



DANCE VICTORIA

THE WORLD'S BEST DANCE

111-2750 Quadra Street,
Victoria BC Canada V8T 4E8

DanceVictoria.com

info@dancevictoria.com
250-595-1829

Nutcracker Auditions Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Auditioning for professional productions can be an incredibly exciting time for young dancers, however, being a bit nervous about the “big day” is a very normal and natural response when they’re unsure of what to expect. We’ve compiled some tips as well as some answers to commonly asked questions from both parents and students that we hope may help make any audition a really positive learning experience.

1. WHAT HAPPENS IN THE ROOM?

Usually the dancers enter the room in numerical order and make rows in front of the person responsible for casting. This person is usually called the Ballet Mistress/Master or *Company Rehearsal Director* – the *Children’s Rehearsal Director* will help you through anything if you need, so don’t worry!

The Children’s Rehearsal Director (RD) will teach you some steps or phrases of movement from the production while the Company RD watches. They are seeing if you are able to pick up choreography quickly but also if you suit the character for casting. Sometimes, you may be asked to do the steps again with a different group of people, or even be asked to step to the side and wait – this doesn’t mean that you didn’t do a good job, it is simply so that they can see how certain people look together as a group; stay positive, you never know what they may have planned for you!

Once the Company RD feels that they have enough dancers for the roles, they will thank the dancers and let them go. RESULTS - Some companies have a policy that notifies the dancers immediately after the auditions whether they received a role or not, while others will notify the dancers by email within the next few days. Either way, it is ALWAYS a difficult situation for the casting directors to say no to any of the dancers; they really do mean it when they tell you that they wished there were parts for everyone.

2. WHAT IS THE COMPANY RD LOOKING FOR?

This is very difficult position to have but the Company RD is required to fulfill a few obligations for the company.

- a. **TECHNICALLY AND ARTISTICALLY CAPABLE** – Dancers that get selected are able to pick up choreography quickly and remember their counts and corrections. All of the roles require physical movement that helps the audience believe that you really are that character so try to show those acting skills (even if it’s just a smile!) in your audition.
- b. **FITTING THE COSTUME** – Many students, through their studios, are usually measured or at least fitted for a costume for recitals, festivals and other performances, however, in professional productions this actually works in reverse and ***the dancers must fit into the costumes***. There is absolutely NO WAY AROUND THIS which is why you are asked for your height and measurements at registration.

3. WHAT IF I DON’T GET PICKED?

It’s a yucky feeling to not be chosen for something you really, really wanted. Everyone needs to understand before going into an audition, that it may not happen for them that day – and that’s ok. Disappointment is a normal part of this process but it is in no way a failure of not having danced well.



DANCE VICTORIA

THE WORLD'S BEST DANCE

111-2750 Quadra Street,
Victoria BC Canada V8T 4E8

DanceVictoria.com

info@dancevictoria.com
250-595-1829

4. I WANT THE EXPERIENCE OF AUDITIONING

If you have no intention of committing to the production, please don't audition. Also, please make sure you are available for the rehearsal dates listed, prior to registering. Absences will not be tolerated. The Company RD and everyone working on these productions are working professionals. They have an extremely limited amount of time to successfully select and work with a large amount of young dancers and if you are not serious about joining the production and you happen to be selected, it is confusing and frustrating for everyone to move forward.

Sometimes companies will hold workshops as well as their auditions. This is the time where you could get specific feedback from professionals; much more than in an audition setting.

TIPS WHILE AUDITIONING:

- Please do not chat with those around you – just like in dance class!
- The Children's RD is there to help you, if you don't understand the instructions or a step PLEASE put up your hand and ask for help or to repeat the exercise. We want you to show us your best.
- Know your number – the Company RD doesn't know all of your names so the numbers come in handy!
- Be patient – there are times when the Company RD is going through all of their checklists and paperwork while you have to stand and wait. It's best to stand ready but somewhat relaxed as they try to put faces to names to numbers.
- When we say that you've done a great job, we mean it! Auditions can actually be fun!

ROLE OF AN UNDERSTUDY:

- The Understudies have *the most* important and required positions in any production. This person has been selected to take on the job of "jumping in" whenever necessary and usually at the last moment! An understudy learns the counts and choreography of ALL of the dancers in a role; this means that they must know and be capable of stepping into any of the characters in that group piece. Understudies are not guaranteed a performance, which can feel quite upsetting considering how much work goes into learning all of that choreography, but it is absolutely necessary that all roles, even the professional ones, have understudies ready just in case. As they say... The show must go on!
- Our Understudies always end up having a ton of fun making new dance friends and learning a lot about what goes on backstage at a professional show!

Every role is incredibly important to the success of the production otherwise it wouldn't be in the show! It is an honour to be able to dance alongside professional dancers, to see backstage and work around the flying sets and also to dance to a live orchestra. From the Mice to the Party Children, to the Rats, Soldiers and Angels or Pastorale, every dancer who is chosen has an incredible responsibility in making every performance as professional as possible.

We hope this helps give you some insight into what goes on during the audition day.

Best of luck and break a leg! 😊