

Belly Dance Skill Level Guidelines

Introduction Class (2-4 hours)

What Student Should Already Know:

1. Nothing 😊

What is covered at this level:

1. Basic history of middle eastern dance and its evolution into current styles
2. Resource list of videos, music, teachers for students to supplement their studies
3. Question and Answer period for students to learn more about the dance
4. Simple circle dance

Beginning level ongoing classes (minimum 6 months – indefinitely)

What Student Should Already Know:

1. Basic history of dance, Concepts of what the dance is and isn't

What is covered at this level:

1. Basic posture
2. Good warm up and cool down habits
3. Basic dance movements and isolations of head, torso, shoulders, arms, stomach, hips, footwork
4. Specific movement types covered – variations of lifts, drops, twists, basic shimmy, $\frac{3}{4}$ shimmy, circles, figure 8s, undulations, slides (all movements in place and traveling)
5. Footwork patterns
6. Concepts of patterns, level changes, layering, direction changes, musical interaction
7. Basic zill patterns
8. Basic rhythms
9. Simple choreographies, circle dances, line dances
10. Concept of improv, solo performance, troupe performance, partnering, follow/lead, call/response

Intermediate level ongoing classes (minimum 6 months – indefinitely)

What Student Should Already Know:

1. Familiar with all items from beginning class
2. All basic movements and isolations
3. Musical styles and rhythms

What is covered at this level:

1. Layering of movements
2. Shimmy variations
3. Movement/dance step combinations
4. Variations in all dimensions (level changes, direction changes, 3 dimensional dancer)
5. Audience interaction/performance basics
6. Introduction to using Props – veil, sword, cane, tray
7. Solo improv, Group Improv
8. Partnering: follow/lead, call/response
9. Zill patterns and accents
10. Basic drum solo techniques
11. Intermediate choreographies
12. Musical interpretation

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13. Introduction to Regional Dance Styles
14. Costuming

Advanced level ongoing classes (minimum 6 months – indefinitely)

What Student Should Already Know:

1. All Basic Movements, variations, layering
2. Intermediate combinations
3. Basic prop use
4. Zill playing while dancing – to rhythm, to melody or as accent
5. Familiar with both choreography and improv dance styles, solo, partner or group
6. Basic drum solo techniques

What is covered at this level:

1. Advanced layering and step combinations with musical interpretation
2. Advanced zill playing (Zills as an instrument in the band – playing off drummer)
3. Floorwork
4. Communicating with your audience
5. Veils, sword, cane, tray use
6. Introduction of the use of fire (fire pot, candle dances, shamadan)
7. Creating and polishing own choreographies
8. Dancing to live music both improv and with choreography
9. Advanced drum solo techniques
10. Advanced choreography – precision timing
11. Musical interpretation, audience interaction, conveying emotions, expression
12. Solo and group choreography and improv
13. Regional Dance Styles
14. Costuming

Professional level ongoing classes (ongoing indefinite)

What Student Should Already Know:

1. All subjects taught in Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Classes

What is covered at this level:

1. Performance critique
2. Polishing
3. Advanced specialties (particular props, signature movement variations)
4. Audience interaction and musical interpretation skills
5. Advanced knowledge of specific regional styles of dance
6. Identification and elimination of problem areas or habits
7. Costuming
8. Other items/areas as needed to be tailored to a specific dancer