

THE COMP PARENT'S GUIDE TO SANITY

Version 5 – January 10, 2011

How to avoid this happening to
you...



Information Tips and Tricks to
Help Ease Your Way...

FOREWORD

Here we go again! The 2010-2011 dance season is but a distant memory and 2011-2012 is upon us. We dance moms now sit impatiently in anticipation of the fun, new and creative work our choreographers will present this year.

The Birth of the Survival Guide

I must admit I'm a bit of an information junkie. As such, I feel the need to inform others. Sure, some might call that being a know-it-all, but I'm shooting for "helpful" while I feed my obsession to inform.

Four years ago, when Kristin joined the comp team, I had a head full of questions. The next year my friend Penny, who was new to comp, had loads of the same questions as well as different questions. In some cases, new comp moms have questions they don't even think to ask. It occurred to me after that second season that it would be neat to have a tool that was a sort of brain download of all the stuff comp moms think and ask about. I'm hoping this manual will help make the experience less hazy and overwhelming for new comp parents, as well as provides a check list for existing comp parents - not to mention it may decrease the number of e-mails Robyn gets 😊.

My plan for this document is to make it a dynamic manual. When someone has a new question or idea they would like addressed and believes it applies to everyone, they can send it to me via Facebook and I'll update it.

The manual is available for download on the MWG Website.

Enjoy! And have a great comp season.

Deanna Guitard

NOTE: Important dates, new pricing and such will be updated the information becomes available.

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WHAT IS COMPETITIVE DANCE, EXACTLY?

Competitive dance is a popular, widespread activity in which competitors perform dances in any of several permitted dance styles—such as ballet, tap, jazz, acro, musical theatre and hip hop before a common group of judges. Generally there are 5 competitions per year.

Robyn has tried to keep competitions within a 1.5 hour radius of the studio to help contain traveling costs. However, should the parents agree at some future date, there could be a possibility of attending a competition in more “exotic” locations like Disney, Myrtle Beach, New York, etc... Such competitions would only take place every 2 or 3 years and would be partially financed by fund-raising efforts.

Competitions are organized by competition production companies—also called dance competition companies (e.g. Kick-it-up, Let’s Get Loud, Dancer’s Choice, etc.) —that conduct regional competitions at stops along their annual, province-wide or nationwide tours.

Competitive dancing requires extensive dedication as many months may be spent practicing dance and developing dance routines.

The Journey Begins...

COMPETITIVE AUDITION (COMP) CAMP

The week the kids look forward to the most; Comp Camp is a very important first step in the competition process. All potential competitive dancers are required to attend camp.

For most pre-competitive dancers, it is a first glimpse into both the commitment involved in competitive dance as well as the true team spirit of what it means to be part of the comp team.

At comp camp all the dancers are exposed to all form of dance offered by MWG including but not limited to hip hop, ballet, jazz, acro, musical theatre and tap.

Robyn and the dance teachers use comp camp to assess the dancers’ skills and styles to ascertain where they would best fit in the upcoming year’s choreographies. The teachers are looking to form groups and dances of children of similar age, ability and aesthetics. It is during this week that they decide what lines, groups, duets and trios will be offered. All decisions are made at the sole discretion of the staff of Move with Grace and in the best interest of all the children.

Typically (but not always), dancers are not offered solos, duet or trios in their first year of competition. Sometimes, trios and duets can arise from a low number of dancers available from an age category or genre. However, there are exceptions where trios, duets and solos may be offered for various reasons in a child’s first year of competition at MWG.

During the week, MWG staff speaks to the dancers to determine which styles are their favourites. Prospective comp parents are given a survey inquiring into the number of hours of dance technique in which the child will participate, and how may choreography routines the parents wish their child to accept.

A number of factors enter into the parents’ decision-making process. It is important to consider the number of choreography routines that best fit the family’s financial and time budgets.

THE INVITATION

At the end of comp week, Robyn sends the choreography invitations to the dancers' parents via e-mail to allow them to evaluate in private before discussing the choices with their children.

The invitation includes:

- A List of routines offered to each child;
- The choreographer assigned to the routine; and
- The proposed time slot.

