

# MJP ACADEMY OF IRISH DANCE SHOW/PERFORMANCE HANDBOOK



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## **ATTENDING SHOWS / PERFORMANCES**

Performances are an exciting way to share the talents of our school. If you commit to a performance, it is expected that you attend. Please arrive in full costume at least 15 minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time for every show (Rehearsals usually take place 45 minutes prior to the show start time).

Most of our performance numbers are group dances that appear chaotic or unprofessional when dancers are forced to improvise at the last minute due to missing members. Not only does this project a poor image of our school, but is also unfair to the dancers who followed through on their commitment to attend.

Dancers arriving late to a scheduled performance, or arriving after the other dancers have finished a rehearsal will not be permitted to dance in the show. Any dancers arriving after the rehearsal of a dance will not be permitted to dance in that particular number at the show. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Those who are repeatedly late, or cancel at the last minute may not be asked to participate in future shows.

Please arrive in **FULL HAIR AND MAKE UP.** Dance dresses and shoes can be put on once you arrive, but please avoid unnecessary delay by having your hair and make-up finished before you leave the house.

## **CONDUCT AT SHOWS**

Please remember that our behavior at a feis or show (Parents, Teachers and students) is a reflection on our school, especially when dancers are wearing the MJP costume. At MJP, we value sportsmanlike behavior: Please do not speak negatively of any dancers, adjudicators, teachers or other schools. A good thing to remember is that you never know if someone's Mom or teacher is sitting right behind or in front of you so, always speak as if they are! Please refrain from making negative comments about our own dancers or school when you are at the feis. If you have a valid complaint, please bring it to myself or another teacher so that it can become constructive criticism. On the other hand, feel free to speak positively about MJP but be sure not to put down any other schools in the process. Dancers attending a feis or a dance performance are expected to be properly attired. A sports bra and bloomers are not acceptable for a public event. Although the Irish dance community is a small one, competitions and shows are public events so please be wary of who might be in attendance. Also, being properly dressed helps to represent your school in a professional manner.

## **WHAT DO I WEAR?**

### **COSTUME**

Before a show, MJP will send out an email listing the attending dancers by group. Each group will have their costume listed. Be sure to email [mjpdress@hotmail.com](mailto:mjpdress@hotmail.com) if you are missing a costume piece or [mjpacademy@hotmail.com](mailto:mjpacademy@hotmail.com) if you have questions.

For most shows, we will request that you wear:

- White poodle socks (details below)
- An MJP skirt (rented from MJPIDA ahead of time)
- A black body suit with a boat neck and T-shirt length sleeves

OR

- An MJP Pinny (Rented from MJPIDA) with a white or a black long sleeved T-shirt underneath.

**Bloomers:** For dancers not wearing a bodysuit, red bloomers should be worn under the skirt. These can be purchased through MJPIDA. If wearing a long T-shirt, be sure to tuck the shirt into the bloomers so that when dancers kick, the bottom of the shirt does not show.

On rare occasions, we may request that **black tights** be worn instead of socks. In this case, please be sure the tights are nice and dark. If needed, wear two pairs. And always bring an extra pair of tights in case of runs or holes.

Older dancers maybe be asked to wear **solo dresses**. If so, dancers will usually be asked to wear their white poodle socks and their normal wig (Preferably bun wig to match younger dancers).

## SHOES

Please wear Black ballet slippers or Irish Poms (Ghillies) and Hard Shoes

If your shoes are older, you may want to **replace the shoe laces** to ensure they won't break at a critical moment.

To make quick shoe changes easier, **elastics** can be threaded through soft shoes, hard shoes or both instead of shoe laces. The elastic can be bought at fabric stores, Walmart or a similar store.

Be sure to **polish both pairs of shoes** and repair any holes well beforehand so that they are shiny and new looking. Also, please remove any colored tape from your shoes. If you need to have your hardshoes taped to keep from slipping, please use black tape.

## SOCKS

Please wear white "bubble" or "poodle" socks.

These socks can be **purchased** through our class angels. Send us an email if you need one close to a show to be sure we will have them at the studio for you. They can also be purchased at feiseanna or at Bob Steele's.

