

Top 10 Technique Tips

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Every dance team uses technique. It is always there—in practice, in performance, and especially in competition. Each dance move requires technique: turns, leaps, kicks, extension, etc. Good technique is essential for a competitive team. It is nice to have a team with basic technical skills, but if that is not the case, use the following tips to improve your team's technique.

1. **Focus on the Basics:** Pointed feet, straight legs, arm placement, head placement, etc. Remember beginning ballet?
2. **Practice Every Day:** Choose specific technique on which to focus each practice. Monday, Wednesday, Friday work on turns. Tuesday and Thursday work on leaps and extension. Choose your team's focus and set up a specific schedule.
3. **Use Technique in Warm-ups:** Start practice with a jam. A quick, heart rate increasing, 32 count warm-up. Focus on placement and strength.
4. **Set a Technique Goal:** Want flexibility? Each practice, have your team sit in the splits for one minute on each side. Then use flexibility stretches as a team. Choose your goal and work on it each day.
5. **Partner Up!:** As a coach or captain you cannot see everything! Have team members partner up to work on technique or watch one another perform routines.
6. **Require Technique in Try-outs:** You can get a basic idea of technique in a try-out. Choose what you want to see: kicks, leaps, fouette turns, splits, etc. Then choose your team accordingly.

7. **Practice in Front of a Mirror:** If you have access to a large studio mirror, use it! If you do not use a mirror everyday, there is an advantage to using it every once in a while. Students can see what they are doing right and wrong.

8. **Video Tape:** Video practices and performances. Have your team watch the tape and pick out trouble spots.

9. **Technique Scoreboard:** Make it fun! Choose 5-10 technical skills and let your team members pass them off. Keep track, display the results, and reward your team members for their hard work.

10. **Make Corrections Immediately:** If a team member makes a mistake, correct him/her right then. Do not let him/her practice technique incorrectly.

Technique is something every team needs. Do not become overwhelmed by the big picture. Work on the basics everyday. Use what you know and make it work for your team!

Brainstorm some other technique building activities:

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