



THE DANCE EFFECT COMPETITION

2026 COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATION

Entry Deadline

All entries **MUST** be made online through Dance Comp Genie. Please click the “**Register Here**” link on our website to register for competition. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and will remain open until all openings are filled. Many shows **do sell out**. If the show is “sold out,” the DCG system will automatically put you on a “waiting list,” and we will notify you if spots become available. Registrations are not considered complete until payment has been made in full. **Payments are required to be paid in full 30 days prior to the competition. Registrations received after the 30-day deadline will incur a \$15 late fee per entry and could be removed from the competition.** If balance is not paid in full 7 days prior to competition, your registrations could be removed, and you will lose your deposit. **A nonrefundable deposit of \$500 is required. Deposits only hold spaces, not pricing.** Also, please note that if we accept late entries, they will not be listed in the program. Any changes made to an entry after the deadline will incur a \$30 administration fee. No changes will be allowed within 7 days prior to the competition.

If you register and pay, in full, 45 days early for a Regional Competition, you can save \$5 per entry fee for the Early Bird Special. Early Bird discounts are not valid on Nationals entries due to the increased cost we incur. **However, if you attend 2 or more Regional Competitions within the same season, discounts may be available, restrictions apply.** Please contact us directly for more information.

Entry Fees

Solos - \$140/dancer *National Solos - \$155/dancer
Duets/Trios - \$150/routine *National Duet/Trio - \$160/routine
Groups - \$60/per dancer *National Group - \$70/per dancer
Motivational Title - \$40/per entry *National Title - \$50/per entry
Photogenic Contest - \$30/entry (\$15 for each additional entry) Entered at the competition at the TDE Front Sales Table.
Most Moving Costume - \$30/entry (\$15 for each additional entry) Entered at the competition at the TDE Front Sales Table.

Payments can be made during registration by credit card, or you may choose to mail a studio check. If paying by studio check, your check must be received by The Dance Effect 30 days prior to the competition. There is a \$40 fee on all returned checks. **All entries are non-refundable, and all payments are final. Under no circumstances will we give cash back, unless we cancel a show. BONUS: We do NOT charge a credit card fee to our dance families.**

Types of Entries

Solo (The number of solos may be limited and may NOT compete against themselves in same category. But they can place in line up more than once.)
Duet/Trio: 2-3 dancers
Small Group: 4-9 dancers
Large Group: 10-19 dancers
Production/Line: 20+ dancers
Motivational Solo Title
Photogenic
Most Moving Costume

Age Groups

Mini's: 5 and under **Junior:** 9-12 years old **Senior:** 16-19 years old
Petite: 6-8 years old **Teen:** 13-15 years old **Adults:** 20+

The age group is determined by averaging the ages of all the performers in a dance. The age to be used is the age of the dancer on January 1 of the current year. The average is calculated by adding all the dancers' ages and dividing by the number of dancers in the dance. For example, if there are 6 dancers with ages 6, 6, 7, 8, 8, and 9, the equation would be: $6+6+7+8+8+9=44/6=7.3$, meaning this dance would be entered into the Petite age group. For all numbers ending in a decimal, **drop the decimal**. All dancers are registered through Dance Comp Genie, which automatically determines the age group in which your dancers will compete. **You must be able to verify age if asked.** TDE reserves the right to adjust age groups as needed.

Dancers 20 years and older must compete in the adult division. Those ages cannot be included in the average dance age. The adult division is not eligible for the Solo Motivational Title.

Any dancer or teacher who receives regular payments for their income for teaching class, choreography, and/or performing **MUST** compete in our adult age group, regardless of their age. Please contact us for assistance.

Entry Levels

DESIRE: The **DESIRE** entry level (**level 1**) is for **beginner dancers**. A Desire level dancer is in their first or second year of dance training and has little to no competition experience, with 1-2 hours of dance training per week. This level is designed to help beginner dancers adapt to the competition scene and

become comfortable dancing on stage. **These level definitions are only guidelines.** Teachers should take their students' technical ability into consideration when registering.

AMBITION: The **AMBITION** entry level (**level 2**), is for **intermediate dancers**. An Ambition level dancer has taken two to three years of dance lessons and has some competition experience. This level is designed to prepare dancers for the next competitive level. **These level definitions are only guidelines.** Teachers should take their students' technical ability into consideration when registering.

