Program
9-month program, culminating in our Annual June Recital

Spotlight Program
2 short performance sessions (Fall/Winter)

Seasonal
Short-term Program/ No performance

Pop-Up Classes
One-day class or limited series

- Participants must be the designated age for the class on or before September 1.
- The Des Plaines Park District reserves the right to transfer students into a different class that will be more suitable to their skill level.
- If you have questions regarding what level your child is qualified for, please contact the Dance Academy Recreation Supervisor prior to registration.





Performance Program registration and Payment Plan Information

You will only register one time for the entire 31 week (9 month) Performance Program. Dance Academy registration begins on Monday, July 27 for Des Plaines Park District resident and on Monday, August 3 for non-residents.

New Performance Program ONLY: Multi-Class Savings!
Save $20 on each additional class after the first, up to 4 classes.
Must register for all DPDA Performance classes at the same time. Valid per dancer.
Amount will be credited to your household account.
Does not include Spotlight Performance, Seasonal, or Pop-up classes.

Payment plan: A $35 processing fee will be added for each payment plan.
1. Fill out a registration form and bring it to the Leisure Center, 2222 Birch Street.
2. An installment billing agreement will be filled out by a Park District staff member.
3. 8 Installment payments will be charged to your credit or debit card on the 20th of each month after the initial payment.
4. You will receive a copy of the installment billing agreement once it has been approved.
5. Any declined payments will be subject to a $25 penalty fee. Failure to adhere to the payment plan policies will result in your child's inability to participate in class.

For more information about payment plans, please contact the Business Dept. at 847-391-5700 (M-F 8:30a-5p).

Des Plaines Dance Academy Website
For a updated list of classes and a detailed schedule, please visit the Des Plaines Dance Academy website at DPParks.org

OUR UNIQUE PROGRAMS

DiscoverDance Early Childhood Program

4 Sessions - Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer

Designed for children ages 2-4, DiscoverDance introduces young dancers to the creative world of movement through music, imagination, and play. These age-appropriate classes support motor skill development, creativity, and a love for dance in a fun, multi-sensory environment. Discover w/Me is a parent/child class. **DiscoverTOTs participants must be potty trained and able to participate independently.**

Stage Stars: Spotlight Performance Program

Mini Performance Program - 2 Sessions (Fall and Winter)

Perfect for dancers ages 3-12, Stage Stars is designed for students who love to dance and perform but may not be ready to commit to a full nine-month program. Dancers build technique, strength, confidence, and stage presence while learning a routine to perform at the Prairie Lakes Community Center Theater. Performance opportunities include the Winter Showcase and/or the Annual June Recital. Costumes are included and yours to keep!



Bollywood Rhythm & Roots: Spotlight Performance Program

3 Sessions (Fall, Winter, & Summer)

Embark on a vibrant journey through the dynamic world of Bollywood dance! No prior dance experience is necessary, just bring your enthusiasm and a smile. Throughout the session dancers will learn a short dance that will be performed at Prairie Lakes Community Center Theater. Show opportunities are; Winter Showcase and/or the Annual June Recital. Fee includes their costume. Summer Session will get the oppurtunity to perform at community events.

Des Plaines Poms Dance Team: Spotlight Performance Program

2 Performance Sessions (Fall & Winter)

Poms dance is a fun, high-energy style that requires strength, stamina, coordination, and above all else, teamwork! In this class, dancers will learn how to work together as a team to perform sharp, precise, energetic routines that incorporate elements of jazz, hip hop, and other styles. The Fall session team will perform their routine at Trunk or Treat, Winter Wonderland, and Des Plaines Dance Academy's "Winter Showcase" at the end of the session. The Winter session team will perform their routine at the annual June Recital. Fee includes their costume

Performance Program

9 Month Recital Program - 32 Weeks

The Performance Program combines dance technique, strength, flexibility, and performance opportunities in a supportive and engaging environment. Dancers spend the fall building foundational skills and begin learning recital choreography in January for our annual June Recital at the Prairie Lakes Theater. Recital participation is encouraged for all students enrolled in the Performance Program. Families not planning to participate must notify their instructor by **November 20**. Costume fees are included in tuition; however, costume refund requests must also be submitted by **November 20**. **Registration for recital classes closes October 30.**

Helping Hands Teacher Assistant Program

The Helping Hands Teacher Assistant Program is open to Dance Academy students who are interested in assisting in the classroom. This program provides participants with the opportunity to develop leadership skills, gain self-confidence, and experience personal growth while being of service to others. At the heart of the Helping Hands (HH) Program is the interaction between HH Assistants, Dance Academy staff, and program participants. HH Assistants help with dance classes under the guidance of the adult dance staff and play an important role in the success of the Dance Academy. HH Assistants should have a sincere desire to support staff in working with dance students. We are looking for dancers who are eager to help and willing to make a commitment. Dancers interested in becoming an HH Assistant or learning more can contact the Dance Academy Recreation Supervisor.

OUR UNIQUE PROGRAMS

Adult Classes

4 Sessions

These seasonal classes are geared for ages 12+ and for those who would like to try dance oriented workouts made for adults. Throughout the year we offer seasonal dance inspired workout classes for our 12+ residents to experience. For those interested in more, check out the Des Plaines Dance Academy website for up-to-date class offerings. You can register for one session or all four!

Pop-up Classes

Throughout the year, the Des Plaines Dance Academy offers students the opportunity to explore a variety of dance styles through pop-up classes, workshops, and intensives. These unique experiences allow dancers to try something new, build skills, and have fun, all at a fraction of the cost of many outside programs and events. Whether your dancer is looking to expand their interests, learn from a guest instructor, or simply enjoy a new dance experience, our goal is to provide engaging opportunities that inspire creativity, confidence, and a lifelong love of dance.
Be sure to check the Dance Academy flyer bins at the Administrative and Leisure Centers, as well as the DPDA pages at DPParks.org, for more information.

