

Resources

FITTING

Try on shoes with toe pads and all suggested accessories. Best to wear tights, and avoid fitting late in the day or high heat because feet swell.

You should feel all parts of the shoe, but have no crunching, bunching, pinching. If you slide down into the shoe, it is too wide, or too big.

Pointe shoes must fit correctly at time of purchase. Never “leave room to grow” and get a pair that is too big. A new pair is needed if feet grow.

SEWING

Use pink or white thread, or dental floss (strong and available), and a needle.

Double up thread for strength (not if using dental floss).

Make sure not to sew any stitches through the drawstring and casing.

Elastic can be sewn in a standard loop, or “X” for more support. Your teacher will advise.

Ends of elastic can be inside, or outside shoe (to prevent blisters, if desired).

Fold over ends of ribbon 1 inch to double up before sewing, for strength. Sew through two layers.

Basic placement of elastics and ribbons is provided, but a dancer may make small adjustments to suit their needs.

Once ribbons are tied they may be cut to correct length (your teacher will help with this), carefully melt the cut ends with a lighter to prevent fraying. Use caution. Or, cover ends with clear nail polish.

Shopping

Call ahead for store hours and to make an appointment.

Bourrée Boutique

100 F Street
San Rafael, CA
(415) 785-3360
<https://bourreeboutique.com/>

Contra Costa Dancewear

675 Ygnacio Valley Rd
Suite B104
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(925) 932-9660
<https://www.cocodancewear.com/>

Capezio Sacramento

3839 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95816
916.452.2255
<https://www.capezio.com/capezio-sacramento-california>

ONLINE ORDERING

ONLY ORDER POINTE SHOES ONLINE WITH PERMISSION AND HELP FROM YOUR TEACHER, UNLESS REORDERING A DUPLICATE SHOE

<https://www.discountdance.com/>

HOW-TO VIDEOS ONLINE

How to: sew basic elastic, sew & tie ribbons:

<https://elevationstudio.com/how-to-videos>
> Pointe Shoe Preparation Playlist



Important things to know about Pointe...

Training en pointe requires more strength, stamina and proper technique than regular ballet classes. For safety reasons many factors are considered when starting a student en pointe. Age, physical maturity, strength, coordination, years of training, bone structure/anatomy and emotional maturity are some key factors to consider. Students must be committed, follow instructions and have a certain ability to be responsible for themselves.

Pointe students must attend regular classes with consistent attendance to be prepared for pointe. Two ballet classes per week minimum (in addition to pointe) are required. If a student misses too much regular class, they will be asked to stay off pointe (no pointe shoes) until they build back their strength and are ready again.

Performing en pointe comes only after sufficient time training, and usually takes years before students are ready. I say "think of it like taking a person who is comfortable walking and then strap ice skates on their feet"...there is considerable time and effort needed to learn how to use the new shoes, and it often feels like moving backward and starting all over with the basics before students are able to make forward progress again. New pointe students are not ready to perform en pointe. Training continues in flat shoes even if you have begun pointe work.

Students are asked to challenge themselves, but are never asked to go beyond what they are comfortable with. Remember to communicate with the teacher about any concerns and ask lots of questions! Also, listen to the teacher and be patient. The teacher is responsible to keep students safe and will only ask you to do steps you are ready for, and ask that you not do the things you are not ready for. Each student will be ready at different times.

Pointe can be uncomfortable. It takes time to get used to it.

Once a student gets more experience, they may be interested in customizations for their specific needs. Discuss with the teacher. With time, each student has their own individual way of sewing shoes, breaking them in, protecting toes, preventing blisters etc. Be ready to experiment and find what works best. Its common to try different brands or models of pointe shoes and accessories along the way.

Basic Do's & Don'ts

- For your first few pairs of shoes, shop in person at the recommended store and bring shoes into the teacher before sewing or getting them dirty. The teacher will inspect the fit and style of the shoes. If for any reason they need to be exchanged, they must look perfectly brand new. Be prepared to travel to purchase pointe shoes as long as your feet are growing. Pointe shoes must not have any extra room in them, and if feet grow, then new shoes will be needed.
- Do not wear shoes outside of the studio. Proper supervision from the teacher is important to build correct form and prevent injury.
- Take care of all your pointe equipment. Properly allow shoes to dry between classes. Do not lose items like toe pads or spacers (keep backups). Keep feet clean and dry. Repair shoes if ribbons or elastics come un-sewn. Shoes with loose or missing ribbons/elastics will not be allowed in class for safety. Keep shoes tidy -tuck in drawstrings and ends of ribbons, trim off any loose threads. Keep your own pointe supplies like toe tape, band-aids etc.
- Trim Toenails Regularly. Toenails must be trimmed STRAIGHT across to prevent ingrown toenails. Scissors make it easier to get straight cuts (curved clippers will promote ingrowns). Be prepared to trim nails every 1-2 weeks.
- Convertible tights are required for pointe (tights with a hole on the bottom of the foot). This provides access to the feet and skin to prevent and treat any blisters.
- Always have regular flat ballet shoes with you in your pointe class. Sometimes they will be needed.
- Arrive early for class (15 min. recommended). Extra time is needed to put on pointe shoes and warm up. Be ready with shoes on when class begins.