LEGACY: A **LEGACY** entry level (**level 3**), is for **experienced dancers**. The Legacy level dancer has taken 4+ years of dance and has had ample competition experience. **These level definitions are only guidelines.** Teachers should take their students' technical ability into consideration when registering.

ADAPTIVE DANCE: The **ADAPTIVE DANCE** level is for dancers and/or adults with intellectual and/or physical disabilities. This level will receive adjudicated and special awards in the form of trophies, street signs, pins, ribbons, plaques, medals, and/or other prizes.

If **50% or more of the dancers** are at a higher dance level than the rest, the routine will need to move to the higher level. When registering, please use your best judgment for level placement. The Dance Effect has no way to know a dancer's abilities prior to performance and trust that they are registered at the correct level. However, The Dance Effect has the right to change, and will change, a dancer's entry level if our qualified judges feel the need to do so.

Time Limits

Solos:	3:00	Small Group:	3:00	Line:	4:00
Duets/Trios:	3:00	Large Group:	4:00	Production:	8:00

***Five seconds over the time limit will be allowed. However, any more time and you will need to purchase additional for \$15 per entry**

Dance Category/Style

Jazz: A jazz dance incorporates techniques such as kicks, turns, and leaps in a rhythmic fashion.

Tap: A tap dance must use tap shoes and basic tap technique and rhythm. Recorded tap sounds are not permitted.

Ballet: A ballet dance must be performed in proper ballet shoes and include classical ballet technique.

Hip-Hop: A hip-hop routine can include any hip-hop technique ranging from street dance, break dance, pop & lock, freestyle, funk, and stepping.

Lyrical: A lyrical dance combines jazz and ballet techniques to show balance, flexibility, and emotion that will complement the tone of the music selected.

Contemporary: A contemporary dance is a combination of jazz, modern, and lyrical movements. The dance technique demonstrates control, balance, and flexibility.

Modern: A modern dance is an interpretive dance that executes the principles of fall and recovery and contract and release to express emotions related to the song choice.

Musical Theatre: A music theatre dance uses music from a Broadway or movie musical.

Pointe: A pointe dance uses classical ballet technique. Pointe shoes are required for female dancers.

Pom: A pom dance demonstrates the execution of sharp, uniformed movements. Pom poms must be used for this type of dance. Jumps, kicks, and cheers may be performed during the routine.

Dance/Drill Team: A uniformed group routine with technique & choreography from a middle school, high school or collegiate level.

Acrobatics/Gymnastics: An acrobatic or gymnastic routine contains controlled gymnastics movements with dance choreography.

Clogging: A clogging dance uses proper clogging shoes and clogging technique.

Production: A production performance incorporates any style of dance and/or acrobatics. The performance should incorporate full use of the stage and transitions on and off stage. Solo or small group performances can be incorporated during the production piece.

Character: A character dance portrays an easily recognizable character from a play, movie, musical, or television. You may also portray a character such as an animal, policeman, farmer, etc.

Open: An open dance can be any of the listed categories or a combination of the listed categories/styles of dance.

Variety: A variety dance is a style that does not fit into any of the categories or styles of dance listed.

Vocal: A vocal performance is singing only. Recorded voices or lip-syncing are not permitted. Not eligible for Title Entry.

Song & Dance: A song and dance performance includes both vocals and dance technique. Recorded voices or lip-syncing are not permitted. Not eligible for Title Entry.

Student Choreography: A routine choreographed by a student and performed by the student or another student.

Folkloric: A traditional, cultural, and belief-based styled dance that emphasizes movements from a particular region. It expresses life and spirit through movement.

Music

The Dance Effect requires that all music be uploaded to **Dance Comp Genie** during the online registration process. Music must be uploaded **at least 14 days prior to competition**. If this is not possible, please contact The Dance Effect directly immediately. Your account will be billed a \$30 administrative fee if the music is not uploaded prior to the 14-day deadline, unless prior arrangements have been made with TDE.

Even though you have uploaded your music to Dance Comp Genie, please bring a **thumb drive or an electronic device** as a backup. The Dance Effect is not responsible for your music left at the event.

