

# Criteria for Getting Pointe Shoes

Getting your first pair of pointe shoes is an exciting milestone for young ballerinas. Your ballet teachers will tell you when you are ready to dance on pointe. This decision is based on your age, development and personal technique level. Going on Pointe before a dancer is ready or without the proper guidance may cause serious and long lasting physical problems. This should not be taken lightly.

Generally, students *may* be ready for Pointe Shoes when they are around 12 years old. After at least three years of ballet technique, the dancer needs to regularly demonstrate correct alignment, strength, and flexibility of the legs, feet, and back. Only then will your technique teacher recommend that you purchase your first pair of pointe shoes.

Listed below are the criteria your teachers will be evaluating. Please talk with your teachers for more details!

Age	Approximately 12 years old.
Technique Level	At least three years of quality ballet training.
Ankle Range of Motion	<i>Pencil Test:</i> Sit with legs together, straight in front of you. Place pencil on pointed foot. Pencil should be parallel to floor.
Calf Strength	<i>Single Leg Heel Raise:</i> 20 single heel rises in parallel with proper technique.
Balance #1	<i>Modified Romberg:</i> Balance on single leg in parallel with arms crossed and eyes closed for 30 seconds without opening the eyes, touching the foot down, or moving the standing foot on the floor.
Balance #2	<i>Single Leg Passé-Relevé:</i> Hold full retiré in full relevé for 15 seconds. Pelvis must remain neutral. Standing leg must remain in high relevé and knee must be fully extended and pulled up.
Abdominal Strength	<i>Double leg Lower Test:</i> Begin lying on back, both legs up straight at 90°, keep pelvis in neutral and lower both legs at the same time to at least 45°
Neuromuscular Control	<i>Single Leg Step Down:</i> Stand with one foot on a 9 inch step and lower (plié) to touch the other heel to the floor. Pelvis must remain level. 4-5 times.
Lower Extremity Alignment and Ballet Technique #1	<i>Topple Test:</i> Single pirouette en dehors from 4th position. Fully extended standing leg, high passé standing leg. Pirouette is fully controlled including landing.
Lower Extremity Alignment and Ballet Technique #2	<i>Single Leg Sauté Test:</i> 16 consecutive single leg sauté jumps. 8 of the 16 should maintain a neutral pelvis, toe-heel landing, fully extended knee and foot in the air.



*Every Student Counts!*