



DANCE

COLLEGE DANCE TEAM

COLLEGE DANCE TEAM

The transition from high school dance to college dance can be a challenge. There are many different aspects of being a dancer on a college dance team compared to your high school days. This guide will help you understand the differences of a college dance team and a high school dance team.

TRYOUTS

First things first... you have to try out for the team! Every school will have a scheduled tryout each year, which is usually held in the spring. College dance teams may hold pre-tryout prep classes to help you get ready for the upcoming tryout. These classes will hopefully help ease your fears on what to expect at tryouts.

College dance team tryouts are much different than high school. Depending upon how many people are interested in trying out, some schools often have a first round of competition where you submit a video tape. This helps narrow down who should attend the actual tryout. It is important to note that not all schools have a video round. Once you find out when tryouts are for your school, you will want to block out that entire weekend.

Depending on what school you will be trying out for, the tryout procedure and difficulty levels will change. In college, be prepared to show a routine that you have choreographed yourself. You should also be prepared to learn at least one other routine. Some schools will have you learn two different routines comprised of different styles of dance, and they may also have you learn a fight song/sideline type of routine. You also will be asked to show specific turns, leaps, and jumps. You may also be asked to show turn, leap, and jump combinations across the floor.

Last but certainly not least, be ready to meet new people and make friends at tryouts. After all, the people you meet could be your best friends for the next four years.

CAMP

The camp experience in college will be a big change from high school in many ways. You will first notice a change in the camp atmosphere. Where chanting and hoping to be the “most spirited” team at camp are important in high school, college camp is more laid back and casual.

Second, a main focus of college camp is preparing for upcoming games. Dancing on the sidelines and at halftimes of football and basketball games are one of the most important parts of being

on a dance team in college, and the staff will concentrate on teaching you to how to be interactive with the crowd, continue university traditions, and how to make dedicated alumni proud.

Finally, whether you are a competitive team or not, you will be joining camp with several top competitive teams in the college dance team world. The skill level of camp will be exceptional, and you will come face-to-face with talent from all over the country. With so many different collegiate programs attending, you will get to experience different school’s traditions, how their squad practices, and how they plan for a successful season.

PRACTICES

Practices in college are usually run much differently than in high school. Many coaches will take teammates class schedules into consideration; therefore, instead of a regular “after-school practice,” you could have one in the morning, the middle of the day, or at night.

Aside from regularly scheduled practices, if you’re on a team that attends national competition, you can usually bet on occasional two-a-day practices, conditioning practices, and sometimes even weekend and holiday practices. Because of the goals that you must accomplish, competition team practices can often be seen as more of a responsibility or job.



GAMES

If you were on a dance team in high school, you may have some experience with sideline dances. Some high school dance teams choose to dance on the sidelines in games, but at some schools that is reserved for cheerleaders only. In college, you will most likely dance on the sidelines at games or you may have a specific spot in the stands to dance with your team. Each school will operate a little differently.

One thing is for sure, you will dance at halftimes or time-outs of games. Depending on where you attend school, you may dance with the band at half-time of football games, or you may just come out between quarters and dance in the end zone. Almost all colleges that have dance teams will have their dancers perform routines at halftimes of basketball games.

It is important to remember that when you step out on the floor to perform during the half time of a game, your team is the main feature. There will be a much larger crowd watching you than there was in high school, and there is definitely the possibility that you, or just a portion of your routine, will be televised.

Dancing at games can be one of the most exciting parts about being on a college dance team. Make sure that even when you are not performing a specific routine that you are still cheering on your school. Your job is not finished when you step off the performance floor.

SCHOOL

As a member of a college dance team, your schedule will not be as simple as others. It's hard enough attending college and not having anything planned after class, but imagine class throughout the day, papers to write and homework to do at night, and somewhere in between, you will have two hour to three hour long practices, all while trying to have the best college experience of your life. This routine can get stressful for many, but it's important to stay on the right track. Most college dance team coaches require their members to obtain a certain grade point average to stay a member of the squad, and skipping class is never an option. Many coaches will only allow team members to miss a certain amount of days, and don't think they won't find out if you skip class. Because you are on the dance team, you stand out, therefore, your teachers will notice if you are in class or not and will have no problem reporting it back to your coach or advisor. You have to be responsible for yourself, no matter how hectic your schedule may get.

SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Like it was stated before, because you are a member on your college dance team, you stand out no matter where you go. You will be making appearances and performing at pep rallies, games, and local events. As a result, people will recognize you on campus, in the community, and out at night. It will always be expected of you to present yourself in a very professional manner. Once you become a member of your school's dance team, you are put on a higher level and the standards are raised, so you must act like an adult on and off of the field. It is important to remember that while on a college dance team, you represent your school at all times.