All music must be cut and set to the proper tempo. The Dance Effect will not change the speed of music manually and is not responsible for improper playback of music. You will not need to re-upload music for Nationals if you already uploaded it prior to Regionals. It is a good idea to check your music before completing registration!

Music must be age-appropriate and free of foul language.

Props & More

If your routine involves props, you **MUST list the props on Dance Comp Genie when entering routines!** This alerts the TDE staff and prepares us for the space and time needed for props. Please be mindful of the size, time, and space of your prop, as well as the venue space, elevator size, raised stage, doorway sizes, and/or any other issue that may arise. If your prop is not listed in registration, the prop could be refused.

All props must be brought backstage and checked in with the backstage manager prior to the session. **All props must be clearly marked with the studio name!** Check with the backstage manager for the best time to load out your prop. Each studio is responsible for setting and striking their own props. Each studio will have one minute to set props before the act and to strike props following the act. Productions are allowed 2 minutes to set and 2 minutes to strike. Points could be deducted from any entry for exceeding the setup and strike time limits, not properly marking props, not listing props during your registration, not following backstage directions on when to unload and load props, and not storing them where the backstage manager asks you to store them safely.

The following list of props, but not limited to, are prohibited:

- Weapons/Guns/Knives
- Fire/Pyrotechnics/Fog/Smoke
- Backdrops/Special Lighting – must be freestanding prop
- Anything released from the performers’ hands that cannot be cleared off the stage as the dancers are exiting (glitter, confetti, liquids, baby powder, etc.)
- Release of Balloons
- Live Animals

The Dance Effect reserves the right to refuse any props that are unsafe, or which do not comply. The Dance Effect is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged props or any injuries related to your props. Any prop that causes any kind of damage to the venue or the Marley floor in any way will be the responsibility of the studio owner. The Dance Effect will not be held liable. **No jumping off the stage or throwing things out into the audience. You will be disqualified.** It is always best to stay on the Marley. Anyone on stage in a routine **MUST** be registered to perform in the competition.

Score Sheets

Score sheets will be available on **Dance Comp Genie** approximately **72 hours after the event.** In addition to score sheets, each routine will receive a complimentary voice-recorded critique from each judge, along with a complimentary video feed of their routine. TDE is **NOT** responsible for third-party technology issues but will do our best to resolve them. You will find this information on your TDE Registration Dashboard by selecting the city you attended, then clicking on the buttons “**Score Sheets,**” “**Judges Critiques,**” and “**View Results.**”

Scoring Breakdown

The judges will be judging the following areas:

Technique	35	Skill of Style/Steps, Flexibility, Strength, and Body Line
Showmanship	25	Stage Presence, Expression, Energy, Emotion of Movement
Choreography	20	Difficulty and Creativity, Intricacy and Pace of Movement, Transitions
Overall Appeal	20	Consistency and Timing, Age Appropriateness of Routine, Music, Costume
Total	100	

In the event of a tie, the Technique score will be the tiebreaker. If the Technique score is also tied, the Showmanship score will break the tie. All scores are final.

Judges’ Choice Awards

Each judge will present 3 Choice Awards for the 3 entry levels. They will also present TDE Intensive Scholarships, to join us that current Fall, to a few select dancers.

Adjudicated Awards

Solo, Duet, Trio, and Group entries will receive an award. Everyone in the routine will receive a TDE pin.

Regionals:

- **Platinum:** 285 - 300
- **High Gold:** 280 - 284.99
- **Gold:** 270 - 279.99
- **Silver:** 240 - 269.99
- **Bronze:** 225 - 239.99

Nationals:

- **Diamond:** 291 - 300
- **Platinum:** 285 - 290.99
- **High Gold:** 280 - 284.99
- **Gold:** 270 - 279.99
- **Silver:** 240 - 269.99
- **Bronze:** 225 - 239.99

Other Awards

Top 3/5/10

The Top 3/5/10 in each level and age group will be awarded a medal. The 1st place champion will also receive an award and The Dance Effect Dollars, which are good for any TDE regional competitions or intensives. Please note that the number of entries may change the Top 3 to a Top 5 or Top 10, at TDE’s discretion. There must be 3 or more entries within the level and age group to qualify for TDE Dollars. Productions and Lines may be combined for overalls, depending on the number of entries.