Socks should be fairly short. About halfway between the ankle and the calf. Socks should not touch the knee cap as that is too long.

To keep socks up, use a glue stick or sock glue. Put glue over at least half of length of the upper sock, then pull sock up snugly and pat it into place.

There are socks available with rhinestones on them. They give the socks a subtle sparkle onstage and are fine for solo dancing but dancers should have a plain pair for figures (group dancing) unless the whole team decides to wear matching rhinestone socks.

## HAIR

Hair should be curly and in a high bun. There are two options to achieve curls: curling natural hair or wearing a wig. For a detailed "how to" on either of these options, please see our wig guide on our members only page or our "How to put on an Irish dance wig" on our YouTube channel.

If you are wearing a wig, be sure it is securely attached.

## TIARAS

An MJP tiara can be **purchased** through our class angels. Send us an email if you need one close to a show to be sure we will have them at the studio for you.

**How to position:** Tiaras should be positioned the way a regular headband would sit on the head, with the ends secured behind the ears. Be sure to secure tiaras and headbands very well using plenty of pins and have the dancer do the “shake test” or “jump test” to ensure it will not come loose on stage. If dancer is not wearing a wig, you can put some of their hair in a small, half ponytail to anchor the tiara to.

## JEWELRY

**Beginners:** No jewelry or watches. Small, silver or gold studs or hoop earrings are fine. If a team decides to purchase matching earrings, they will be permitted.

**Advanced:** Many girls like to wear sparkly earrings that match their solo costume. But, DO NOT wear dangling earrings as they can snag and catch.

## MAKEUP

Make-up is not recommended for dancers under the age of 12 for shows, and is not permitted under the age of 12 in a feis.

If the dancer is over 12, or close to it (for shows), here are some tips:

Irish dancing is rarely ever held on brightly lit stages (With the exception of our year end show). Therefore, make-up used does not have to be overly dramatic or very much darker than regular street make up.

## EYES

If the dancer will be on a large, brightly lit stage (as is the case at some major competitions or big shows) fake eyelashes are helpful to make the eyes really stand out from a distance. Drawing a small "fake eyelash" at the outer corner of each eye will also help the eyes from disappearing onstage. For regular competitions, sweeping your eyeliner out a little past the edge of your top lid is enough to do the trick.

A bit of white eyeliner on the inside corner of the eyes will help make the eyes look larger. Or, try dusting some white eye shadow on the inside corner of the eyelid.

Generally, keep your lighter colours of your eye shadow on the inside corner of your eyelids (by your nose) and your darker colours on the outer edge of your eyelids.

For a good detailed walkthrough on applying eye shadow, try out this youtube video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1-Wel076ik>

At a feis: If your solo dress is sparkly, a bit of glitter on or around the eyes is nice. Try not to go overboard.

Below are some eye make-up samples. The third picture has a much longer fake eyelash drawn which gives the eye a much more dramatic look. This is well suited for large stages with bright lighting.



### **CHEEKS**

If your cheeks are not naturally rosy, rouge will help stop the "washed out" look from bright stage lights. Pick a colour that is only a shade or two darker than your natural skin colour. When applying, use long sweeping strokes starting at the cheek bones and sweeping up to the hairline. Afterwards, use your fingers to blend the edges to avoid getting a clown look.

### **LIPS**

When choosing a lipstick, pick one that is not too much darker than the natural lip colour. A nice way to make the lips stand out but not look too overdone is to apply a dab of very light pink in the center of the lips and blend in, finishing off with a coat of shimmery or sparkly lip gloss.

On younger dancers in particular, often a shiny lip gloss with a bit of tint is nicer than a deep colour.

### **SHOW CHECKLIST**

- Dress (solo and or school dress)
- or skirt and blouse (make sure both are clean)
- Bloomers
- Headband/ Tiara/Hair scrunchie
- Wig
- Poodle socks/ Tights
- Sock glue or Glue stick
- Both pairs of shoes: Ghillies (soft shoes) and Heavy shoes
- Spare shoe laces or elastics
- Tights and Spare tights
- Black duct tape (for bottom of hard shoes if the stage is slippery)
- Shoe polish and/or Black marker
- Water Bottle
- Band-aids
- Safety pins
- Bobby pins