

Studio Handbook

Welcome to Shining Starz Acro-Dance Academy! This handbook contains everything you need to know for the entire year, including class schedules, dates, and rates!



About Us

I'm Theresa Shine, the proud owner and director of Shining Starz Acro-Dance Academy. We are passionate about nurturing each dancer's artistic spirit and technical process. Our mission is to help every dancer explore their creativity, passion, and authentic voice through the art of dance. We are thrilled to have you join our vibrant dance family and embark on this exciting journey of artistic discovery with us!

Founded in 2018, Shining Starz has grown from a small group of passionate dancers to a renowned dance school. Our philosophy is to provide a comprehensive dance education that emphasizes creativity, discipline, and a safe space for students to find their voices. We believe that each student has the potential to shine and grow as both a dancer and an individual, supported by our dedicated and experienced instructors.

Our mission is to deliver elite dance education in a supportive and innovative environment that focuses on artistic expression, technique and mental wellbeing. It is our goal to train mentally strong artists.

We are committed to:

- **Artistry:** Guiding dancers to find their voice.
- **Technique:** Offering the highest standards in dance training.
- **Community:** Building a supportive and nurturing dance family.
- **Growth:** Promoting continuous personal and artistic development.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 2 - 3 . . . Programs

Page 4 - 5 . . . Schedule and Enrollment

Page 6 . . . Faculty

Page 7 . . . Dress Code

Page 8 . . . Master Calendar

Page 9 . . . Fee Structure

Page 10 . . . Studio Policies

Page 11 . . . Parent Resources

Page 12 . . . Studio Communication

OUR --- PROGRAMS

Recreational Classes

Our Recreational Program is designed for those who are new to dance ages 15 months up to 12 years. This program introduces children to the world of dance in a fun, nurturing, and creative environment. As they move up throughout class levels, dancers will build on a strong technical base emphasizing their own creativity in movement. Our instructors are experienced in early childhood education and use engaging methods to foster a love for dance from a young age. Recreational classes help build confidence, social skills, and a strong foundation for future dance training.

Adult Classes

Our Adult classes aim to inspire and invite those who are new or seasoned dancers to find love in the art of dance. We currently offer tap dance for adults and occasionally have heels & chairography pop-up classes. Adult pop-up classes are always advertised on our website and social media channels.

Master Classes

We offer Master classes open to anyone who is a current student or a drop in. These typically are offered throughout the year and are separated by age and level. We have guest teachers come in and offer various styles including acro, contemporary, hip-hop, theatre and technique.

Starz Competition Company

The Starz Competition Company offers a diverse range of classes for dancers ages 3-21 who want to explore dance in a competitive and supportive atmosphere. This program focuses on developing technique, artistry, and a love for dance. Students will benefit from a structured curriculum that encourages personal growth, creativity, and physical fitness. Depending on company level, dancers will perform in up to three regional competitions in Connecticut and one national competition in New Jersey. Dancers will also get the opportunity to dance together in our studio's year end production number performed at one regional competition and at the recital. The Starz Competition Company is perfect for those who want to dance, tumble, build friendships, and improve their skills in a positive environment.



STYLES OFFERED

Acro

Acro dance is a fusion of dance and acrobatics, emphasizing strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination. Dancers perform gymnastic elements seamlessly integrated with dance choreography.

Ballet

Ballet is the foundation of all dance, achieved through barre and center floor work, with a focused attention to proper alignment, technique, and artistry. Students are classically trained with an emphasis on challenging each dancer to the highest degree of technical and artistic excellence—appropriate for their ability level.

Jazz

Jazz dance combines high-energy movement with classical dance technique, focusing on leaps, turns, and stylized choreography. This style emphasizes sharp, rhythmic movements and expressive performance qualities.

Contemporary

Contemporary dance blends elements of ballet, jazz, and modern dance, focusing on fluid movements, emotional expression, and innovative choreography. It encourages versatility and improvisation, allowing dancers to connect deeply with the music and their own artistic voice.

Hip-Hop

Hip-Hop dance is a dynamic and energetic style rooted in street dance and urban culture, featuring movements such as popping, locking, and breaking. This style emphasizes rhythm, freestyle improvisation, and a powerful, expressive performance.

Tap

Tap dance is a percussive style where dancers create rhythmic patterns and sounds with their feet, using metal taps on the heels and toes of their shoes. It combines intricate footwork with musicality and timing.

Lyrical

Lyrical dance combines the technique of ballet with the expressiveness of contemporary dance, focusing on fluid movements and emotional storytelling. This style encourages dancers to convey the lyrics and mood of the music through their performance.