Choreography invitations are very exciting for the dancers (and parents). They're also a little stressful as parents and their kids need to agree on the number of routines they will accept.

Note: It's important to consider not only to the number of hours of technique training, but also the number of choreography hours as well.

Once the decision is made, parents are asked to send an e-mail back confirming which choreographies they will accept. It is helpful to put "Comp Acceptance—Name of child" in the subject line of your e-mail to help Robyn track these e-mails.

Once all the acceptances are received four things could happen:

1. The numbers would run as proposed;
2. Some numbers would be removed (due to low interest);
3. Large groups could become small groups; and/or
4. Small groups could become trios or duets.

A final decision regarding which routines will run, the times and choreographers are made prior to the week choreography begins.

THE CONTRACT

All of Move with Grace Competitive dancers and parents must sign a competitive contract. This contract clearly defines the rules for the team, sets minimum standards for etiquette for the students and the parents and helps to protect your investment in your child. We must remember that competition is to enhance the level of dance skill, self esteem and feeling of community. Our goal is to help build character in your child through quality dance education.

MWG DANCER CLASSIFICATIONS: COMPETITIVE, PRE-COMPETITIVE, NOVICE

Pre-Competitive/recreational: Generally speaking, a pre-competitive dancer is one who does fewer than 6 hours per week of technique classes. A pre-competitive group or line must be made up of 75% pre-competitive dancers.

MWG Pre-Competitive Team Expectations: MWG asks pre-competitive dancers to commit to a minimum of 3 hours training per week plus choreography.

Note: sometimes a dancer may dance more than 6 hours and still be in our pre-competitive program. For instance, when a dancer is new to MWG or has not danced competitively in a couple of years, his or her skills are assessed in comparison with other dancers in the same age group. After serious consideration, the faculty may decide that these dancers should stay in the pre-competitive program to upgrade their skills to be more on par with their peers.

Please understand that MWG has the child's best interests in mind. It can be overwhelming and a detriment to a child's self-esteem to be put in a situation where they're having difficulty keeping up on an on-going basis. We have found this to be counter-productive in their development.

Competitive: Generally, a competitive dancer trains more than 6 hours of technique per week and has competed in the previous year.

Novice: A novice dancer is a dancer who is new to competition. A Novice soloist may have competed before, but has never done a solo before. Once you've done a solo in any dance genre, you can no longer be a Novice soloist. A novice group must typically be about 75% novice.

***NEW* EXCEL 1, EXCEL 2 & EXCEL 3 & PRE-COMPETITIVE LEVEL 1 & 2 DANCE SKILL CLASSIFICATION FOR TECHNIQUE CLASSES**

Competitive Excel 1, 2 & 3

NEW to MWG this year, all Full Competitive (All-You-Can-Dance) students will be placed into Excel 1, Excel 2 or Excel 3 dance classifications in **Jazz, Tap, Lyrical** and **Acro**. These levels will determine which technique classes the student will be taking. The levels are based solely on ability and will not take into account age or number of years in dance. A student may be an Excel 3 Jazz dancer, an Excel 2 for Tap and an Excel 1 for Acro.

Each Excel level class is generally given in the same time slot (i.e. Jazz Excel 1, 2 & 3 are all offered at 8 PM on Monday night), so regardless of where a dancer is placed, it will fit into his/her schedule.

This approach will allow the more advanced dancers to spend more time on elements they need to work on and less time on review. In addition, because they won't have dancers doing 3 variations of the same moves, instructors can focus more on the development of all the students. The goal is to have students perfect their technique before attempting elements with higher difficulty that require the progression. As MWG grows as a competitive team, the staff strives to continue to challenge dancers consistently to improve their skills.

Ballet will be categorized based on CDTA examination grade level.

Hip Hop will continue to be categorized based on age.

How will they be evaluated? Each Full Competitive student will be assessed in the last two months of the dance year by MWG teaching staff. The benchmark against which they will be evaluated is based on required elements set by national dance syllabuses in each dance style combined with staff standards.

At the end of the year, each dancer will receive a report card reflecting their progress through the required elements and the level to which their results corresponds.

