



Criteria for Pre-Company Recommendation

1. The student must meet the minimum age requirement held by the instructor.
2. The student must have at least 3 years of consistent training in ballet.
3. The student must be able to consistently hold correct *turnout* while dancing from foot flat to demi-pointe. Correct turnout is achieved from the hips and not from the feet and knees. In the turned-out position, the foot is in line with the knee cap and hip joint.
4. The student must demonstrate an age-appropriate awareness of maintaining a strong, straight *trunk* while dancing with reduced tilt in the pelvis.
5. The student must be able to consistently perform a correct *demi-plié* position for all transitions. Demi-plié should be performed with turnout from the hips while maintaining the knee cap in line with the 2nd toe, and without allowing the heels to pop up. This should occur in pirouette preparation, jump preparation, and prior to demi-pointe positions.
6. The student must be able to consistently *point* their feet. The student should be able to fully point their foot in all steps especially at the barre and in center without “sickling” or flexing.
7. The student must demonstrate an age-appropriate awareness of maintaining a straight *leg* in all leg extensions – tendus, dégagés, grand battements, arabesques, etc. Incorrect form leads to incorrect muscle development.
8. The student must be able to consistently *articulate* their feet in transitions. The student should be able to use the floor to articulate the feet into or returning from a pointed/stretched position. This is needed to build muscles in the feet and ankles and to prevent injury.
9. The student must be able to consistently perform correct *arm* positions in transitions and maintain good form.
10. The student must demonstrate an age-appropriate awareness of performing a *piqué passé* with straight standing leg and properly pointed/stretched working foot (no sickling or flexing).
11. The student must be able to consistently do 12 *relevés* in the center without stopping. Relevés are excellent for building up calf muscle strength, which is vital for advanced ballet work. A student who keeps their heels very low to the ground is not preparing their calf muscles adequately and will not have the strength for advancement.
12. The student must be able to consistently hold a *retiré/passé* balance on demi-pointe. The student should be well-placed (hips square, back straight, legs turned-out), and have the strength to balance on demi-pointe with a properly pointed/stretched working foot.
13. The student must have a strong *dedication* to ballet and the ballet class requirements. Pre-company is a privilege that must be earned and the possible advancement to Company classes with pre-pointe and pointe work is a very serious undertaking. Dancers who do not have the motivation to do their best and maintain a positive attitude in their current ballet class(es) each week will not be recommended for Pre-Company.

Note about Pointe Work



Pointe technique is the part of classical ballet technique in which a ballet dancer supports all body weight on the tips of fully extended feet within pointe shoes. Pointe work should *not* begin before the age of 12. Dancers must be both physically and emotionally mature enough to endure the rigorous training at this advanced level. Beginning pointe too early can *permanently* damage immature bones, and also cause further injury if the dancer does not have adequate concentration and body awareness. Pointe readiness takes years of training and dancers must be enrolled in a Company class in order to be assessed for pre-pointe/pointe work. Also, pointe shoes should never be purchased without permission from the dance teacher and a professional pointe shoe fitting.



Criteria for Company Recommendation

1. The student must meet the minimum age requirement held by the instructor.
2. The student must have at least 3 years of consistent training in ballet.
3. The student must be able to commit to several hours of ballet training each week.
4. The student must be able to consistently hold correct *turnout* while dancing from foot flat to demi-pointe. Correct turnout is achieved from the hips and the foot is in line with the knee cap and hip joint.
5. The student must be able to consistently maintain a strong, straight *trunk* while dancing without any tilt in the pelvis. A straight trunk is held by both the back muscles but more importantly by the lower abdominals. A weak trunk will throw the student off balance and put the dancer at risk for injury.
6. The student must be able to consistently perform a correct *demi-plié* position for all transitions. Demi-plié should be performed with turnout from the hips while maintaining the knee cap in line with the 2nd toe, and without allowing the heels to pop up. This should occur in pirouette preparation, jump preparation, and prior to demi-pointe positions.
7. The student must be able to consistently *point* their feet. The student should be able to fully pointe their foot in all steps especially at the barre and in center without “sickling” or flexing.
8. The student must be able to consistently maintain a straight *leg* in all leg extensions – tendus, dégagés, grand battements, arabesques, etc. Incorrect form leads to incorrect muscle development.
9. The student must be able to consistently *articulate* their feet in transitions. The student should be able to use the floor to articulate the feet into or returning from a pointed/stretched position. This is needed to build muscles in the feet and ankles and to prevent injury.
10. The student must be able to consistently perform correct *arm* positions in transitions and maintain good form.
11. The student must be able to consistently perform a *piqué passé* with straight leg. Student should have enough strength to push themselves onto demi-pointe with a straightened leg. A bent leg is usually a sign of weakness or improper step preparation.
12. The student must be able to consistently do 16 *relevés* in the center without stopping. Relevés are vital for pre-pointe work. A student who keeps their heels very low to the ground is not preparing their calf muscles adequately and will not have the strength for advancement.
13. The student must be able to consistently hold a *retiré/passé* balance on demi-pointe. The student should be well-placed (hips square, back straight, legs turned-out), and have the strength to balance on demi-pointe.
14. The student must have a strong *dedication* to ballet and the ballet class requirements. Company is a privilege that must be earned and the resulting pre-pointe and pointe work is a very serious undertaking. Dancers who do not have the motivation to do their best and maintain a positive attitude in their current ballet class(es) each week will not be recommended for Company.

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