

Syllabus Training

Manual / Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan

Class time suggestions

Primary: 45 minute lesson/week

Level 1 - Level 4: One hour lesson/week

Level 5 - Level 8: Two hours/week

Pre Professional: Three hours/week

Cardio

Primary 3 - 5 minutes

Use relay races and terminology races to warm up the muscles

Level 1 - Level 4: 3 - 5 minutes, Level 5 +: 7 - 10+ minutes

Examples for smaller classrooms: the teacher leads this exercise with music. All dancers stay in one spot, working in time with the music. *Front and back attitude jumps, jumping jacks, twist jumps, tuck jumps, burpies, frog jumps*, etc. are examples for this warm up. Any kind of aerobic jumping will work (see *Cardio Definitions* for more examples).

Examples for larger classrooms: the teacher can set up multiple stations, and split the students up into partners or small groups to rotate around the stations (30 seconds - 1 minute at each station). *Skipping, climbing stairs, mountain climbers*, etc. are examples for this warm up (see *Cardio Definitions* for more examples). Running games, such as *follow the leader* or *catch the front person in the line*, also work in larger classrooms.

For the cardio portion of your class, the most important thing to remember is to keep it moving, so the heart rate is elevated and the muscles become warm. As a side benefit, it will also help your students' stamina when it's time for choreography. Depending on the exercises you choose, running shoes may be required for this part of the class. As the body starts to warm, big rolling movements should be used to stretch. Have the dancers walk around the room with big arms circles, hip circles, etc.

Straddle and Side Stretch

Primary - Level 5: 3 minutes, Level 5 +: 5+ minutes

Sit in a very wide straddle, extending legs as far as possible. Reach toward the right leg with the left arm, stretching the right arm toward the opposite leg. Repeat on the other side. Then, sitting up tall, turn upper body towards the right leg and reach out over the leg keeping the back as flat as possible. Do not allow the body to cave towards the leg. Keep chest lifted. Repeat on the other side. Complete this exercise by reaching for the middle trying to keep back flat, chest lifted and arms reaching straight out (engaging core muscles to hold the body up). Then, relax the muscles and lay down in centre, trying to get the whole torso on the floor, while keeping the hips turned out. These should be big round movements, working the body through full range of motion.

Straddle roll through, Pike and Cobra

Primary - Level 4: 5 minutes, Level 5 +: 5 minutes

Sitting in a tall pike position, stretch and flex feet. Stretch forward in pike. Then, open to a wide straddle with feet stretched (or flexed) and roll through centre, and up to *cobra*, pushing back as far as possible. Roll back through centre to pike. Stretch and flex feet. Reach for flexed feet with back straight and chest lifted. Then, relax the muscles and lay down in pike, trying to get the shoulders and whole torso on legs. Repeat the exercise. This part of the class should work both flexibility and strength. These stretches should be dynamic in nature.

Plank, Lunges and Downward Dog

Level 1 - Level 4: 7 - 10 minutes, Level 5 +: 20 minutes

Emphasize staying on hands and keeping core tight throughout. Incorporate some or all: *Forearm plank, plank, side plank, side forearm plank, lunges, forearm lunges, triangle, rotated triangle, downward dog, 3 leg dog* (can be hands off or feet off, with or without a twist), *needle, crocodile, cobra, toes to head, push ups*. (See *Terminology* for definitions). This part of the class should work both flexibility and strength.

Stretch Shoulders and Wrists

5 minutes

Stretch shoulders and wrists (see *Flexibility* for more information).

Handstands

Primary - Level 4: 7 - 10 minutes, Level 5 +: 15-20 minutes

Hold handstands against the wall, hold handstands facing the wall. Work shoulder touches each side. Work shoulder shrugs. Have the students try handstand walking across the room. Have a handstand competition. Be sure to choose skills that are appropriate for the student's level. (See *Fundamental Skills: The Handstand* for more information).

Strength

Level 1 - Level 4: 5 - 7 minutes, Level 5 +: 15-20 minutes

Choose at least four exercises for strength (core strength should be a main focus for this portion of the class). Example: 1 min 'V' sit, 1 min forearm plank, 50 upper body lifts, 1 min wall sit. Tip: it is a good idea to stay off the wrists as much as possible for this part of the class to allow them a break (see *Drills for Strength* for more information).

Limbering and Balance

Primary - Level 4: 7 - 10 minutes, Level 5+: 10 minutes

Hold bridge (trying to get weight over shoulders with legs and arms straight), work on *bridge recover, bridge kick over* and other limbering skills. Work on *headstands, front chest stands*, and other level appropriate balances. Alternatively work on partner tricks (see *Syllabus < Category < Partnering* for definitions and examples).

Tumbling

Primary - Level 4: 7 - 10 minutes, Level 5 +: 20 minutes

Work on level appropriate tumbling. Examples include: *Cartwheels, cartwheel variations (one hand cartwheels, chassé step hop cartwheel, flying cartwheel, pop cartwheel, etc) front and back walkovers and variations, aerials, back handsprings*.

Hold Splits (Contortion training in Pre Pro)

Primary - Level 4: 5 minutes, Level 5 - Level 8: 7 - 10 minutes, Pre Pro: 20 minutes

Hold splits right and left for one minute and thirty seconds. One minute in split with body upright, hips square, 15 seconds with bent back leg, toe to head, and 15 seconds reaching for front foot with both hands. Hold centre splits for one minute and thirty seconds. One minute lying flat on the floor, and 30 seconds sitting upright with feet flexed (see *Fundamental Skills: Splits* for more ideas). Alternatively, this section of class can be used to work more advanced contortion work in the back, shoulders, hips, etc. (especially in advanced level classes).

Cool down

Primary - Level 4: 5 minutes, Level 5 +: 10 minutes

Static stretches are appropriate for the cool down as they help muscles to relax, realign muscle fibres and re-establish their normal range of movement. Pay special attention to the wrists, back and shoulders, as they are used most often in acrobatics class.



Acrobatic Arts Manual



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