What if a parent disagrees with an assessment? Should a parent disagree with the staff's assessment of their child and wish to appeal it, an appointment will be set for the child to take a test. Robyn, two instructors and the parent will be part of this testing process.

What if my child improves over the summer or the dance season? Super Tuesdays will be separated into Excel levels. Furthermore, during Comp Camp and through the dance season, the teachers will continue to evaluate the dancers. If a student reaches the specific goals set by the Excel level and the instructors are satisfied that they have mastered the skills, the dancer will be moved up into the next Excel level.

Precompetitive Level 1 & 2

Pre-competitive dancers will be placed in a Pre-competitive Level 1 or Level 2 depending on their skill level for **Ballet** and **Jazz**. They will be assessed and placed into Excel levels for **Tap** and **Acro**.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHOREOGRAPHY AND TECHNIQUE

Technique classes

Technique classes are regular weekly classes where dancers learn the basic technique for dance components. For example, they might work on jumps, spins & kicks in Jazz class and port de bras (arm movements), posture, footwork and lines in ballet, etc... These classes are critical in enhancing the dancers' development, and in giving them the skills to master their competition choreography.

Typically, the minimum number of classes a dancer takes corresponds to the number of genres of competitive choreographies they've accepted plus ballet (whether the dancer competes in ballet or not). For example, if you've accepted a jazz and hip hop number, at the very least, you'll want to enroll in both those technique classes as well as ballet.

Because ballet technique contains the foundational principles for all dances, MWG believes strongly in all dancers taking ballet regardless of whether they compete in ballet.

New If Miss Robyn has determined that a dancer is ready to take ballet exams in the upcoming year, and the dancer wishes to take the exam, that dancer will be required to take the two ballet classes that correspond to his/her CDTA Grade level. The requirement serves to ensure that the child has been exposed to the entire curriculum throughout the season.

Note: A dancer is typically not ready for exams until they've taken competitive ballet technique for at least a year. There are also age requirements.

***New* Pre-Pointe** is a pointe preparatory program developed to ensure that dancers transition to pointe in a smart and safe way. This class is open to dancers who:

- * Are 10 years and older;
- * Have studied ballet for a minimum of 3 years;
- * Take a minimum of 2 ballet classes per week;
- * Dance year round (do not take summers off) and
- * Show the appropriate level of maturity and readiness.

It is important to realize that some students advance to pointe more quickly than others. These decisions are made for the health of your dancer. Pre-mature (both in age and ability) pointe work can create a lifetime of physical problems. For this reason, dancers will never be rushed to get on pointe.

If your child is interested in pursuing other forms of dance in upcoming years, but does not currently have the skills to compete in that form; you might want to consider enrolling your child in that technique class in the current year to allow him/her to prepare for the next year.

Technique classes follow the same schedule as our regular recreational classes but do not run if the team is away at competition as the students are encouraged to be at the competition to support the team

Summer Technique

Competitive dancers are encouraged to dance year-round in order to maintain their level of fitness and skill. This not only allows the dancers to keep their competitive edge, but it also helps keep them fit to avoid over exertion or injury at the beginning of the next dance season.

MWG offers two nights of dance to their competitive dancers:

Super Tuesdays - MWG offers a 3-hour Super-Tuesday class where dancers focus on Jazz trick, strength and stretching. These classes can be purchased in blocks of 4, 6 or 8 classes. The first Super Tuesday class begins June 14, 2011.

NEW Because of the growing popularity of Super Tuesdays, MWG is offering Super Tuesdays for pre-competitive dancer as well younger dancers this year.

Summer Acro - MWG also offers an 8-week acro skills class throughout the summer to help those dancers focused on improving or maintaining their acro skills.

Choreography classes

Separate from technique classes, these are 1 hour or 1/2 hour sessions where the dancers learn the routines with which they will compete in upcoming competition season. Dancers are expected to arrive warmed up and ready to work on nothing but their routine for the allotted time. This helps the children focus and produces a very strong level of technique and a much cleaner dance routine for competition.

New for the 2011-2012 Season, group choreographies will run from September 30 through the competitive season; for a total of 25 weeks (previously 20 weeks). Solos, duets and trios choreography classes run from October for 15 weeks like in previous years. Additional choreography classes can be purchased at the discretion of the choreographer or dancer. Dancers are also free to practice their routines during open studio time.