- Everyone in the entry receives a medal.
- 1st place champions in each lineup will also receive The Dance Effect Dollars in the following amounts:

- Solos, Duets/Trios - \$50 → Nationals - \$100
- Small Groups - \$75 → Nationals - \$150
- Large Groups/Lines/ Productions - \$100 → Nationals - \$200

Category Cup

The highest score in each category/style within the age group will receive a **Category Cup Trophy**; all levels are combined. Must be **3 or more entries** within the category/style in each age group to qualify.

Choreography Award

The Choreography Award will be awarded to the routine with the highest choreography score in each entry level.

Solo High Point Award

Soloists that perform 2 or more solo acts will automatically be entered into the Solo High Point. The top 2 individual scores are averaged together to determine the winner. Winners will receive a **High Point Award** and **\$50 TDE Dollars**.

Solo Motivational Title

We encourage soloists to add the optional Solo Motivational Title, as it is one of the dancers' favorites! The Solo Motivational Title entries will be judged during their regular solo performance but will be entered into a second (separate) award category. Only the **top 1st place** in each age group and entry level will be awarded, and all dance styles will be combined for the **Solo Motivational Title Award**. The 1st place winner will receive an award, a tiara, and \$50 in The Dance Effect Dollars for this prestigious award. If a male dancer enters for the title and wins 1st place, the tiara will be replaced with a hat. Only **3 solos per person** can be entered into this title division. **Adults are not eligible**. You may enter this registration or at the Front Sales Table at the show, but it **MUST** be done prior to that routine taking the stage. The fee is \$40 per person at Regionals and \$50 per person at Nationals.

Photogenic Contest

Any participant can enter the Photogenic Contest. The fee to enter this contest is \$30 and must be paid at the merchandise table 1 hour prior to the end of the solo session for the participant's age group. You will also turn in the photo and the entry form at that time. The 1st place winner will win **\$50 in The Dance Effect Dollars**. There must be at least 3 different contestants entered into each age group to make a valid contest. Contestants may enter **up to 2 photos**; the additional photo entry fee is \$15.

It is your responsibility to pick up your photo(s) at the merchandise table after the awards ceremony. We are not responsible for damaged, unclaimed, or lost photos. We will not mail photos if they are not picked up on the day of competition.

- **Photo Size:** 5x7 or 8x10 (color or black and white)
- **Individual photos only** (no group photos)
- **Information to be placed on back of photo:** Name, Age, and Studio
- **Age Groups:** Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen, and Senior. If there are fewer than 3 contestants in an age group, the contest will be combined into **12 & Under** and **13 & Over**.

Most Moving Costume Contest

Any routine can enter the Most Moving Costume Contest. The fee to enter this contest is **\$30** and must be paid at the merchandise table prior to that routine taking the stage. You will also turn in the entry form at this time. The 1st place winner will win \$50 in The Dance Effect Dollars. There must be at least 3 different acts entered into each age group to make a valid contest. Contestants may **enter up to 3 different routines**, with an additional \$15 fee per entry.

- Solo, Duets, Trios, Groups, or Line/Productions are all eligible.
- Age Groups: Mini, Petite & Juniors and Teen & Seniors.

Sportsmanship Award

The Sportsmanship Award is the most prestigious award. This award will be given to the studio that shows the most sportsmanship, kindness and charisma. The winner will receive a **5'0" tall trophy** to take home to their studio.

ADCC Studio of Excellence Award (Association of Dance Competitions & Conventions)

This award is given to one studio at each event that best exemplifies the mission and purpose of ADCC: working together and striving for excellence. The winner will receive an **SOE Award** and could be **listed on the ADCC website and in The Competition Advantage Magazine!** If you receive this award, be sure to follow the directions on the back of the award.

Competition General Information & Guidelines

- **Doors Opening:** The venue doors will open **1 hour prior** to the first act to allow access to the lobby and dressing rooms. The doors to the performance hall and backstage will open **30 minutes prior** to the first act.
- **Finding a Seat:** The best time to find a seat in the auditorium is in between acts. Please be courteous and wait until the dancer(s) leave the stage before walking through to find your seat or getting up to leave the auditorium.
- **Audience Etiquette:** We encourage applause and cheering for each act, but please refrain from screaming and shouting. Be sure to **clap for all dancers** during the awards ceremony. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated, and violators may be asked to leave.