Musical Theatre

Musical Theatre dance incorporates elements of jazz, ballet, and tap to create dynamic routines that tell a story or express a character. This style is typically performed to music from Broadway shows and emphasizes theatricality and performance skills.

Pointe

Pointe is an advanced form of ballet performed on the tips of the toes using specialized shoes. It requires significant strength, technique, and proper alignment, building on a solid foundation of ballet training.

Gymnastics

Gymnastics combines tumbling, beam, bars and vaulting exercises demonstrated in an athletic form.



CLASS SCHEDULE

Class Schedule

Our classes run from Monday to Saturday, with a variety of times to accommodate different schedules. A detailed weekly schedule is provided below:

Monday				Tuesday			
Time		Level	Class	Time		Level	Class
5:30PM	6:00PM	All Levels	Adult Tap	5:15PM	6:15pm	Intermediate	Preteen & Junior Company Ballet & Lyrical
6:30PM	8:00PM	Beginner	Soaring Starz	6:15PM	7:00pm	Intermediate	Preteen & Junior Company Tap
				7:00pm	8:00PM	Int/Adv.	Senior Company Ballet & Contemporary
				8:00PM	9:00PM	Int/Adv.	Senior Company Jazz
Wednesday				Thursday			
Time		Level	Class	Time		Level	Class
5:30PM	7:30PM	Adv. Beg.	Petite Company	5:45PM	7:00PM	Adv. Beg.	Junior Company Jazz & Acro
7:30PM	8:45PM	Intermediate	Preteen Company Jazz, Theatre & Acro	7:00PM	7:45PM	Int/Adv.	Senior Company Tap
				7:45PM	9:00PM	Int/Adv.	Senior Company Acro & Conditioning
Friday				Saturday			
Time		Level	Class	Time		Level	Class
5:00PM	6:15PM	All Levels	Gymnastics	9:00AM	9:30AM	Basic	Future Starz
6:15PM	7:00PM	All Levels	Boys Hip-Hop	9:30AM	10:15AM	Adv. Beg.	Mini Company
				10:15AM	11:00AM	Beginner	Newstarz
				11:00AM	12:15PM	Beginner	Cosmic Starz
				12:15PM	1:15PM	All Levels	Technique
				1:15PM	2:00PM	Intermediate	Hip-Hop Company

Level Placement

At Shining Starz, we believe in placing students in classes that best match their skill level and experience to promote optimal growth and development. Level placement is determined through a combination of age, skill level, and instructor assessment. New students are required to attend an evaluation class, where our experienced instructors will evaluate their technique, coordination, and overall ability to ensure they are placed in the appropriate level.



CLASS --- REGISTRATION

1 **New & Current Students:** Please fill out all required registration forms. These are available in person at the studio or through our online portal, Studio Pro.

2 Once forms are filled out, please hand them to us, or submit through the online portal.

3 **For All Families:** a \$25 registration fee is required upon registering. Your registration will not be complete until we receive it.



REGISTRATION INFO

Scan the QR Code to
access our online
registration portal.



STUDIO FACULTY



Theresa Shine - Studio Director, Owner & Instructor

Miss Theresa, the founder of Shining Starz grew up dancing in CT and has trained professionally in NYC. She is a graduate of Broadway Dance Center's Pro Sem in Jazz and Theatre. She holds over 10 years of teaching experience, specializing in acrobatics and theatre. In extension, she is a current dance adjudicator both nationally and internationally. She is also a decorated gymnast at the Xcel Diamond Level with the NAIGC. As a current professional dancer, Theresa incorporates current industry criteria into her own teaching.

Performance credits: Elmwood Burlesque, The Shirts, The West End Lounge, We the Heroes Ball, LipGloss Crisis Productions, The State House Cabaret, Deucebug Productions/Fullblast Booking, PRIDE New Haven, The Stonewall Inn, So You Think You Can Dance, Trevi Lounge & Troupe 429.

Choreography Credits: East Shoreline Catholic Academy 2022 & 2023 school musicals *We the People* and *Annie*.
2025 Rave Dance Challenge National Choreography Award Winner



Kate Shine - Petite, Junior/Preteen & Senior Tap

Miss Kate has over 25 years of experience in the dance world. She started out at Myra's School of Dance in Hamden, CT. She then went on to perform with The Judith Nilsson Ballet Company in Hamden, CT. Miss Kate had the honor of receiving an outstanding tap dance award, as well as placing in various competitions for Dance Educators of America and Dance Masters of America.