Summer Solos

MWG offers a "summer solo" choreography program. The dancers who had solos in the previous year are offered the opportunity to learn their solo choreography throughout the summer in an 8-week session. Not only is this practice advantages to most of the soloists, but it also opened up studio time through the regular season for more solos. During regular season, these solo dancers will have the remaining 7 weeks of choreography on a bi-weekly basis for "cleaning".

Open Studio Time: If a studio is free, dancers are encouraged to practice their numbers in the studio. iPod docking stations and/or CD players are available to the dancers if they have their music with them. If more than one dancer wishes to practice their routines, they will be asked to take turns. This can be a very enjoyable experience. Quite often other dancers come in and serve as an audience for the practicing dancer. It is a good way to promote team spirit.

Choreography classes run as follows:

Small group	4 – 9 dancers	25 weeks for ½ hour
Large Groups and Lines	10 – 18 dancers	25 weeks for 1 hour
Production	MWG Encourages the entire team to participate	20-25 weeks for 1 hour; 2 hours closer to competition
Duets/Trios	2 – 3 dancers	15 weeks for ½ hour
Solos		15 weeks for ½ hour

DANCE STYLES

Pure Dance Styles

Jazz - Uses technique. Dancing includes jumps, turns and extensions with no acro tricks.

Tap—Rhythmic style dancing using percussive footwork performed in tap shoes.

Ballet Demi Pointe—Classical Ballet style performed in soft ballet shoes.

Demi Character—Ballet style dancing which displays character development.

Pointe—Classical ballet style dancing performed on Pointe shoes.

Lyrical—A style combining Jazz and Ballet technique while expressing emotion and interpreting the music.

Modern—Routines performed using modern technique including falls, rolls, spirals with expression of emotion and abstract style.

Contemporary— Routine with fluid and unlimited personal styles which is not associated with any specific dance technique. Contemporary Involves strong emotional connection with emphasis on the connection between the mind and body.

Specialty Dance Styles

Hip Hop — Street, music video style dancing includes popping, locking, break-dancing, etc.

Musical Theatre — Routines where the dancer's portrays a character by lip sync the song while acting it out.

Song & Dance — The performer sings and dances.

Acro — A routine including contortion, tumbling, aerials, walkovers, hand and elbow stands etc. combined with dance choreography.

Open — A routine consisting of any style or combinations of styles or does not fit into any other category.

Production — A routine including many dancers that follows a theme or tells a story. A production number may include a combination of several styles of dance, costume changes and props.

THE BILL—WHAT DO ALL THE NUMBERS MEAN?

Dance fees for competitive dancers are broken down into 6 components:

1. Tuition (Technique Classes) – Same price as recreational stream classes.

Hours of Technique	Subtotal	HST	Total
One Hour	\$425	55.25	\$ 480.25
Two Hours	\$795	\$103.35	\$ 898.35
Three Hours	\$1,145	\$148.85	\$1,293.85
Four Hours	\$1,495	\$194.35	\$1,689.35
5 to 8 Hours	\$1,640	\$213.20	\$1,853.20
Additional Classes	\$200 Each	\$26.00	\$226.00 each

2. Choreography

Choreography	Subtotal	HST	Total
Groups	*New* \$275	\$35.75	\$310.75
Duets	\$240	\$31.20	\$271.20
Trios	\$240	\$31.20	\$271.20
Solos	\$420	\$54.60	\$474.60
Production	*New* \$125	\$16.25	\$141.25

3. Competition Entry Fees

Competition Entries	Subtotal	HST	Total	X 5 Competitions
Groups	\$35	\$4.55	\$39.55	\$197.75
Trios	\$40	\$5.20	\$45.20	\$226.00
Duets	\$40	\$5.20	\$45.20	\$226.00
Solos	\$65	\$8.45	\$73.45	\$367.25

4. Costumes

Based on costume prices in 2011, the cost will be approximately **\$130 plus HST each**. MWG purchases all the competition costumes and charges the average cost per costume.