Acrobatics

4 Sessions - Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer

Acrobatics is a style that combines the techniques of classical dance with acrobatic movement. The program is designed to teach acrobatics through safe, proper progressions and stresses the importance of alignment and training everything on both sides of the body. Students will focus on training and developing their acro technique for this season!

Aerial Silks

2 Technique Sessions (Fall/Summer) – 1 Performance Session (Winter)

Aerial Silks combines strength, grace, and flexibility to create a unique type of movement. You will learn to manipulate the silks and move your body in new ways. How to pose, climb, and invert on the silks are just a few of the skills you will learn in addition to conditioning and how to combine poses into unique sequences. Fall and Summer session students will focus on training and developing their Aerial Silks technique. Winter session students will learn a routine that will be performed at the end of the session. Fee for Winter session includes their costume.

Acro & Aerial Silks Student Evaluations and Class Placement

Each student enrolled in **Acrobatics** and **Aerial Silks** classes will participate in skill evaluations during December. These evaluations are not pass/fail assessments, but rather an opportunity for instructors to review each student's current skill level, progress, and readiness for the next stage of instruction.

While every effort is made during the fall session to place students in the most appropriate class level, some dancers may benefit from a class adjustment as their skills develop. December evaluations help ensure that students are placed in the class that best supports their continued growth, safety, and success during the winter session.

This process is especially important for **Aerial Silks**, as students will begin working toward their June performance during the winter season. Proper class placement helps ensure that students are training with peers of similar skill and strength levels, allowing instructors to safely introduce new skills and create routines that best reflect each class's abilities.

The goal of these evaluations is to provide every student with the best possible learning experience by ensuring they are challenged appropriately, progressing safely, and building confidence throughout their dance journey.

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS & DRESS CODE

DiscoverDance Classes

These introductory classes begin with the fundamentals of dance such as rhythm, coordination, and creative movement. Dancers will learn the basics of each discipline including terminology, positions, and simple center combinations.


Street shoe


Slippers with laces

Class Dress Code: SOLID colored leotard (NO Skirts, tutus, or dance costumes) with PINK convertible tights. Dancers will be barefoot or in canvas ballet slippers without laces (satin slippers, socks, and street shoes are NOT permitted in class).


Ballet Slippers with no laces

Ballet Classes

Ballet provides strength, balance, flexibility, posture, technique and knowledge of terminology critical to success in other dance forms, including jazz, modern, tap, and hip-hop. Students will be taught the classical techniques of ballet, including terminology and positions. Classes will start with a proper barre warm-up, and then move into center and progressions.

***It is strongly recommended that all dancers take ballet in conjunction with any other dance genre.**

Pre-Pointe Class

This class is designed for the serious student who would like to advance their ballet technique, while gaining tremendous strength and stability in their feet, ankles and legs. When the instructor feels a student is strong enough to advance their pointe work without the risk of injury, the student will move on to Pointe.

Class Dress Code Ballet/Pointe: BLACK leotard (no visible undergarments, if necessary dancers are encouraged to purchase front lined or shelf lined leotards for additional support), PINK convertible tights, and Pink canvas ballet slippers. For all levels- proper ballet bun (bobby pins and hairnets) required. All Pointe shoes must be approved by the instructor before ribbons and elastics are sewn on (ballet skirts allowed in Pre-Pointe class only, length must be instructor approved).

Jazz, DP Poms, Musical Theater, and Glitter & Pop Classes

Jazz combines techniques of classical ballet and modern dance with current forms of popular dance. Students will be taught movement vocabulary ranging from the isolation of certain body parts to the movement of the entire body with accents of musical rhythms. Classes begin with a warm-up, including isolations, stretching, strength building, and center barre work. Dancers will learn traveling progressions across the floor as well as center combinations, working on performance and style.

***Please note: In order to properly advance, it is strongly recommended to take ballet in conjunction with jazz technique.**

Class Dress Code: Solid colored leotard or form fitting top and form fitting bottoms (tights, leggings, shorts). CLEAN Tan leather jazz shoes (No laces). Hair should be pulled back securely in a ponytail.

Modern/Contemporary/Lyrical Classes

Discover new ways of using your body and defy the limitations of all different dance forms. This discipline of dance requires strength, control and grace, by utilizing concepts such as; contract/release, fall/recovery and tilts/spirals.

Class Dress Code: Solid colored leotard or form fitting top and form fitting bottoms (tights, leggings, shorts). Barefoot.



Classes with a Prerequisite

Please note: The Des Plaines Dance Academy reserves the right to transfer students into a different class that will be more suitable to their skill level. If you have questions regarding what level your child is qualified for, please email the Dance Academy Supervisor prior to registration.

Aerial Silks Levels 2+: Must have instructors consent

Aerial Flight Lab: Must be currently enrolled in Aerial Silks to enroll in Flight Lab.



CLASS DESCRIPTIONS & DRESS CODE

Tap Classes

Students learn to make music with their feet. Early levels learn basic terminology in an interactive classroom, working in center and down the floor. Basic combinations will be taught, allowing students to practice connecting different steps. Advanced levels focus on how to elaborate on these basic ideas, incorporating intricate rhythms, and will be exposed to the exciting "loose ankle" technique of tap.

Class Dress Code: Solid colored leotard or form fitting top and form fitting bottoms. NO JEANS. Black leather lace up tap shoes required for all levels (No slip on or split-sole shoes).

Hip Hop and Action & Beats Classes

Students will learn to groove to the newest and best of upbeat street funk. Classes will begin with a basic warm-up, including isolations, stretch and strength, and learn combinations in center and down the floor, incorporating style and attitude.

Class Dress Code: Loose fitting dance specific clothes, easily able to move in(no streetware). NO JEANS OR SHORTS (Legs must be covered for potential hip hop floorwork). Clean white sneakers, no street shoes or outside shoes (Your hip hop sneakers are to only be worn in class and not outside). ***This year the Hip Hop instructors have selected white shoes for the Annual June Recital.**

Acrobatics Classes

Students will enhance their flexibility, strength, balance, and tumbling skills in this new program. Taking the beginner preschool level student from donkey kicks and tuck jumps to the advanced student tumbling effortlessly across the floor! The program is designed to teach acrobatics through safe, proper progressions & stresses the importance of alignment and training everything on both sides of the body.

