

Theatre Etiquette

Whether you've been to the ballet before or you're coming to the ballet for the first time, you may have some questions about how everything works and what is expected of you as an audience member. Here are the answers to some questions students usually ask:

Q. What do people wear to the ballet? A. You can wear whatever you want to the ballet. Some people like to dress up and make their visit to the theater a special occasion.

Q. May I talk in the theater? A. You may talk quietly before the ballet begins. During the ballet you should be quiet so everyone can hear the music. You'll want to pay close attention so you don't miss anything. Talking during the ballet will distract those around you.

Q. What about food, cell phones, going to the bathroom, etc? A. No food or drink is allowed in the theater. All cell phones, pagers, CD players, and other electronic should be turned off. Go to the bathroom before the ballet starts or wait until intermission. It's distracting to the audience and the dancers to have someone walking up the aisle during the performance.

Q. How do I know when the ballet is going to start? A. When you first come to the theater the lights will be on so that you can see everything. When the ballet is about to start, the lights will dim, just like at a movie. This is an exciting moment...time to get ready to concentrate on the performance.

Q. When should I clap?

A. You should clap whenever you see something you like, but don't clap just to make noise. A ballet audience usually claps when the conductor comes out and when a dancer or group of dancers finishes a dance. You can also clap when a dancer does steps that are difficult, like a lot of turns in a row. At the end of the ballet all of the dancers will come out and take a bow. Then you can really let them know how much you appreciate their dancing!