5. Summer Technique

Note: Payments may be split up into 3 equal payments on June 1st, July 1st & August 1st

June 14 th through August 10 th , 2011	Subtotal	HST	Total
Super Tuesdays (8 weeks – 9 actually offered)	\$192	\$24.96	\$216.96
Super Tuesdays (6weeks)	\$180	\$23.40	\$203.40
Super Tuesdays (4weeks)	\$144	\$18.72	\$162.72
Summer Acro (8 weeks)	\$120	\$15.60	\$135.60

6. Competitive Audition Camp

Comp Camp	Subtotal	HST	Total
	\$225	\$29.25	\$254.25

7. Miscellaneous Incidental Expenses - Estimate

Tights (2 pairs)	\$30
Make Up – as specified by Miss Robyn	\$35
Accessories (Earrings, Hair Clips, Eye lashes)	\$40
Hair Products (Gel, Hair Spray, Hair Pins)	\$10
Shoes	Pre-Pointe \$75 and up Pointe \$100 and up Hip Hop \$50 Ballet - \$30 Jazz \$75 Tap \$90

PAYMENT METHODS

Tuition & Choreography:

Tuition and choreography fees may be amortized over the 10 month period of the dance season.

Competition Fees:

New Because MWG must pay all competition fees up front when registering the team, competition fees are due by December 15th, 2011.

Costumes:

New Costumes are to be in full by December 15th, 2011.

WE'RE GOING TO COMPETITION—WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

Competition Dates

DATES	COMPETITION	LOCATION
February 23-26	<i>Bedazzled</i>	Richmond Hill Theatre for the Arts Richmond Hill, Ontario
March 2, 3 & 4	<i>Kick it Up</i>	Barrie Central Collegiate 125 Dunlop Street West Barrie, Ontario
March 30 – Apr. 1	<i>Let's Get Loud</i>	Niagara Falls Centre for the Arts 4700 Epworth Circle Niagara Falls, ON
April 20 - 22	<i>Kick it Up</i>	Hamilton Conventions Centre 1 Summers Lane Hamilton, Ontario
May 11-13	<i>Flashdance</i>	P.C. Ho Theatre 5183 Sheppard Avenue East Scarborough, Ontario Canada M1B 5Z5

Schedule – Miss Robyn receives the competition schedule 1-2 weeks before the competition and will e-mail it to all parents and post it to the Facebook Competition Parents' page. The schedule shows the precise time that each Move with Grace group or individual is scheduled to be on stage. **Please note, these are not "ready-times" these are the times the kids are actually on stage.**

Note: If you haven't received a schedule for whatever reason, just ask one of the other parents. They will be happy to forward it to you. If you notice you aren't receiving e-mails, send Miss Robyn an e-mail with the subject line "not on e-mail list" or "add e-mail address".

The One-Hour Rule – Now this is an **important rule!** It's right up there with "Yield to pedestrians", "Don't park in a handicap space" and "Don't eat yellow snow". It is imperative that your child arrives one hour before they are scheduled to be on stage with their hair and make-up done.

There are a several reasons for this:

1. The competitions may run early or late. Do not rely solely on the scheduled times.
2. It helps calm the dancers' nerves to be prepared well in advance. When the child is in a group number, there are other dancers that rely on him or her. When a dancer is late, it increases the anxiety level for all the dancers in the routine.
3. One of the instructors will "run the number" about 15 to 30 minutes before the dancers are scheduled to be on stage. This means that they will have the dancers perform the number a couple of times (with or without music), to help iron out last minute kinks and to keep the choreography fresh in the dancers' minds. This practice goes a long way to easing any worry the dancers may have about forgetting the routine before going on stage.

Hair and Make-up – Miss Robyn and the choreographers will convene to discuss what hair styles and make-up will be required for each number. Robyn will then provide a list that outlines the costume, hair and makeup for each number.

It is necessary for all dancers to have the same hair and make-up. Therefore, MWG will direct parents as to what make-up to purchase. The reason for the need for uniformity is so the judges are not distracted by inconsistencies and they can focus on the dancing. Judges do notice any inconsistencies and may dock points if they are too distracting.

Miss Robyn holds a hair and make-up demonstration to show new parents and refresh experienced (I won't say "Old") parents on the proper technique for applying make-up and styling the hair.