Class Dress Code: Biketard/leotard or tight fitting top with dance shorts/leggings (no tights, no loose fitting clothes). Hair in a ponytail and Barefoot.

Aerial Silks and Flight Lab Classes

Aerial Silks combines strength, grace, and flexibility to create a unique type of movement. You will learn to manipulate the silks and move your body in new ways. How to pose, climb, and invert on the silks are just a few of the skills you will learn in addition to conditioning and how to combine poses into unique sequences.

Class Dress Code: Comfortable, fitted clothing that covers the backs of your knees, underarms, and midsection. NO LOTION, JEWELRY, SHOES, or clothing with ZIPPERS.

Bollywood Rhythm & Roots Classes

Embark on a vibrant journey through the dynamic world of Bollywood dance! No prior dance experience is necessary, just bring your enthusiasm and a smile.

Class Dress Code: Loose fitting dance specific clothes, easily able to move in (no streetware). NO JEANS OR SHORTS

Male Identifying dancers: For all classes (with the exception of Hip Hop) Solid colored fitted t-shirt, Black shorts or pants/joggers (no logos).

Shoes: Ballet-Black canvas ballet slipper, All other classes-refer to section for shoe requirements

Proper attire is vital for the dancer's safety and will maximize the dancer's learning experience. It is necessary for the instructor to see the shape and line of the dancer's body which will assist in the proper assessment of the advancement of each student. We appreciate your cooperation with the compliance of the dress code for our program. Individual instructors may have additional requirements; please check with your instructor after the first day of class.

Please note: We encourage a hands-on teaching approach. Instructors may need to physically readjust a student's body, to fully correct the dancer's placement and alignment (Instructors will ask dancers first if they can adjust them).



Additional requirements:

· Hair must be secured away from the face for ALL classes.
· Tools needed for a ballet bun: Elastic ponytail holders, bobby pins/hair pins, hair net, brush/comb, gel/hairspray.
· All jewelry must be removed before any class.
· Dancers ages 10 and older should wear deodorant.
· ALL Level dancers should not wear underwear underneath a leotard and tights (Tights are the undergarment and if necessary dancers are encouraged to purchase leotards with front/shelf lining). No visible undergarments.

WHAT EVERY DANCER SHOULD KNOW

Nutrition

Proper nutrition helps dancers stay energized, focused, and ready to learn. We encourage students to make healthy food choices, stay hydrated, and bring a water bottle to every class. For dancers attending multiple classes in one day, healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, yogurt, cheese, or whole-grain snacks are recommended. Limiting sugary snacks and drinks before class can help support focus and energy throughout the day.

Hygiene

Students are expected to maintain good personal hygiene habits such as bathing regularly, wearing deodorant (ages 10+), washing hands, sneezing/coughing into arm, etc. The dancers will be in close quarters, as well as working up a sweat throughout class. It is important to practice proper hygiene habits to eliminate sickness or other issues that may result from poor hygiene.

Student Injury

It is the responsibility of the parent and dancer to inform the instructor before class if the dancer has an injury that will preclude the dancer from any part of class. If a dancer receives a mild injury during class, he or she will be offered appropriate first aid treatment as needed. For a more severe injury, the parent will be notified immediately. Accident reports will be filled out by staff and given to the Recreation Supervisor. We ask that if your child sustains an injury, or is not feeling well, but not sick before class begins, that they still come and observe class and take notes. Dancers should always come prepared with a notebook in their dance bag. Watching a dance class is very beneficial to becoming a better dancer.

Classroom Etiquette

- Please be on time for class! Students arriving late must get ready in the hallway before entering the studio. This includes removing outerwear, putting on dance shoes, and having a water bottle ready. Once prepared, students should knock and wait for the instructor to let them into the classroom. This helps minimize distractions and allows class to continue uninterrupted.
- Students are to bring a water bottle to class to avoid multiple trips to the water fountain.
- No talking or distracting other dancers in class.
- All cell phones must be turned off and placed in a phone box in the studio. No texting will be allowed during class time.
- Smart watches should be removed before taking class.
- Refrain from speaking negativly about another dancer or teacher or posting negative comments to social media outlets.
- No sitting in dance class unless you are instructed to by your teacher.
- Be attentive and work on corrections when given. Students should apply all corrections to their own work whether or not you are being directly addressed.
- Let your teacher know if you feel ill or have an injury. Keep your instructor informed.
- Please visit the restroom before class.
- No running in the classroom or leaning/hanging on the dance barres at any time.
- No wet shoes, gum chewing, eating or drinking is allowed in the studios.
- Always applaud and thank your instructor upon completion of class.
- Students are expected to respect studios and hallways by keeping them clean, as a courtesy to all who use them.



Dancers, please practice respect. Students are not to be socializing in a disruptive manner during the class with other students. Please honor your teacher and fellow students by giving full attention and cooperation. You will be advised if we feel any student is not well adjusted to the classroom environment for any reason over time. Dance is educational and fun, however, an important part of class work is developing an attitude of discipline and respect for teachers and fellow students. We trust that following our classroom etiquette will provide an environment where classes at The Des Plaines Dance Academy will be a pleasure for all concerned.

WHAT EVERY DANCER SHOULD KNOW

Bring a Friend to Dance Week

During the week of October 12-18, 2026 is a special opportunity to have fun and let your friends see where you dance(Only 9-month performance & Seasonal classes. Your friend will take part in your regular dance class (only one friend per class). Your friend needs to wear dance clothes or comfortable clothes they can easily move in. Your friend's parent must sign a participation waiver in order for your friend to participate in class. Forms will be available in the flyer bins outside each studio.