- **Schedule Flexibility:** Please note that the competition may run ahead of time or behind schedule. Be prepared for this possibility. There is no “set” schedule format. The number of entries, entry types, and certain requests may cause us to adjust the timing for specific age groups or sessions. These variations may differ from city to city. **Do not** plan around a specific schedule until we release it, usually 2 weeks prior to the competition start date. In some cities, the competition may begin as early as **8 AM** on Friday morning.
- **Personal Items:** Please secure your personal items. The Dance Effect is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen items.
- **Dressing Room Access:** Only same-gender parents, siblings, teachers, and studio owners will be allowed in the dressing rooms with dancers. **No propping dressing room doors open.** Tents are prohibited in dressing rooms. Hallways are NOT dressing rooms.
- **Soliciting & Advertising:** No soliciting or advertising is allowed.
- **Food & Drink:** **No food or drink** is permitted in the performance hall. Please follow the venue rules and take care of the facility. Always clean up after yourself and remind your dancers to **not leave trash** on the TDE stage after an award ceremony.
- **Substance Use:** The use of tobacco, marijuana, or alcoholic products are prohibited in the performance facility.
- **Potential Hazards:** We may use flashing lights, strobe lights, laser lights, loud music, fog and other special effects that could cause harm to some. Please be aware of these effects and take precautions if needed. Let the DJ or backstage manager know if you have any concerns.
- **Photography & Videography:** Video recording and photo-taking are **always PROHIBITED inside the performance hall during the competition and in the dressing rooms!** This will be strictly enforced. Please notify your families that TDE has a **zero-tolerance policy** for violating this rule. Points will be deducted, and violators may be asked to leave. We will have a professional photographer and videographer from **Express Yourself Video Productions** who will offer routine videos and pictures for purchase. This protects our dancers, teachers, and choreographers. You may take photos during the awards ceremonies, TDE Entertainment, Charity Dance Off, and Move Across the Floor.
- **Live Streaming:** TDE will **no longer livestream** events. We believe this is in the best interest of our dancers’ safety, which is our priority.
- **Choreography Rights:** The Dance Effect will not dispute choreography rights or get involved in such matters.
- **Communication Protocol:** The Dance Effect will only speak to the **studio** regarding any issues or questions about the competition. Parents should only contact TDE if they are registered as an **independent entry**, or if the dancer is a **TDE Elite or Protégé**.
- **Coaching from Wings:** No coaching from the wings or backstage is allowed.
- **Tap Routines:** For tap routines, please inform us if you would like the DJ to lower the music volume so the judges can better hear the tap sounds.

Backstage Regulations:

All routines must check in backstage with the stage manager **1 hour** prior to their performance. One representative from each routine may check in with the stage manager. The Dance Effect stage manager will line up routines in the correct order.

At check-in, please notify the stage manager of any props or microphones needed for your routine.

Teachers and performers are only allowed backstage for their performances or when directed by a staff member. No one is allowed backstage during awards except for TDE staff. **DO NOT** crowd backstage.

Due to space constraints at most venues, you may be required to line up outside the backstage area. Please remain where we ask you to be, as we may need to jump to your number. If you are not in the designated area, it could cause delays as we will have to take time to find you. This is done for the safety of our dancers, so please respect this decision.

We do **not** allow anyone backstage during productions, other than the dancers in the routine and/or teachers and parents required to assist with the production on stage. This is a major safety issue and **must** be adhered to. The Dance Effect reserves the right to take action if this critical safety rule is not followed.

No food or drink is allowed in the backstage area, on stage, in the auditorium, or in the dressing rooms. All dancers and studio teachers are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Any damages to the venue or dressing rooms will be the responsibility of the Studio Owner. The Dance Effect will not be held liable.

Competing Out of Order

Each entry is expected to compete at the time it is scheduled. However, The Dance Effect stage manager may ask routines to compete out of order to avoid delays caused by costume changes or malfunctions. Please be **prepared to perform up to one hour earlier** than your scheduled time, as The Dance Effect competition may run ahead of schedule. We should not have to search for you, as doing so could cause a delay in the competition.