Note: Miss Robyn will have make-up kits, tights, earrings & and hair accessories available for purchase closer to competition.

HAIR & MAKE-UP TIPS

- 1) Inspirations Dancewear's website posts an instructional video by JAM Cosmetics. It can be found at the following URL: <http://store.inspirationsdancewear.com/index.php?cpage=look> or at the Homepage, click on the JAM Cosmetics Info tab.
- 2) Practice applying make-up at home. Generally, the kids love to wear make-up, so try it at home first so you don't feel so stressed the day of the competition. If your child doesn't want to cooperate, try it on yourself. ☺
- 3) To get a liquid eyeliner look, simply wet your brush to apply the brown eye shadow at the lid.
- 4) The cheaper the gel, the better the results! You'll need a vat of it to keep the hair in place.
- 5) Don't worry... It's not too much make-up. The point of the make-up is for the judges to see your child's expression from far away. The judges' tables are generally at the back of the theatre, so a lot of make-up is necessary.
- 6) **If you need help, ask one of the "experienced moms"**. We love to help and we've been where you are not so long ago. Some of us are better at certain things than others, so we'll be sure to direct you to the proper resources.

Hotel - One of our mom's - Fran DeGouveia - will arrange for a team rate at a surrounding hotel. The contact and registration information is made available on Facebook and/or by e-mail within a reasonable amount of time before competition. Fran also prepares maps to accompany the confirmation packages for each family.

There are a couple of things to note with respect to hotels:

1. If your child performs in the afternoon, you may not need to stay in a hotel. The best course of action is to book the hotel in advance and once you've received the schedule, you can cancel the hotel booking if it isn't needed. Some parents even wake up bright and early and make the drive to save hotel costs. The most important thing to remember here is "DON'T BE LATE!"
2. A Competition such Barrie, when it is likely we'll need a hotel, is a great way for the dancers and parents to get to know each other better. It's well worth making the effort to stay in the same hotel as all the other dancers. The kids swim together, have breakfast together... It's a lot of fun.

Note: All Novice and pre-competitive numbers are typically (but not always) the first groups to compete at a competition and generally compete on just one day, which in some case cuts down drastically on the need for hotels.

Photography and videography – If an individual is caught taking pictures or videotaping the dancers in the theatre; the whole studio could be disqualified.

A photography/videography company (such as DRC who do our recital videos) is always hired to take care capture your child on stage... for a fee. In the case of DRC, you can purchase a video from the competition that will have all group numbers from MWG on it for that particular competition. They will also have photos available for purchase.

How the awards work...

Awards vary from competition to competition but there are some consistencies.

Adjudication: Adjudication is the awards ceremony held after every section of competition. There are typically 3 or 4 adjudications per day.

Adjudication begins with one of the judges coming up to give their "**special awards**". These awards are given to dancers that the judges feel did something outstanding. The recipients are not often the dancers with the highest marks. They are dancers that show potential, danced a particularly impactful choreography, showed grace, strength or good showmanship or had to overcome an obstacle in completing their number. These awards are sometimes more special to the dancers than winning first place.

After special awards, each dance number is named and awarded a ribbon and a trophy or a medal. The ribbons represent their score. The scoring systems vary at each competition. Examples of the scoring system are:

Ultimate Platinum: 93 and up
Platinum: 90 - 92.99
High Gold: 87 - 89.99
Gold: 85 - 86.99
High Silver: 80 - 84.99
Silver: 76 - 79.99

Titanium: 95.00 and up
Ultimate Platinum: 92-94.9
Platinum: 90-92.99
High Gold: 87-89.99
Gold 85-86.99
High Silver 80-84.99

Diamond: 93-100
Emerald: 90-92.99
High gold 87 - 89.99
Gold: 85 - 86.99
High Silver: 80-84.99
Silver: 79.9 and lower

Overalls: Overall awards are given to the dancers who have received the highest score in their category. The number of overall awards varies from competition to competition. Examples include: overall mini, junior and senior soloist, overall mini, junior & senior duet, Overall mini, junior & senior Group, etc.

Musical Theatre and Acro often have their own overall category.

