

## **Dance Classes for 2 to 3 Year Olds**

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Ready to enroll your toddler in a dance class? If you have a toddler who loves to move while being creative, silly and social, then consider the world of dance. Dancing is a fun and interactive way for children to grow and develop in all levels. Here are a few points to ponder when choosing a dance class.

### ***Pick a dance studio that focuses on the needs of two to three-year-old children***

We all know toddlers need to have fun to stay engaged. While the right dance class should be entertaining, it should also help develop your toddler's motor skills, flexibility, musicality and self-confidence. Toddler-focused dance classes can incorporate ribbons, scarves, maracas, wands and hula hoops to keep your child engaged while promoting physical and social awareness. It's important to explore the different ways our bodies can move and the many shapes they can make. Tapping into your child's love for music and sound helps to form the foundation for a healthy love of dance and music for years to come.

Many three-year-olds are ready for a dance class without mom, so check whether your dance studio has [On My Own class](#) options. However, while On My Own style dance classes foster independence, some parents still want to watch all the fun. A parent-friendly studio may be set-up to allow for one-way parent viewing. Also, check whether there are opportunities for student performances. When a child is ready, a recital or other performance in front of a group can encourage self-confidence and a sense of pride and accomplishment.

### ***Parent Participation***

Two-year-olds typically are more comfortable learning with a partner with whom they already connect and trust. Separation from parents can sometimes be difficult for toddlers. Most importantly, most children at this age have not yet experienced copying movements

and following a teacher's directions. Dance classes for toddlers should be structured to allow parent participation throughout the class while also allowing a child and parent to separate from each other. Parents or caregivers should be encouraged to provide comfort and guidance at whatever level they are comfortable with, to help make their child's first structured dance experience a success.

### ***What to expect in class***

Warm up, circle time activities are a great way to ease dancers into the class. Parents may be encouraged to join in the fun, using engaging props like scarves and shakers. A large, creative, movement activity can round out the class as children focus on the teacher for instruction. This may be followed by parent participation as the exercise evolves.

### ***Know your teacher***

Why not schedule a time to talk to the dance instructor at the studio? Find out if your class is taught by a dance professional who is experienced with two and three-year-olds. If so, you can have some assurance that your child will receive the proper guidance as he or she attempts only movements for which he or she is both mentally and physically ready.

### ***Look for a dance studio that will grow with your child***

As your child gets a little older, he or she will have an increased ability to focus, which is needed to have fun with a routine. Children can start to have this ability around age three. At this point, classes can focus more intensely on ballet, tap, hip hop, jazz, and leaps and turns. Staying with the same dance studio is a benefit to your dancer because he or she is already comfortable in the learning environment. Your child can build on existing friendships while making new ones. Choose a dance studio choice that will help grow your child's love for dance and creative movement for years to come!