Spirit Week

During the week of April 19-25, 2027 we encourage dancers to come to dance class in the themed attire to celebrate National Dance Week (NDW). National Dance Week is an annual event in the United States sponsored by the United Dance Merchants of America to increase public awareness and appreciation of various forms of dance. Flyers will be available with the themes for each day during Spirit Week.

How to Succeed in Dance

Here are some helpful ideas and thoughts to guide every participant to be the best dancer they can be!

- ► Be Ready – on time and prepared for class (water, shoes, and mindset).
- ► Be Responsible – for yourself and your belongings.
- ► Be Smart – don't chew gum, run in class or hang on the barres.
- ► Be Attentive – listen quietly when the instructor is speaking.
- ► Be a Pro – work hard and always give 100%.
- ► Be Positive – never judge yourself or others.
- ► Be Safe – take care of your body in all that you do during the day.
- ► Be Brave – take risks so you can learn new skills.
- ► Have Fun - enjoy class, we dance because we enjoy it!



Student / Teacher Relationships

The Des Plaines Dance Academy is committed to the principle of protecting the integrity and objectivity of its staff members in the performance of their duties and to maintaining a fun, safe and education environment. It is, therefore, fundamental to the overall mission of the Dance Academy that the professional responsibilities of its staff be carried out in an atmosphere that is free of conflicts of interest and favoritism that compromise these principles.

- The Dance Academy has a policy regarding online social networking. The staff, if asked, cannot "Friend or Follow" any of their students on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- Staff members, if asked, will not give out any personal contact information, i.e. cell phones, email addresses. Contact can be made through the Dance Academy Supervisor via email or phone.

Lost and Found

The Des Plaines Park District & Dance Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please label shoes and other personal items. Do not bring valuables to dance class and check to make sure you have everything you brought to the studio when leaving. Anything left in the dance studios will be placed in the lost and found box in the dance hallway.

WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance is essential to individual growth and group performance success. The following attendance policy has been established to support skill development, choreography retention, and performance readiness:

9-Month Performance Program (September-May)

- Up to 7 absences permitted
- 8th absence: Student placed on attendance probation
- 9 absences: Student becomes ineligible to perform in the June Recital

Fall Spotlight Program (September-December)

- Up to 2 absences permitted
- 3rd absence: Student placed on attendance probation
- 4 absences: Student becomes ineligible to perform in the showcase

Winter Spotlight Program (January-May)

- Up to 3 absences permitted
- 4th absence: Student placed on attendance probation
- 5 absences: Student becomes ineligible to perform in the recital

Students who miss class frequently may fall behind in technique, choreography, and performance preparation. Because performance classes learn and rehearse as a group, excessive absences can also affect the progress and performance readiness of the entire class. Attendance requirements help ensure all dancers are prepared, confident, and successful on stage.

Pick up/ Drop off/ Arrival/ Late Arrival Procedure

- Students should arrive no more than 10 minutes before class begins. Instructors may be teaching another class or preparing for instruction and are not responsible for students until classroom doors open.
- If accompanying your child into the building, please park in designated parking areas. Do not park or leave your vehicle unattended in the drive-through area.
- **Parents of dancers age 6 and under are encouraged to remain in the hallway or lobby during class** in case their child needs assistance.
- Classroom doors will open at the scheduled class start time and reopen at dismissal.
  - **Students arriving late** should get ready in the hallway before entering the studio, including removing outerwear, putting on dance shoes, and having their water bottle ready. Once prepared, students should knock and wait for the instructor to let them in. This helps minimize distractions and allows class to continue smoothly.
- **Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late on three occasions** will be recorded as having one absence. Missing warm-up can affect a student's progress and increase the risk of injury, so punctuality is important for both safety and success.
- If you expect to be significantly late due to unavoidable circumstances, please contact the Dance Academy Recreation Supervisor.

Missed a class?

- **Make-Up Classes:** Students enrolled in the 9-Month Performance Program (prior to choreography) and Seasonal classes may make up a missed class with prior approval from the Recreation Supervisor.
  - Make-up classes should be completed before January 2027 whenever possible.
  - Please notify the Dance Academy Recreation Supervisor of any known absences in advance.
- **Refunds & Credits:** Missed classes due to illness, vacations, school activities, sports, family events, or other personal commitments are not eligible for refunds, credits, or prorated tuition.
  - Tuition reserves a student's place in class regardless of attendance.

Canceled classes

- **Weather & Facility Closures:** Classes canceled due to weather, power outages, or facility-related issues will be eligible for a make-up class.
  - Make-up classes will be held on a designated make-up date when possible.
- **Refunds:** If a make-up class cannot be scheduled, a refund credit for the canceled class will be issued to the household account.
- **Instructor Absences:** Classes may occasionally be canceled due to instructor illness or a substitute not being available.
- **Keep Contact Information Current:** Class cancellation notifications are sent to the primary email address listed in ePACT.
  - *Please ensure your Park District account and ePACT contact information are up to date.*

WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

Snow Day Policy

The Park District follows District 62 guidelines for holidays and breaks. In cases of inclement weather (snow) or extreme cold, the park district will evaluate the situation and notify families no later than 2:00pm of any closures if they occur. If staff/ families can travel safely to our facilities, we will not cancel programs. You can always check the Park District website or the Des Plaines Dance Academy ClassDojo for up-to-date class cancellations.

Illness/Injury

- **Illness During Class**: If a dancer becomes ill during class, they may be asked to sit out for the remainder of class. If symptoms are severe, a parent/guardian will be contacted for immediate pick-up.
  - *Please ensure your contact information in ePACT is current.*
- **Stay Home When Sick:** If a dancer has a fever or is experiencing a contagious illness, please keep them home.
  - If a severe illness may have exposed other participants, please notify the instructor or Recreation Supervisor. *A doctor's note may be required following an extended illness.*
- **Absence Notification:** If your dancer must miss class due to illness or injury, please contact the Recreation Supervisor.
- **Long-Term Illness or Injury:** Dancers unable to fully participate for multiple consecutive weeks due to illness or injury must be medically cleared to return to full activity by May 1 to participate in the recital.
  - This requirement is in place to promote the health, safety, and well-being of all dancers.