There is typically a separate overall category for Novice and/or Pre-competitive.

Overalls are given out once every dancer in that category has gone. Novice/Pre-comp/recreational overalls are usually handed out the first day.

Age Divisions: Age Divisions are relevant to Overall Awards. The limits vary, but the categories are usually, small fry (occasionally), mini, junior, intermediate & senior.

Tip: Pick up a program at the concessions table when you arrive at the competition (\$5-\$10). The back or the front pages of the program usually have the information on the award classifications, the age divisions and the overall categories. This information can also be found on the competition company's web-site if you're curious.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR ORGANIZING YOUR STUFF

I just want to clarify at this point that these are all just tips, and you are not required to implement these measures. These tools and tricks are just things that some of us moms felt were helpful to make the dance competition experience run smoother.

Stop Fighting It; Get Facebook - For good or for bad, the dance parents are on Facebook. It is the absolute best way to get formal and informal information on the competition goings-on and see what people are up to. Not only will it keep you in the loop, it will also help curb any feelings of disconnect you may feel with the other dance parents. The name of the Parents' page is: Move with Grace - Competitive Dance Parents Page. It is a closed page, so you can request it to be your friend to get access.

How to organize in the midst of chaos

Number 1 – The Rac n Roll



*Save Time—
Stay Organized*

**racⁿ
ROLL**

Find out how RAC n ROLL can make your dance competitions a breeze. Visit www.racnroll.com or call 905-918-0052 or toll free 1-866-545-9302.

racnroll.com

Or: Dancers' Dream Duffel ® (Inspirations Dancewear)



While not crucial, the Rac n Roll and the Dream Duffel are amazing tools if you have several costumes to contend with. It is a suitcase on rollers that doubles as a travelling closet. It has plenty of storage for all shoes, makeup and other accessories. In fact, the Dream Duffel even has a Thermal pocket to keep your drinks cold.

You can visit the following websites www.racknroll.com or <http://store.inspirationsdancewear.com/index.php?product=600D&c=56> for more details.

2. Costume Organization

A really great way to combat the feeling of not knowing whether you're coming or going is by being organized. Here are a couple of tips:

1. ***ALWAYS inventory your bag before leaving for a competition.*** We never know if our daughter(s) has decided to play with the make up; show her friend from school her cool new costume; or practice her tap routine in the basement with her tap shoes. Nothing makes you more crazy then arriving at the competition without Suzy's dance shoes.
2. ***LABEL EVERYTHING!*** – Any label type will do. However, **mabel's labels™** "are laundry safe and are designed to adhere to almost any fabric. Shoe labels are waterproof labels that stick to the insoles of footwear". A number of us use them and have found them to be incredibly durable. They are fairly pricy - \$34 for a combo pack – but they are very handy.

new we are currently holding a fund-raiser with Mabels Labels to raise funds for a competitive team trailer to carry props. Check us out at www.movewithgrace.mabel.ca.

3. ***Have a proper bag/case for your costumes*** – If you don't have a Rac n Roll-type bag, bring your child's costumes in a suitcase on rollers or a suit bag.

4. **Place individual costumes in individual bags** - This includes, shoes, tights, hair accessories, etc. Some parents suggest putting the tights, shoes and other accessories in a Ziploc labeled with the name of the routine.

Dollarama carries clear garment bags for \$1 each. While they are not particularly sturdy, they work in a pinch. Mine held up for the whole season.

Please Note: Dream Duffel has come up with a great garment bag that holds not only the costume, but also has compartments for shoes, tights and other accessories (hair, gloves, socks, etc.) They're priced at \$12 each or \$34.95 for 3. They are available at Inspirations Dancewear which is located at: 54 Queen St. South / Kitchener, ON / N2G 1V8

Once your costumes are organized, place them in the bag in order of performance.