Other Rules & Disclaimers

The Dance Effect reserves the right to:

- Cancel any competition at any time
- Add or change competition days
- Move the competition location

These changes may be necessary due to weather, the number of entries, or unforeseen circumstances such as a pandemic.

The Dance Effect also reserves the right to limit the number of entries at each competition and to adjust the number of entries at any time.

If you have received The Dance Effect Dollars or scholarships, it is **YOUR** responsibility to keep them until you are ready to use them. The Dance Effect will not go back and verify what your studio was awarded. TDE Dollars may be used toward any regional entry, but **they are NOT valid for cash, merchandise, Intensives or national entries**. You must contact us directly via email or phone to apply your TDE Dollars. They will not be activated until we enable them on our end.

The Dance Effect Competitions are a kid-friendly environment. We will not tolerate music, choreography, costumes, or content that is inappropriate for the age division or audience members.

Risk of Injury

It should be known to all performers that by competing in a dance competition, you are at risk of injury, including but not limited to sprains, muscle strains, bruises, and broken bones. By entering this competition, you agree to release, exonerate, indemnify, and hold harmless The Dance Effect, LLC event. Furthermore, you agree to release The Dance Effect, LLC and its affiliates from responsibility for any and all losses, damages, and associated court, legal, and/or medical fees.

If an injury occurs, please report it to a staff member immediately and complete an Accident Injury Form.

Media Releases

By entering this competition, you also agree to allow The Dance Effect, LLC and its agents, including Express Yourself Video Productions, to use any pictures or videos in which you and your child may appear in, as well as any choreography, for promotional purposes, including on social media.

Judges

The Dance Effect will have 3-5 judges throughout the competition. Different judges may score different sessions. The judges will be provided with an iPad for scoring. All judges' scores are FINAL and are **not open for discussion**. However, if you feel the need to dispute a score, Studio Owners must do so in writing **within 2 days of the competition**, providing details. We will not discuss scores at the competition.

Do not crowd the judges' table or communicate with the judges during the competition in any way.

Nationals

National entries are currently open, meaning you do not have to attend a regional competition to qualify. However, those who have competed in a TDE regional competition and have paid their national registration will take priority. The number of entries will determine the entry allowance for nationals.

We will have a TDE Finale Showcase at Nationals for all levels of dance. If chosen by the judges, you will be invited to return and perform again at the TDE Finale Showcase. All levels will be represented.

Additionally, we have special awards that are only given at TDE Nationals.

Additional Competition Information

Mini Master Classes - Workshops

The master classes are offered free of charge to any dancer registered in the competition. (Note: This may not be available in all cities).

Charity Dance Off - Improv

Anyone who purchases a \$5 cash ticket from the TDE front sales table will be eligible to participate in the Improv Charity Dance Off. Encourage all of your dance families to join in the fun! All proceeds will go to Shriners Children's. For more information or to donate in addition to \$5 cash donation, please visit the TDE front sales table. (Note: This may not be available in all cities.)

Move Across the Floor - Freestyle

Move Across the Floor is where we allow dancers to "freestyle" across the TDE stage. Audience members and dance families may be invited to participate as well. Our DJ will announce participation guidelines prior to the start. Dancers will line up backstage on stage left where they will be directed on how to line up properly. This process may vary by venue. Once we are ready, dancers will move across the stage from stage left to stage right, passing through one section of curtains. Additional details will be provided at the show. (Note: This may not be available in all cities.)

Social Media

We are active on Instagram and Facebook, posting regularly. Be sure to follow us @TheDanceEffect! We encourage you to post and tag us in your post from competitions and intensives! We also love to hashtag. Here are a few of our favorites:

#TDENationals #TDEDanceFamily #TDEFamilyLove #TDECompetition #TDEWichita #TDEKC #TDELiberty #TDEOKC #TDEFortSmith #TDESTL #TDEDallas #TDEOmaha #TDEAmarillo #TDETexas #TDEIntensive

We look forward to seeing all of your posts!

Rules & Expectations

Please follow all rules outlined. Failure to do so may result in point deductions or disqualification from the event and/or future events. We also reserve the right to ask anyone to leave the event for any reason. Please be kind and respectful to others. Smile and enjoy the fun!