



# Helpful Hints



## Ballet Terminology - Part 1

We hope that this will help you and your family to learn the language of ballet.

**Port de bras** [*pour-de-brah*]: carriage of the arms - a movement or series of movements made by passing the arm or arms through various positions.

**Plié** [*plee-ay*]: bent, bending - a bending of the knee or knees

**Grand plié** a full or complete bending of the knees

**Demi plié** a half-bending of the knees

**Tendu** [*tawn-dew*]: pointing the foot while keeping contact with the floor

**Dégagé** [*day-ga-zhay*]: disengaged - lifting the pointed foot slightly off the floor

**en croix** [*ahn krwah*]: in the shape of a cross - an exercise performed to the front, side, back, side or back, side, front, side, for example *tendu en croix*

**Rond de Jambe** [*rawn duh zhahnb*]: circle of the leg - the working leg describes a semi-circle on the ground

**en dehors** [*ahn duh-awr*]: outward, from front to back in a circular motion, as in *rond de jambe en dehors*

**en dedans** [*ahn duh-dahn*]: inward, from back to front in a circular motion, as in *rond de jambe en dedans*

**Fondu** [*fawn-dew*]: to melt - a movement where the supporting leg slowly bends with the working leg pointed at the ankle. As the supporting leg straightens, the working leg unfolds and is extended to a point

**Passé** [*pa-say*]: lifting the foot to knee level or to pass it from the front to back

**Developpé** [*de-vel-o-pay*]: extending the leg (front, side, or back) through *pas de*.

**Arabesque** [*ara-besk*]: a position of the body in which the dancer is standing on one leg and the other leg is extended to the back

**Grand Battement** [*grond-bot-mon*]: a big kick - the working leg is raised into the air and brought down again while both knees remain straight

**Rélevé** [*ruhl-vay*]: raised - to raise the body onto half toe (*demi-pointe*)

**Piqué** [*pee-kay*] prick, pricked - a step in which the dancer steps directly onto the leg in *demi-pointe*

**Tombé** [*taum-bay*]: falling - a movement in which the dancer, with the working leg raised in the air, falls into a *plié* on the working leg

**Balancé** [*bal-on-say*]: a rocking, side to side waltz step in which the weight is shifted from one foot to the other

### POSITIONS OF THE BODY

**en face** [*ahn fahss*] in front, facing directly front

**Croisé** [*krwah-zay*] crossed - a position of the body in which the dancer stands at an oblique angle to the audience with the working leg crossed in the front or in the back

**Effacé** [*eh-fa-say*] shaded - a position of the body in which the dancer stands at an oblique angle to the audience with the working leg open in the front or in the back

### JUMPS

**Sauté** [*soh-tay*]: jumped - to jump or elevate any position into the air

**Changement** [*shon-jmon* (soft J)]: changing - to change in *sauté*, putting the foot to the back

**Echappé** [*ay-sha-pay*] escaping or slipping movement - a small jump starting from fifth position in which the legs open and finish in a second or fourth position *demi-plié*

**Chassé** [*sha-say*]: chased - a step in which one foot literally chases the other foot out of its position

**Glissade** [*glee-sod*]: to glide- a moving step that involves a *dégagé* with each leg- one foot leads and the other follows

**Pas de Chat** [*pah-de-shah*]: step of the cat- a moving step where both legs are picked up through *passé*

**Assemblé** assembled or joined together - a jump where the dancer takes off from one foot, joins the legs in the air and lands on two feet

**Grand Jeté** a big leap

### TURNS

**Chainés** [*sheh-nay*] chains, links - a series of rapid turns on the *demi-pointes* done in a straight line or in a circle

**Pirouette** [*peer-wet*] whirl or spin - a complete turn of the body on one foot

**Piqué turn** a turning step in which the dancer steps directly on the *demi-pointe* with the raised leg in *passé*

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Coupé** [*koo-pay*]: cut, cutting - a movement where one foot "cuts" the other away and replaces it

**sur le coup de pied** [*sewr luh koo-duh-pyay*] on the "neck" of the foot - a position where the working foot is placed just above the ankle

**Soutenu (en tournant)** [*soo-te-nu ahn toor-nahn*] sustained (in turning)

**Détourné** [*day-toor-nay*] turned aside - a pivot turn on both feet, in *demi-pointe*