5. **Bring a copy of the schedule with you** – Print a copy, highlight your child's numbers (routines) and put it in a protective cover so you can consult it throughout the weekend. Some moms hang it in their Rac n Roll. It also allows you to see at a glance when the other dancers from MWG are performing so you can cheer them on.
6. **Bring a portable stool** – This is by far not a must. However, having a stool upon which your child can sit while you do her make-up is pretty convenient. Inspirations carries a collapsible stool at a cost of \$12. Some moms have 2 stools – one for mom and one for the child.
7. **Whirl-a-Style Bun Maker** – Okay, so this thing is my new best friend! This year was Kristin's first year needing a bun for competition. This little gadget (approx. \$8.00 at Inspirations Dancewear or Kreation's Active wear) made it so easy. You still need a hair-net and a couple of bobby pins to finish it off, but it takes half the time and makes a beautiful bun. It comes in different sizes and colours to accommodate differing hair colour, length and thickness.



8. Carry all accessories and make-up in one make-up bag or box.

I bought a pink tackle box this year. It was great. I found mine at Canadian Tire. It looks much like this Plano Ladies Tackle Box which is available for \$11.99 at Bass Pro Shop. The Tackle's not included so you can't go fishing after the competition unfortunately☹.



Tackle not included.

THINGS TO CARRY IN YOUR BAG:

- Extra tights
- Make-up kit
- Moisturizer
- Foundation
- 2 pairs false eye lashes
- Super hold Hair spray (Joico – Joifix Firm is effective)
- Comb for making side part
- Brush
- LARGE BOTTLE OF Cheap Gel
- Bobby Pins
- Bun Pins (you can get special ones from inspirations)
- If in ballet – Hair nets
- Shatter-proof mirror
- Make-up wipes (L’Oreal is effective)
- Make up brushes (Quo recommended)
- Make-up sponges
- Spray Bottle (for wetting hair down to change hair styles)
- Sewing kit
- Safety pins

9. ***Pack a lunch and snacks-*** Keep in mind that there is not always a long lunch break allotted after adjudication. In some cases, it is necessary to bring a lunch if your child must perform shortly after the lunchtime adjudication.

IMPORTANT DATES - AT A GLANCE

Here is a list of important dates for the 2010-2011 Competitive Dance Season

Date	Event
Dance Season Begins	September 10, 2011
1 st Competition Fees Installment Due	End of September 2011 (TBA)
Choreography - Groups	September 30, 2011
Monday Solo/Duet/Trio Choreo (early because of Halloween)	October 17th (October 31 off)
Summer Solo Cleaning - Flight A	Week of October 25 th , 2011
Summer Solo Cleaning - Flight B	Week of November 1, 2011
Solos, Duets & Trios	Week of October 25, 2011
2 nd Competition Fees Installment Due	October 2011
Annual General Meeting	TBA
3 rd & 4 th Competition Fees Installment Due	November, 2011
5 th Competition Fees Installment Due	January 2012
Hair & Make-up Demo Night	January 16 th , 2012 *new*
Competitive Showcase (Recital)	January 22, 2012 *new*
Competition – Bedazzled – Richmond Hill	February 24-26, 2012
Missed Choreo Saturday Make-up Day	February 5, 2012
Missed Choreo Monday Make-up Day	February 5, 2012
Missed Choreo Saturday Make-up Day	February 12, 2012
Competition – Kick it up – Barrie	March 2 - 4, 2012
Competition – Let's Get Loud – London	March 30 – Apr. 1, 2012
Competition – Kick it Up - Hamilton	April 20 – 22, 2012
Competition – Flashdance - Scarborough	May 11 – 13, 2012
Regular Classes End	May 31, 2012 (Tentative)
Summer Session Begins	June 12, 2012 (Tentative)
Competition Camp	July 16, 2012 (Tentative)
Planned Closures	
Halloween	October 31, 2011
Winter Holidays	December 23, 2011 to Jan 2, 2012
Family Day	February 20, 2012 (only Monday)
March Break (No choreo Monday to Friday)	March 12 to 16th, 2012 (Dance runs both weekends)
Easter Break	April 6 & 9, 2012
Victoria Day	May 19 th – 21 st , 2012

Open Studio Time & Extra Rehearsals

Sunday January 15th noon to 2pm

Everyday 4pm to 5pm

Tuesday 7pm to 9pm

Saturday 2-4pm

Extra Rehearsals

Sunday January 15...

Lyrical line 2-3 pm

Production 3-5 pm

This will be run by Robyn