

Parent Prep for Competition

1. Check Check Check the dance costumes, shoes, and accessories. -Oh man this is my nightmare. Getting somewhere 4 hours away and realizing we are missing a shoe or a hairpiece etc. It's not like you can run out and buy any of this stuff. I have seen this happen. The first thing I do is make a list. A BIG list. List every routine and under it every thing she needs on her body for it from the costume to the tights and type of shoes. Check any stones or anything else that was added on to ensure it's secure. Check the shoes for cleanliness. Judges notice these things. Once I acknowledge something is ready to go, I pack it. If you realize that you are missing shoes, tights, eyelashes, basically anything other than costumes, and you have more than 48 hours before you leave, hit up your Coach.

1a. Make sure you are fully aware and have all of your dancers needs to accommodate hair and makeup as directed by your coach.

2. 100% Make/Confirm your competition hotel or lodging accommodations. -We will always have a group rate and destination information available to you in advance but it is up to you to ensure you get everything reserved! GET ENOUGH SLEEP! Grumpy dancers WILL have a meltdown.

3. Gather the emergency costume and competition apocalypse supplies.

-See competition checklist

4. Get your Cameras, Chargers and Cash! -Absolutely no photography or video is allowed in the auditoriums except for during awards, but you are going to want those dressing room/silliness/awards photos. Have back up chargers for EVERYTHING! Some competitions will not accept credit/debit cards

5. Bring a change of clothes for the family and comfortable warm up attire is important for your dancer before and after the competition. He/She should wear warm up pants, shirt, company jacket, leotard and tights when not in costume.

6. Arrive at least 2 hours ahead of your performance time. Competitions thoroughly enjoy running ahead as it gets their staff out early.

7. During the competition, there can be hardly any time at all for a big planned meal. The best thing to do is to bring healthy snacks that can be kept in your dancer's bag or outside the theater for breakfast and lunch. Many venues do not allow outside food inside performance areas AT ALL. In that case, a cooler with packed lunches or a quick run to the sandwich shop is your best bet. Who doesn’t like a tailgate? Some other healthy snack ideas are; apples, peanut butter, grapes, nuts, yogurt, granola bars, pretzels or carrot sticks.

8. Look up the parking situation at the event location, oftentimes there are specific parking areas. Also, bring extra cash with you because there can be fees or cash meters, and they WILL tow.

9. Upon arriving, you will come across assigned waiting and dressing areas for the dancers separated by studio. All dancers are required to share dressing space in a courteous and respectful manner. It is best to send your dancer with a quiet activity such as a book or private listening device so they can go over their routine in their head.

At this point, as a parent, you are to enter the theater and find a place to camp out. Bring books, tablets, or work to keep you busy in between your dancers' performances. Remember not to enter or exit the theater during someone else’s number. Spirited comradery for your child’s studio is very good, but remember participating in excessive yelling is not proper theater etiquette either, you are at a performance, not a sporting event. Coordinating with other parents to make t-shirts and signs is a great way to show support and team spirit!

10. When it comes time for awards, it is important that your dancer knows that where they place isn’t the sole reason for doing competition. The main goal is to improve at each competition. At the awards ceremony, all winners deserve attention and cheers when it’s time for them to accept the awards.

11. After each performance, be proud of your dancer for getting up on stage and doing their best. Tell them that each competition will get easier and more successful with time.

12. Relax -At least try to! NO ONE wants to be that mom SCREAMING about your daughters score or the judges backstage. It doesn't look well on you, your kid or your studio. I know things get crazy tense and hectic sometimes but try to remember what it is all about-your kid challenging themselves and having fun. You kid will feed off your emotions and attitude and will do much better if you are pleasant and relaxed! Plus there is a super cool award for the studio with the best attitude awarded at some of these competitions, and we HAVE WON THEM!!!