Throughout her teaching experience, Kate has always emphasized Ballet technique. She has a strong background in Ballet, Tap, and Jazz dancing. Her past classes have focused on pre-teen and teen dancers both competitive and non-competitive. She also was the head of the arts department at First Congregational Church in West Haven, CT teaching Liturgical Dance.



Sarah Caron - Gymnastics & Boys Hip-Hop

Miss Sarah has over 20 years of gymnastics and acrobatics experience. She has worked for All Stars Gymnastics Academy in Windsor, CT specializing in pre-school age, levels 1-3 and tumbling/trampoline. She also has coached backhandspring clinics and done choreography for their gymnastics exhibitions.

Miss Sarah has also coached the competitive hip-hop team at All Stars along with a few seasons of dance team both at St. Bernard's Elementary School and Enfield High School. In addition, Miss Sarah owns three strength and conditioning gyms in Southern California.



Jamie Grenet - Cosmic, Soaring Starz & Technique

Miss Jamie has been dancing for over 20 years and is a graduate of American Dance Experience. She is also a graduate of Central CT State University, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education. Jamie is a former member of the Central CT State University & Hamden High Dance Teams. She has competed in UDA sanctioned competitions and camps as well as in The World Dance Championships with SDA growing up placing 5th in 2018. When teaching, Miss Jamie likes to bring her experience and knowledge to her students while inspiring a new generation of dancers to have fun.



Kaitlyn Cheslock - Junior Jazz & Acro

Miss Kaitlyn has been dancing for 13 years and is currently enrolled at Shining Starz in our Senior Company. Her specialties include Ballet and Acrobatics. For the past few years, Miss Kaitlyn has volunteered in our summer camps and more recently became an assistant teacher in the Junior Company ballet and acro classes. You can find Miss Kaitlyn coteaching our Junior Company acro class this fall. Demonstration credits include Acrobatic Arts 2025.



OUR DRESS CODE

At Shining Starz, we have a dress code to ensure that all dancers are dressed appropriately for optimal movement and safety during classes. This uniformity helps instructors provide effective corrections and fosters a sense of discipline and professionalism among our students.

Future Starz	We encourage our youngest dancers to wear clothes that allow them to move and feel confident! Street shoes are not allowed, barefoot or ballet shoes are fine.	
Newstarz	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard with tights. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: Capezio Shuffle Tap Shoe in Black.
Cosmic Starz	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard with tights. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: Capezio Shuffle tap shoe in black. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series tan jazz shoe
Soaring Starz	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard with tights. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Dance SD16. Tap: Capezio Shuffle tap shoe in black. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series tan jazz shoe
Mini Company	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard with tights. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: Capezio Shuffle tap shoe in tan. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series tan jazz shoe
Petite Company	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard with tights. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: Bloch tap on tap shoe in tan. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series tan jazz shoe.
Junior Company	<i>Attire</i>	Black leotard for Ballet. For other genres, black leotard or sports bra and shorts or leggings. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: So Danca black one inch heel Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series tan jazz shoe.
Preteen Company	<i>Attire</i>	Black leotard for Ballet. For other genres, black leotard or sports bra and shorts or leggings. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: So Danca black one inch heel. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series black jazz shoe.
Senior Company	<i>Attire</i>	Black leotard for Ballet. For other genres, black leotard or sports bra and shorts or leggings. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Ballet: So Danca SD16. Tap: Capezio Downtown Tap Shoe in Black. Jazz/Acro: Capezio e series black jazz shoe.
Hip-Hop Company	<i>Attire</i>	Sports Bra or tank/t-shirt and shorts or leggings.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Adidas grand court sneakers
Gymnastics	<i>Attire</i>	Leotard, shorts or leggings over are optional. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Barefoot.
Boys Hip-Hop	<i>Attire</i>	T-Shirt and athletic shorts or pants.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Adidas boy's grand court sneakers
Technique	<i>Attire</i>	Black Leotard with shorts or leggings. Hair pulled back in a ponytail or bun.
	<i>Shoes</i>	Barefoot.

Need Dancewear?