Parent Etiquette

- **Closed Door Classroom Policy:** DPDA utilizes a closed-classroom format to promote student focus, independence, and engagement. Parents may not remain in the classroom during class unless the class is designated as a parent/child program.
  - *Blinds are closed to avoid distractions and maintain a structured and focused class environment.*
- For the privacy and safety of all participants, parents may not record or take photos during class without instructor permission.
- **Please leave toys, stuffed animals, and other non-class items at home or in the car.** Bringing these items into the studio can create distractions and make class transitions more difficult for students.
- To maximize each student's learning experience, we ask that parents refrain from discussing concerns with instructors **immediately before, during, or after class.** Instructors must focus their attention on student supervision and instruction during this time. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Recreation Supervisor at 847-391-5094 or Natalie.Sanchez@dpparks.org, and we will respond as promptly as possible.

Bathroom Use

- **Toilet Training Requirement:** All children age 3 and up must be fully toilet-trained and able to attend to their own bathroom needs. Pull-ups and diapers are not permitted.
  - Staff and Helping Hands Assistants cannot assist with toileting or changing clothing.
- **Bathroom Accidents:** If a bathroom accident occurs, a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to assist their child. Please remain close to the classroom if your child is 6 and under.
  - Three bathroom accidents may indicate a child is not yet ready for a group dance class setting and may result in removal from the program until this requirement can be met.
- **Before Class:** Parents are encouraged to have dancers use the restroom before class and remind them to notify their instructor if they need to use the bathroom during class.

Lobby/Hallway Expectations

- **Be Considerate:** Sound from the hallway can be heard inside the studios and may disrupt classes in session.
- **Supervision Required:** Siblings and guests must be supervised at all times.
- **Respect the Facility:** Running, yelling, climbing on railing, and playing with water fountains, vending machines, lockers, or promotional materials is not permitted.
- **Keep Walkways Clear:** Please keep entrances, studio doorways, hallways, and walkways clear and store belongings in designated areas.

WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

Setting an example for your child

- **Focus on Personal Growth:** Encourage your dancer to focus on their own progress, accomplishments, and goals rather than comparing themselves to others.
  - Every dancer develops at their own pace and should be encouraged to celebrate their individual achievements.
- **Model Respect:** Speaking negatively about instructors, dancers, or other families in front of your child can influence how they interact with others in the studio.
  - We ask all families to model kindness, respect, and professionalism both inside and outside the Dance Academy.
- **Support a Positive Environment:** Dance is a personal journey. Encourage your child to work hard, support their classmates, take pride in their accomplishments, and celebrate the success of others.

Communication

- **Stay Connected:** We encourage families to maintain open communication with the Dance Academy staff.
- **ClassDojo & Email:** Important announcements, reminders, and program information will be shared through DPDA ClassDojo and email.
- **Keep Contact Information Current:** To ensure you receive important updates and notifications, please keep your Park District account and ePACT information up to date.
- **Electronic Notifications:** Most communications are sent electronically rather than by mail.
- **Check Regularly:** Please monitor your email throughout the season, especially in the months leading up to the recital. *If you are not receiving emails, please check your junk or spam folder.*

Behavioral Policy

The Des Plaines Dance Academy follows the Des Plaines Park District Behavior Guideline (A-24) which can be found on the Park District website. Positive statements and redirection of behavior are used to help children learn self-control, problem-solving, and assume responsibility for their actions. When more discipline is needed, removal from the group may also help children regain control. Children will only be removed from the group for a short period of time.

When this fails, these guidelines will be implemented:

1. A conduct report is written by staff and discussed with the parents.
2. A copy of this report is given to the parent.
3. A conversation will take place with the staff and the parent to discuss further action if necessary.

The following listed below are examples of inappropriate behaviors that result in a conduct report:

- Disrespectful/Rude/Foul/Abusive language
- Continuous disruptive behavior
- Disrespecting Property
- Threatening/Causing bodily harm/affecting the safety of other participants, staff, or self.
- Continuous defiance of authority
- Eloping (running away or running out of the classroom)

If inappropriate behavior continues and a dancer has had repeated conduct reports during the program, then the following procedures may take place:

1. A behavior contract is implemented.
2. The dancer will be suspended from the dance program for a minimum of one class.
3. If the problem continues after the suspension, the dancer will be removed from the program.

Parents will always be informed of problems involving their children. If behavior persists, a meeting with the Recreation Supervisor, Dance Instructor and Parent will be held. Refunds and/or prorates will not be issued for suspension and/or dismissal from dance.

Refunds

In order to receive any refund, you must complete a Refund Request Form. The form, which includes the complete policy, is available at any of our facilities as well as from our website: www.DPParks.org

1. Satisfaction Guaranteed: Participants will receive a full refund if they are dissatisfied with the program after the 1st class meeting, and we receive a refund request form at least 24 hours before the 2nd class meets. An Administrative Fee of $3 per class or program will be charged for all refunds.
2. After the first week of a program/class no refunds will be granted unless the program/class is cancelled.
3. Refund requests received after the first week of a program will be honored if the request is due to a medical condition. A doctor's note must accompany the request.
4. No refunds for gift certificates will be allowed.
5. A refund request for trips or one-day programs must be received 48 hours prior to the day of the program; refunds will be prorated based on the program costs incurred prior to receipt of the request.
6. Refunds take approximately **2 weeks to process**, and are mailed in check form or credited to your credit card account.
7. If you have an outstanding balance, a refund will be applied to that balance.
8. **Dance Academy Costume Fees will not be refunded after November 20**. Participants will be responsible for the full cost of the costume.

Non-Resident Card

If you are a non-resident taking classes at the Des Plaines Park District, you may want to take advantage of this great, money-saving opportunity. Persons living outside Des Plaines pay up to 25% more than the resident rate for programs and facilities. Instead, Non-Residents can pay an annual fee of $450 which will give them "Resident" status and save them the additional Non-Resident Fees for the entire year. For more information, please contact the Administrative and Leisure Center.

