

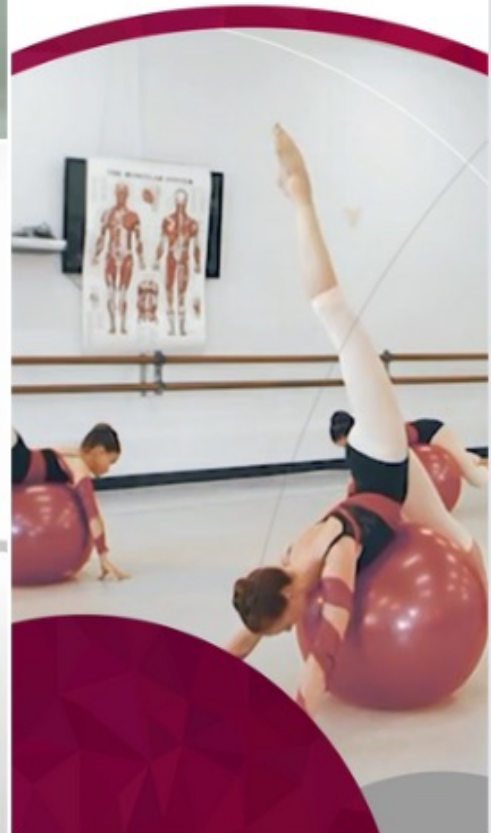
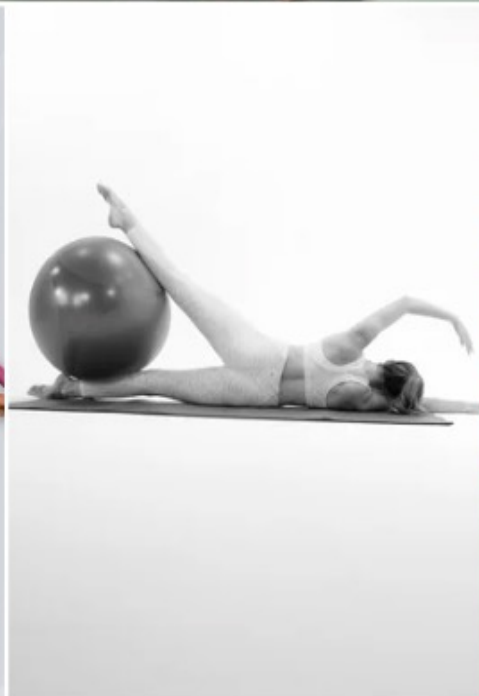
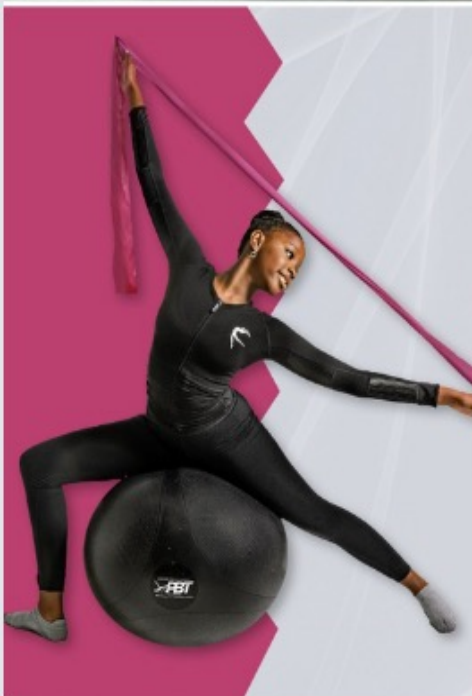


# PROGRESSING BALLET TECHNIQUE





**PBT**  
PROGRESSING BALLET TECHNIQUE®



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# WHAT IS PBT?

Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT) is an innovative body-conditioning and strengthening program that has been designed to enhance students' technique in all forms of dance by focussing on training the muscle memory required in each exercise in all forms of dance.

PBT helps teachers around the world prepare their students to receive the strength they need to achieve their personal best. It is an innovative program that helps students with core strength, weight placement and alignment.

The program helps with injury prevention and rehabilitation and enhances the ability of athletes to perform at their best. It can be difficult for students to feel which muscles initiate the correct alignment in training. However, with the use of an exercise ball, the students gain a great sense of posture and weight-placement whilst feeling each correct muscle group working throughout each exercise, which then stays with them whilst performing.

PBT focuses on core strength, weight placement and alignment of the body with a gradual approach of carefully designed exercises and repetitions of these exercises that trigger their muscle memory. The program is designed with safe dance methodology to promote a long, healthy career. PBT is now being taught by over 6000+ certified teachers worldwide and over 4500 schools globally have added PBT classes in their curriculum for students.

PBT is not only a program to improve technique in ballet dancers, it is now being appreciated and incorporated in training by all forms of dancers, athletes, physiotherapists and even footballers!