The following boutiques are aware of our dress code and can provide everything you need:

- **Dancer's World:** 2348 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518
- **Dancer's Boutique:** 224 Main St. East Haven, CT 06512



Master Calendar



- **August 3rd:** Season Registration Opens
- **August 5th:** In person registration
- **August 22nd:** In person registration & open house
- **September 8th:** Classes Begin
- **September 27th to October 3rd:** Bring a Friend Week
- **October 12th:** Closed for Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day
- **November 7th:** Platinum Dance Convention
- **November 25th - November 29th:** Thanksgiving Break
- **December 16th to 22nd:** Parent Observation Week
- **December 23rd - January 2nd:** Christmas Break
- **January 18th:** Closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **January 23rd:** Glow Dance Party/Studio Fundraiser
- **February 13th - 15th:** Closed for Presidents Day Break
- **March 13th - 14th:** Work It Dance Challenge
- **March 26th:** Closed for Good Friday
- **March 27th:** Picture Day
- **April 16th - 18th:** Rave Dance Challenge
- **April 25th - May 1st:** Bring a Friend Week
- **May 14th - 16th:** Driven Talent Competition
- **June 4th:** Dress Rehearsal
- **June 5th:** Recital
- **June 27th - July 1st:** Rave Dance Challenge Nationals

FEE STRUCTURE

Class Tuition

We offer two payment options: full season or monthly installments (9 installments). The full season payment must be completed by September 8th, 2026, to receive a **5% discount**. Please note, we do not prorate the full season payment option. The full season option is for group classes only. After September 8th, only monthly installments are available. We offer **20% off** for the second child and **25% off** for the third child and beyond.

NOTE: If you pay for the full year and withdraw for any reason, a 30% cancellation fee will be deducted from the refund balance.

Monthly Installments		Full Season	
Class	Cost per Month	Class	Full Season Rate
Future Starz	\$65	Future Starz	\$556
Newstarz & Mini Company	\$75	Newstarz & Mini Company	\$642
Cosmic Starz	\$85	Cosmic Starz	\$727
Soaring Starz	\$85	Soaring Starz	\$727
Gymnastics	\$270/session	NA	NA
Boys Hip-Hop	\$75	Boys Hip-Hop	\$642
Adult Tap	\$75	Adult Tap	N/A
Technique	\$80 Company Members \$60	Technique	N/A
Petite Company	\$120	Petite Company	\$1026
Junior Company	\$155	Junior Company	\$1326
Preteen Company	\$155	Preteen Company	\$1326
Senior Company	\$210	Senior Company	\$1796
Hip-Hop Company	\$50	Hip-Hop Company	\$428

Registration Fee
Per Family
\$25

Solos, Duos/Trios & Private Lessons

Please note: Solo and Duo/Trio lessons are for anyone that already attends class at our studio. Only Company members are allowed to perform a solo or duo/trio.

Private lessons are for those who do not attend weekly classes and wish to train with us.

Lesson Costs		Lesson Costs
Solos	Duos/Trios	Private Lessons
\$30 per 30 mins \$45 per 45 mins \$60 per 60 mins *\$30 one time choreography fee*	\$25 per 30 mins *\$30 one time choreography fee per dancer*	\$35 per 30 mins \$50 per 45 mins \$65 per 60 mins

Additional Fees

Recital Tickets: \$30 per Ticket (all ages). Dancers & children under 3 are free.

Starz Competition Company: One-Time Company fee of \$50/family to cover all rehearsals throughout the season



STUDIO POLICIES

Attendance and Tardiness: Regular attendance is crucial for progress in dance. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. If a student will be absent, parents must notify the studio in advance by contacting (203) 215-7277. *Excessive absences may result in reassessment of class placement.* Students should arrive on time for all classes. If a student arrives more than 10 minutes late, they may be asked to sit and observe the class to avoid disruption. Repeated tardiness may result in a meeting with the instructor and parents.

Code of Conduct: Students are expected to show respect to instructors and peers at all times. This includes listening attentively, following instructions, and maintaining a positive attitude. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action. Parents should support a positive environment by encouraging their children and respecting the studio policies. Any concerns or issues should be addressed privately with the studio staff.

Health and Safety Guidelines: Students should stay home if they are feeling unwell, especially if they have symptoms of contagious illnesses. Please inform the studio if your child will be absent due to illness. All injuries must be reported to the instructor immediately. An incident report will be completed, and parents will be notified. In case of a serious injury, emergency medical services will be contacted.

Dress Code Enforcement: Students must adhere to the dress code at all times. Non-compliance may result in being asked to sit out of class until proper attire is worn.

Inclement Weather Policy: Closures due to inclement weather will be announced via email, and social media by 2 PM on the day of the closure.

Makeup Class Policy: Students may attend makeup classes for any missed classes due to illness, family emergencies, or weather-related closures. To schedule a makeup class, please contact us. Makeup classes must be scheduled in advance and are subject to availability.