Referral Program

Word of mouth is the best form of advertisement when it comes to dance classes. We appreciate you spreading the word about our academy and want to offer you a reward for your loyalty. When your friend registers for a class at our studio and lists your name as a referral, you will receive a $15 credit, which will be applied to any class within the Des Plaines Dance Academy Program. There is no limit to how many students you can recommend, so there is no limit on the amount of credit you can receive. The friend can be a former Dance Academy participant but cannot have danced with the Dance Academy for the past two years. You could potentially pay for a dance class or your recital costume just by spreading positive words about your experience with The Des Plaines Dance Academy!

Medication

If your child requires medication of any kind (epi pens, inhalers, etc.), they must fill out a Medication dispensing form which can be found and uploaded to ePACT. All medication must be in the original packaging or in clearly marked containers which include the person's name, medication, dosage, and time of day the medication is to be given. Staff are not able to administer any diabetic medication injections or check blood sugar for your child. ***Please contact the Park District if you are in need of the Medication Waiver, Release of Claims and Dispensing Information forms. They will also be located on ePACT.**
If you need to make any updates to your account (such as the pick-up list) you can do so by logging into your account using this link: **https://portal-us.epactnetwork.com**
If you have any technical difficulties with ePACT, please visit their Help Center website at **https://epactnetwork.freshdesk.com/support/home**

Inclusion

It is the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to notify the Park District of any physical, mental or emotional condition(s) which might require special attention by our staff. If your child needs special accommodations to participate in our dance program, notify the Recreation Supervisor. Your confidentiality will be respected. With proper notification we can work with the parent, child, and staff to be prepared to assure for the best possible conditions for a positive dance experience.

MNASR

If your child requires assistance from our Maine-Niles Special Recreation Association, please notify the Recreation Supervisor a minimum of two weeks in advance. Please see our website for more information.

Mandated Reporting

Suspected Abuse or Neglect In accordance with the procedures set forth on the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, any dance personnel having reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional capacity may be an abused or neglected child, shall immediately report the matter to their supervisor. The proper authorities will be notified.

Keeping You Informed

For important information, news and updates on all things DPDA, check out our:
ClassDojo: Des Plaines Dance Academy (Must be currently enrolled in a DPDA Class to join!)
Website: https://www.dpparks.org/programs/des-plaines-dance-academy/

Contacts and Locations

Dance Academy Location
Administrative and Leisure Center, 2222 Birch Street
Dance Studio 101, 102, 113, and ALC gym

Theater Location
Prairie Lakes Theater, 515 E. Thacker Street



Administrative and Leisure Center Front Desk:	847-391-5700	www.desplainesparks.org
Natalie Sanchez, DPDA Recreation Supervisor:	847-391-5094	Natalie.Sanchez@dpparks.org
Candice Morden, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation:	847-391-5096	Candice.Morden@dpparks.org

WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

WHERE TO GO FOR DANCE APPAREL



dancewear SOLUTIONS

ONLINE STORE
DANCEWEAR SOLUTIONS
WWW.DANCEWEARSOLUTIONS.COM

allegro
DANCE BOUTIQUE

ALLEGRO DANCE BOUTIQUE
2114 CENTRAL STREET
EVANSTON, IL 60201
847-733-8460



DISCOUNT DANCE
VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE AT
DISCOUNT DANCE SUPPLY

DANCE'N TEES INC.

DANCE N' TEES
1065 NORTH SALEM DRIVE
SCHAUMBURG, IL 60194
847-884-5924





DPDA Spotlight program presents: Winter Showcase

Saturday, December 19, 2:30p

Prairie Lakes Theater, 515 E. Thacker Street

Tickets on sale to the public November 16 at the ALC, 2222 Birch Street 847-391-5700 (M-F 8:30a-5:00p) and online DPParks.org until Friday, December 18.

Tickets on sale 1 hour prior to show time at the box office, ***if available.***





DPAS Presents: The Fabric of Time

Sunday, June 13, 2:30p

Prairie Lakes Theater, 515 E. Thacker Street



Costumes

Costume measurements will take place the week of January 25-31. During this time, we will measure each dancer and determine the appropriate costume size. The following week, dancers will receive a costume information sheet listing the size selected for them. Parents should review the size carefully. If you feel a different size should be ordered, please make the necessary changes on the form and return it by the indicated deadline.

If no changes are made and the form is not returned, we will assume the listed size is correct and will proceed with ordering the costume as indicated. Please note that costume sizing is generic and alterations may be necessary to achieve the best fit. Costume fees are included in the registration fee.

Tickets

Tickets will be available for families to purchase at the front desk at the Leisure Center on Monday, May 3. Families will be allowed to purchase 2 tickets per show. Tickets be released to the public and available online on Monday, May 10. Front desk hours are as follows: Monday - Friday: 8:30a-5:00p. The Leisure Center will be closed on Monday, May 31. Ticket sales close Thursday, June 10 at 5:00p, but can be purchased at the Box Office on the day of the shows, if tickets are still available. Once tickets have been purchased, there are no returns. Tickets may be exchanged for another performance, unless the show is sold out. Tickets are $12 per person/per show. Children under 2 are free (if they sit on a lap).