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# PHYSIOTHERAPIST ANALYSIS OF PBT

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## References

Quin E, Rafferty S, Tomlinson C (2015): Safe Dance Practice. Human Kinetics. Champaign, IL.

Welsh, T (2009): Conditioning for dancers. University press of Florida.Gainesville, FL.

PBT website: accessed 30 July 2020. <https://pbt.dance/home/about>

Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT) is a unique training system using ballet-technique specific exercises to train skill acquisition in a graded and progressive manner from junior through to advanced levels.

The PBT program enhances the process of skill acquisition defined by Quin et al 2019, pp 255 as 'the process of learning and developing a new ability through instruction and practice', and that of motor learning 'the process of learning and improving the new movement actions through practice and experience' (Quin et al 2019, pp 253).

PBT teaching refers to this learning of a new skill via 'muscle memory', while acknowledging that while skill acquisition might require the strengthening of certain muscles at certain joint angles, the processes that are important for learning and memory of new skills occur mainly in the brain. The predominant areas of the brain involved in 'muscle memory' include the motor cortex, the basal ganglia and the cerebellum, along with the afferent and efferent neural systems in the periphery.

Dancers must optimise a number of physical capacities to achieve their dance goals (Welsh 2009 pp 4-10) including:

Alignment: Dancers must learn to align their bodies in ways that allow them to move efficiently. Good alignment is sometimes called placement. PBT works for correct alignment through all exercises, at all levels.

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Co-ordination: the nervous system and the muscles that execute and control movement must collaborate to accomplish the skilful movements that dance requires. This neuromuscular co-ordination contributes to 'muscle memory', a cornerstone of the PBT program.

Flexibility: dancers are required to move their joints through the full range of movement required by the choreography. Careful, dynamic stretching is an important component of PBT.

Strength: is actually three related capacities - muscular strength (the maximal amount of force a muscle or muscle group can generate), muscular endurance (movements required by choreography repeated without fatigue) and power (a combination of force and speed). PBT progressively builds towards each of these with increasing repetitions, increasing level of difficulties and increasing force & speed.

Aerobic capacity: while an advanced PBT class may result in elevated breathing, heart rate and sweating it cannot be claimed PBT enhances cardio-vascular capacity per se until further research into the PBT program is completed.

PBT also follows the 3 principles of conditioning:

i) adaptation and reversibility, ii) specificity and iii) progressive overload.

The first principle of physical conditioning, adaptation, explains how 'when the human body is challenged repeatedly, it gradually develops the capacity to manage that challenge', also known as the overload principle in exercise physiology.

This overload is inherent in the progressive challenges to the dancers bodies as they work through the beginner, intermediate then advanced levels of the PBT program. Overload is challenged further by the addition of the equipment used in PBT including the exercises ball, pilates ball, bosu and resistance bands. When we challenge our bodies they grow stronger (Welsh 2009 pp 14).

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Adaptation has a direct corollary called reversibility (Welsh 2009, pp 14). If we stop working a capacity, that capacity will diminish or become weaker. Dancers are encouraged to continue PBT even when away from the studio to maintain all capacities to an acceptable level, 'use it or lose it'.

The second principle of conditioning, specificity, holds that the exercise needs to closely match the specific ability you are trying to build. All PBT exercises have the goal of improving a specific element of balletic technique.

The third and final principle of conditioning is progressive overload. 'Our capacities will expand fastest when the challenge is increased progressively' (Welsh 2009, pp 16). A sudden increase in demand will load the body too quickly and this is when injury may occur. There is strong evidence in the dance & sports medicine literature supporting a gradual increase of load during the dancer or athlete's training cycle. Sudden increases in load can occur after returning from a break, during dance intensives and when rehearsing or performing adds longer hours, shorter breaks and increased demands on the dancers. PBT classes are structured to avoid any sudden overload as the dancer trains.

PBT has also taken into consideration those dancers with joint hypermobility (GJHS), those with genu recurvatum (hyperextended knees also known as sway back legs), have a dynamic (postural) or structural scoliosis, tibial torsion and neural challenges eg Chiari malformation. All PBT exercises can be modified to meet the needs of each individual dancer.

Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT) is an innovative body-conditioning and strengthening program developed by Marie Walton-Mahon for students to understand the depth of training muscle memory in achieving their personal best.



## Junior Festival Team



### PBT TAUGHT HERE

DATES: Saturdays

TIMES: 12:15 – 1:00



## Inter Festival Team



### PBT TAUGHT HERE

DATES: Saturdays

TIMES: 11:30 – 12:15

## Inter Festival Team



### PBT TAUGHT HERE

DATES: Wednesdays

TIMES: 4:45 – 5:30



## Senior Festival Team



### PBT TAUGHT HERE

DATES: Saturdays

TIMES: 1:00 – 1:45



## None Festival Team

### Open Class



### PBT TAUGHT HERE

DATES: Fridays

TIMES: 4:15 – 5:00