Refund Policy: Tuition is non-refundable except in cases of medical emergencies with a doctor's note. Requests for refunds must be submitted to shiningstarzacrodance@gmail.com. Costume fees are non-refundable after costumes have been ordered. Private lesson fees are only refundable with 24-hour notice of cancellation. Summer camp deposits are non-refundable. No refunds will be issued for no-shows or last-minute cancellations.

Photo/Video Release: Photos and videos of students may be used for marketing and promotional purposes. By enrolling your child, you consent to the use of their images. If you wish to opt-out, please contact shiningstarzacrodance@gmail.com

Liability Release: Participation in dance classes involves some risk. By enrolling, you agree to release Shining Starz Acro-Dance Academy LLC from any liability for injuries or accidents that may occur during classes or events.

Payment Policy: Tuition must be paid by the last day of the month via cash, check, credit or debit card. A late fee of \$15 will be applied to accounts past due after a five day grace period. A credit card must be on file as a backup method of payment. Payment information is securely stored and protected. If you need to update your payment information, please contact shiningstarzacrodance@gmail.com

Communication Policy: Communication is by email, studio phone or BAND. We aim to respond within 24 hours to all inquiries. Studio staff will respond to inquiries during office hours. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response.

Studio Etiquette: Students should show respect to instructors and peers at all times. This includes listening attentively, following instructions, and maintaining a positive attitude. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and maintain a tidy environment. No food or drinks are allowed in the studio, except for water bottles. Students should use the bathroom for changing and the waiting area for resting. *Parents and siblings must wait in our designated waiting area. Only 1 parent is allowed to view in the Future Starz, Newstarz &/or Mini Company classes.*

Lost and Found Policy: Lost items should be reported to the office. Unclaimed items will be kept in the lost and found for 30 days before being donated. Please check the lost and found regularly for any missing items.

Attendance, Absences, and Makeups: Regular attendance is crucial for community and technique development. Inform the studio of absences via email, band or text. Only two makeup classes are allowed per month scheduled by contacting us within 24 hours prior to missed class. Makeup classes must be from the same or a lower level.



PARENT --- RESOURCES

Volunteer Opportunities

We welcome parent involvement and offer various volunteer opportunities throughout the year. To volunteer, please contact shiningstarzacrodance@gmail.com. Opportunities include:

- Assisting with recitals and events
- Helping with costume fittings
- Supporting studio fundraisers



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What should my child wear to class?

A: Please refer to our dress code section for specific attire requirements for each dance style.

Q: How do I register for classes?

A: Registration is online through our Studio Pro Portal. Paper forms are also available upon request.

Q: What happens if my child misses a class?

A: Makeup classes are available for missed classes due to illness or emergencies only. Please contact us to schedule a makeup class. Please note this is for classes only and not private lessons.

Q: Are there any discounts available?

A: Yes, we offer sibling discounts of 20% off for the second child and 25% off for the third child. Additionally, we have a legacy discount program for students facing financial hardship. Please inquire with Miss Theresa for more details.

Q: Can parents observe classes?

A: Parents of students only in the Future Starz, Newstarz & Mini Company Classes are welcome to observe classes. ****Only 1 parent per student is allowed to observe.**** We feel it is important for students to be able to focus on class with minimal distractions.

Q: When and where are the recital and dress rehearsal?

A: Dress Rehearsal and Recital will both be at Joseph Melillo Middle School in East Haven, CT. Friday June 4th will be the rehearsal (mandatory for all students) and the recital on Saturday June 5th. Dress Rehearsal runs from 6-8pm with at 5:30pm arrival time for all students. The recital runs from 4-6pm with a 3pm arrival time for all students- doors will open at 3:15pm for spectators.

Get in Touch



You can also reach us by email, call, text, social media messages, or BAND messages.

We are always available during studio hours. For reminders and announcements, we sent out a monthly newsletter via email and the BAND app.

We're excited to provide you with a clear, organized, and positive experience!

- **Address:** 3 Research Drive Suite 8, Branford, CT 06405
- **Phone:** (203) 215-7277
- **Email:** shiningstarzacrodance@gmail.com
- **BAND Group:** <https://band.us/n/a6a6baDfa4g6O>
- **Instagram:** @shiningstarzacrodance
- **Facebook:** @shiningstarzacrodancect

**JOIN OUR PRIVATE
BAND APP**

Download the BAND app and join our private group for instant updates and notifications sent directly to your phone! Enjoy exclusive photos, group chats, and more!