Picture Day/Technical Rehearsal/ Dress Rehearsal Information

- Participation in Picture Day, Technical Rehearsal, and Dress Rehearsal is **MANDATORY** for all students participating in the show. Failure to attend may result in forfeiting the recital performance.
- The dates for all recital-related events, including Picture Day, Technical Rehearsal, Dress Rehearsal, and recital performances, are listed in the **DPDA Calendar** located in the back of this handbook. Families are encouraged to review these dates carefully and reserve them on their calendars at the start of the season. While detailed rehearsal schedules and performance orders will be distributed in May, the event dates have been provided in advance to help avoid scheduling conflicts.
- Any unavoidable conflicts should be discussed with your instructor as soon as possible.
- Rehearsals will begin promptly at 4:30p Aerialists should arrive at Prairie Lakes Theatre no later than 4:15p
- All aerialists must attend Picture Day and Dress Rehearsal in FULL COSTUME. (Hair, Make-up, and costume)
- Dancers will need to sit with their class in designated areas of the theatre. Please look for the sign with your dancer's class name upon arrival. Dancers may not sit in front of the stage or in the aisles. Everyone will need to be in chairs when rehearsals begin.
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS are allowed in the theatre. Water bottles may be brought for dancers.
- Parents, you DO NOT stay for Dress Rehearsal. Rehearsals are not open to the public. Dance Staff, Dancers, and approved Stage Parents ONLY! This helps us track who is in the theatre and assists with crowd control.
- Parents may pick up their child from the designated Stage Parents in the theatre lobby at the end of the Rehearsal.

Show Information

- Aerialists ages 12 and under should arrive 45 minutes before the show. Aerialists 13 and up should arrive 1 hour before the show.
- Dancers should arrive in costume. Please label all costume pieces, including headpieces, shoes, and personal belongings. The Des Plaines Park District is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Pack healthy, non-staining snacks (pretzels, crackers, etc.) and a water bottle. No juice or soda, please.
- Dancers are not permitted in the theatre before their performance. If a dancer wishes to watch the show after performing, a ticket must be purchased, and they must wear a costume cover-up.
- **Videotaping and flash photography are not permitted during performances.**
- Dancers participating in multiple routines may take their final bow with only one class.
- Following the performance, please wait at least 10 minutes before picking up your dancer to allow time for costume changes and to prevent congestion in the hallways. Family and friends should wait in outside the building to avoid crowding in the theater lobby.

ANNUAL JUNE RECITAL (JUNE 4-5)

FRIDAY SHOW
Friday, June 4 6:30p

Recital 2027:
DPDA Around the Globe

SATURDAY SHOW
Saturday, June 5 2:30p

All forms and handouts regarding **Recital 2027 : DPDA Around the Globe** will be emailed home in April/May. Forms can also be downloaded on our website, www.DPParks.org. and will be available in all of the dance studios. Keep checking our website throughout the year for updated Des Plaines Dance Academy information.

Recital Costumes

Costume measurements will take place the week of November 9-15. During this time, instructors will measure each dancer and determine the appropriate costume size. The following week, dancers will receive a costume information sheet listing the size selected for them. Parents should review the size carefully. If you feel a different size should be ordered, please make the necessary changes on the form and return it by the indicated deadline.

If no changes are made and the form is not returned, we will assume the listed size is correct and will proceed with ordering the costume as indicated. Please note that costume sizing is generic and alterations may be necessary to achieve the best fit. Costume fees are included in the registration fee.

If you do not intend to participate in the recital, a refund request form must be filled out by **November 20** or you will be responsible for the full price of the costume.

Recital Tickets

Tickets will be available for DPDA families to purchase at the front desk at the Leisure Center on Monday, April 26. Families will be allowed to purchase 2 tickets per show. Tickets be released to the public and available online on Monday, May 3. Front desk hours are as follows: Monday - Friday: 8:30a-5:00p. The Leisure Center will be closed on Monday, May 31. Ticket sales close Thursday, June 3 at 5:00p, but can be purchased at the Box Office on the day of the shows, if tickets are still available. Once tickets have been purchased, there are no returns. Tickets may be exchanged for another performance, unless the show is sold out. Tickets are $12 per person/per show. Children under 2 are free (if they sit on a lap).

Volunteer Stage Parents

Calling all Volunteer Stage Parents! We are always looking for volunteers to help out at the recital as designated "stage parents" and room supervisors during the performance. Every class will need to have 1-2 dedicated adults, per show, depending on the age and size of the class. The duties of the stage parents will include helping dancers, for your child's class only, on and off stage and planning quiet activities in the dressing rooms as they wait for their turn on stage. Stage Parents are critical to helping our dance recital run smoothly! Volunteer forms will be included in the recital handouts, and sign-up sheets will be posted outside the dance studio in April.





ANNUAL JUNE RECITAL (JUNE 4-5)

Dress Rehearsal/Picture Day Information

- Attendance at Dress Rehearsal is **MANDATORY** to all students participating in the recital. Failure to attend will result in forfeiting the dancer's chance to perform. Any unavoidable conflicts should be addressed with the instructor prior to the rehearsal.
- A dress rehearsal/picture day schedule will be posted outside of each dance room. This will give parents an approximate time of when each grouping of dances is expected to start and finish. Students are encouraged to stay; this is a great opportunity to see the entire show.
- Pictures will be taken at Prairie Lakes, backstage; only photographers, dance staff, and dancers will be allowed into the backstage area.
- The rehearsal will follow the order of the show. Drafts of the show order will be posted outside each dance studio end of April, with the final show order posted by mid May. It is important for parents to notify the instructor of any conflicts with the dress rehearsal or recital days before the final show order is posted.
- Dress Rehearsal/Picture Day will start promptly at 4:30p. Dancers should arrive at Prairie Lakes Theatre no later than 4:15p.
- All dancers must come in full costume (make-up, hair, tights, shoes, accessories etc.).
- Dancers will need to sit with their class in designated areas in the theatre. Please look for the sign with the name of their dance. After the dancers have completed rehearsing their dance, they will need to return to their reserved section of seats in the theatre. For safety reasons, dancers will not be allowed to sit in the area in front of the stage or in the aisles. Everyone will need to be in chairs!
- **NO FOOD OR DRINKS** are allowed in the theater! There will be tables set up in the lobby for everyone to use. To avoid damage to the costume, please do not eat or drink in costume or without cover ups.
- Parents, you DO NOT stay for the dress rehearsals. Dress rehearsals are not open to the public: Dance Staff, Dancers and Stage Parents ONLY! This helps us track who is in the theater and with crowd control. Parents can pick up their child from the designated stage parents in the Theater lobby at the end of their assigned shift.



