

CONSIDER THE COSTUME

Imagine judging a dance competition where every team was dressed exactly the same. It would quickly become difficult to discern one team from another and you would very likely be bored beyond belief! Good costuming not only compliments choreography, but many times is the element that shapes a performance.

Designing and ordering costumes can be overwhelming experiences. Most all of us have some disastrous costuming experience where either the cost goes way beyond the budget or the "perfect" costume simply does not work with the choreography. Most unfortunate situations with costuming can be avoided with proper planning and a few ordering tips.

Getting Started

You can't start too early! Most vendors will want to provide a sample. For a custom design more than one sample may be necessary. Summer is not too early to start planning

There is no "right" or "wrong" way to start. You can:

- * Decide what types of routines you want to do.
- * Look for music. Visualize color, texture, style, mood, etc..
- * Think about what mood you want to convey with the dance.
- * Get a "jump" start by looking at costume designs first and finding the music later.

Spend Money Wisely

Tight budgets are always a concern. Costuming can get very pricey, especially if you are trying to costume several routines. Some things you may want to consider:

- * Instead of buying one item that can't be coordinated, consider getting a top and pant. You can use the pant with other tops or vice versa.
- * Think about costume pieces you can use for other venues, ie: Spring Show, field performances, pep rallies or re-use for contest over the next few years.

Leapin' Leotards has designed and created Drill/Dance team costumes for over 20 years. They design for many award-winning and Nationally acclaimed schools across the country.

You may contact Leapin' Leotards at 800-460-9776 or through their web site at www.leapinleos.com. Their friendly and professional staff will be happy to assist you!

By Lise Price, Co-Owner Leapin' Leotards Designing a Garment

It is always a good idea to consult a designer before ordering your costume(s). If you are trying to put together a concept, there are a few details you'll want to be aware of:

- * Choose styles that are flattering on many body types.
- * Sleek lines can create a slimming look.
- * Too many cut-outs can look choppy.
- * Consider what looks good from a distance. Sometimes simple is more effective.
- * Color: Pick colors that will look good on the gym floor. Different colors convey different moods. Examples are:
 - ◆ Black- sultry, jazzy, somber
 - ◆ Red- spunky, sophisticated, sassy
 - ◆ Hot Pink- fun, feminine
 - ◆ Purples/Browns- earthy, somber

Avoiding Problems

Creating and ordering costumes can be a stress-free experience. Knowing common mistakes and allowing an ample amount of time are essential when designing costumes.

Avoid the Following:

- ◆ Ordering late.
- ◆ Designing a costume that will interfere with the movement.
- ◆ Trying on a sample without dancing in it.
- ◆ Not checking your costume order as soon as it is delivered.

Common Questions

What is the turn around time?

An existing design can be four weeks. A custom design can be 6-8 weeks or longer.

Is a custom design always more expensive?

Not necessarily. You can "customize" existing designs by choosing your own colors and changing the fabrics.

How soon can I get a price quote?

This can take anywhere from one day to one week.

