

Kia's FR Dance – Going En Pointe



For many ballet dancers, the desire to dance en pointe is very strong. It's a dream of theirs as well as a mark of accomplishment and growth as a dancer. But there are certain criteria that are required before being able to dance en pointe. It is an issue of safety for the dancer and we have certain criteria that must be met for a dancer to pass up to pointe. The criteria are in place to protect the dancer from injury and permanent damage to the bones of the foot, which are not fully hardened and developed until sometime in the teenage years. Maturity is another important factor. The dancer must be able to be 100% responsible for themselves in all regards.

The following is a list of requirements for passing up to pointe.

Physical Requirements

- Maintain turnout while dancing
- Maintain proper alignment in positions and while moving
- Show awareness of proper ankle and foot alignment, avoiding sickling or rolling in
- Properly roll through the foot and use plie in takeoff and landing of jumps
- Properly use plie while dancing Stretch or Point the foot while dancing
- Can Pique Passe with a straight leg
- Can perform repeated Releve in the center without tiring & while maintaining alignment
- Can balance on one foot with the body correctly positioned over the supporting leg
- Maintain proper alignment in pirouettes, particularly even hips

Advancing to pointe work is a serious step and should be treated as such by students, teachers, and parents. Pointe work builds upon ballet technique and every struggle, problem, weakness, and deficiency is amplified with this new layer of difficulty. With this in mind, please remember the following:

- *Pointe work is an evolution and extension of effective ballet training. It is NOT the end result of a particular number of years in ballet class, being a certain age, or even of an intense desire to dance en pointe.*
- *Pointe work is not a right.*
- *Pointe is not for everyone.*
- *Dancing en pointe is only a requirement for ballet dancers who are pre-professionals or professionals.*
- *Choosing not to dance en pointe (because you are not planning to be a professional ballet dancer) does not make you less of a dancer. It's actually a very mature decision!*
- *Pointe work is a positive experience for those ready to devote themselves to quality ballet training.*

Responding to a “No”

As a student, you should expect no less of a teacher than to instruct logically, carefully, and thoughtfully. If your teacher's criteria are unclear or if you have a question about what is required or how you might improve, arrange a meeting with your teacher to discuss this. However, make a commitment to respecting your instructor's judgment and knowledge if she feels you are not yet ready for pointe work. A teacher willing to say no to you has likely put a lot of thought behind the decision. A teacher who tells everyone yes is not someone you should not trust to train you.