Recital Information

- All dancers ages 6 and under must arrive at Prairie Lakes 45 minutes before their designated show begins and go directly to their assigned dressing room. For students ages 7 and up, call time is 1 hour before each day of performances.
- Please arrive in costume on the recital days!
- Make sure to label each item of the costume, including headpieces, shoes and any other belongings. The Des Plaines Park District is not responsible for lost or stolen property.
- We ask that you pack healthy snacks that will not stain the costume (pretzels, crackers, etc.) and a water bottle (no juices or soda please!).
- No dancers will be allowed in the theater before the performances! If dancers want to watch the show after their dance, parents will need to purchase a ticket for them. Dancers must be out of costume.
- **Videotaping and flash photography are not allowed at the performances!**
- If a dancer is in multiple dances, they are allowed to bow with only one class.
- Parents, please wait at least 10 minutes after the show before picking up your child. This gives the dancers time to get back to the waiting rooms and makes it less crowded in the hallways. We ask that family and friends wait in the Gym Lobby or right outside of the building.

Des Plaines Dance Academy Calendar

Please mark your calendars with these important dates.

(Dates are subject to change)

SEPTEMBER

9/1 & 9/2 (Tu & W)	Dance Academy Open House (5:00-6:30p)
9/14-9/20(M-Su)	**Des Plaines Dance Academy classes begin**
9/28-10/4 (M-Su)	**Costume Measurement Week** (Spotlight performance program)

OCTOBER

10/2 (F)	Spotlight performance program registration ends!
10/5 - 11/20 (M-F)	DPDA Community Care Drive *(Help support local families)*
10/12-10/25 (M-Su)	**Bring a Friend, Make a Friend** (Only 9-month Perf & Seasonal classes)
10/26-11/1 (M-Su)	**Halloween Week** (Come dressed in costume - All classes are encouraged to participate)
10/30 (F)	9-month Performance program registration ends!

NOVEMBER

11/2-11/6 (M-F) (8:30a-5p)	DPDA's "Winter Showcase" pre-sale tickets available at the ALC front desk *(Participating families only/ max 2 per family)*
11/9 (M)	DPDA's "Winter Showcase" public tickets available online
11/9-11/15(M-Su)	**Costume Measurement Week** (9-month Performance program)
11/16 (M)	"Winter Showcase" stage parent & ADA seating request forms due
11/16-11/22 (M-Su)	Sign off on costume sizes (9-month Performance program only)
11/23-11/29 (1 Week)	NO CLASSES (Thanksgiving Break - Happy Thanksgiving!)

DECEMBER

11/30-12/6 (M-Su)	Dec Evaluations (Aerial Silks & Acrobatics winter session placement)
12/5 (Sa)	Winter Wonderland at Prairie Lakes
12/7-12/13 (M-Su)	**Parent Observation Week** (All Classes)
12/15 & 12/16 (Tu & W)	Additional Onstage Practice (All winter showcase participants)
12/18 (F 4:30-7:00p)	"Winter Showcase" Dress Rehearsal/Picture Day
12/19 (Sa 2:30p)	Des Plaines Dance Academy presents "**Winter Showcase**"
12/14-1/10 (4 Weeks)	NO CLASSES (Winter Break - Happy Holidays!)

JANUARY

1/11 (M)	**Performance program resumes & Winter session classes begin**
1/25-1/31 (M-Su)	**Costume Measurement Week** (Spotlight & Aerial Silks Classes)
1/29 (F)	Spotlight performance program & Aerial Silks registration ends!

FEBRUARY

2/8-2/14 (M-Su)	**Valentine's Week** (Come dressed in pink/red/purple - All classes are encouraged to participate)

MARCH

3/15-3/28 (2 Weeks)	NO CLASSES (Spring Break - Happy Spring Break!)
3/19 & 3/21 (F & Su)	Make-up class (For cancelled Aerial Silks class on 4/2 & 5/9)

APRIL

4-2-4/4 (F-Su)	NO AERIAL SILKS CLASSES (ALC GYM unavailable)
4/19-4/25 (M-Su)	**SPIRIT WEEK** - Celebrate National Dance Week!
4/26-4/30 (M-F) (8:30a-5p)	"DPDA Around the Globe" pre-sale tickets available at the ALC front desk *(Participating families only/ max 2 per family per show)*

MAY

5/3 (M)	"DPDA Around the Globe" public tickets available online
5/3-5/7 (M-F) (8:30a-5p)	DPAS's "The Fabric of Time" pre-sale tickets available at the ALC front desk *(Participating families only/ max 2 per family per show)*
5/9 (Su)	NO CLASSES (Mother's Day)
5/10 (M)	DPAS's "The Fabric of Time" public tickets available online
5/17 (M by 4:30p)	Recital & Showcase stage parent and ADA seating request forms due
5/24-5/30 (M-Su)	**In-Class Costume Week/LAST week of classes**(except Aerial Silks)

JUNE

6/1 & 6/2 (Tu & W) (4:30-7:30p)	Additional Onstage Practice (select 6 & under classes)
6/3 (Th 4:30-9:30p)	**"DPDA Around the Globe"** Dress Rehearsal/Picture Day
6/4 & 6/5 (F & Sa)	Des Plaines Dance Academy Presents **"DPDA Around the Globe"** (F 6:30p) / (Sa 2:30p)
6/1-6/6 (Tu-Su)	**LAST week of Aerial Silks Classes!**
6/8 (Tu 4:30-7:30p)	DPAS's "The Fabric of Time" Picture Day
6/9 (W 4:30-9:30p)	DPAS's "The Fabric of Time" Technical Rehearsal
6/10 (Th 4:30-8:00p)	DPAS's "The Fabric of Time" Dress Rehearsal
6/13 (Su 2:30p)	Des Plaines Aerial Silks Presents "**The Fabric of Time**"
6/14 (M)	Session 1 Dance & Arts Camp Begins

SCAN FOR THE DPDA WEBSITE



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