

Katha Dance Theatre School of Dance



HANDBOOK
2023 - 2024

Information, Policies and Procedures

Katha Dance Theatre seeks to provide all persons with equal access to its programming, facilities, and employment, regardless of a person's race, national origin, gender, creed, or ability. Persons with special needs - financial, learning, physical, emotional, etc. - should contact the KDT office to discuss accommodations.

Welcome to another exciting year of Kathak dance at Katha Dance Theatre! We are confident that you will be both challenged and inspired to reach your potential as a dancer in our program. This handbook will provide you with helpful information regarding the operations of the school along with the services we provide. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Katha Dance Theatre [office](#).

OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: 5444 Orchard Ave, Crystal, MN 55429
Office Phone: 763-533-0756
Emergency Phone: 612-708-5217
Email: info@kathadance.org
Website: <https://kathadance.org/>

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Rita Mustaphi - Artistic Director
rita@kathadance.org
Kalyan Mustaphi - Executive Director
kalyan@kathadance.org
Nina Hagen - General Manager
nina@kathadance.org

MASTER TEACHER

Rita Mustaphi | 612-709-0138

INSTRUCTORS

Sarika Haris
Monica Singh-Shukla
Nivedita Sahni
Mukta Sathe
Shilpi Chatterjee

STUDIO

Please note that KDT is offering hybrid classes this school year (in-person and online). Our studio address is as follows:

St. Louis Park

[5806 W. 36th Street](#)
[St. Louis Park, MN 55416](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION PER SESSION (10 CLASSES)

\$249	(1 hour class/week/session - a total of 10 hours)
\$337	(1.5 hours class/week/session - a total of 15 hours)
\$31 per class	(1 hour class – valid for less than 8 classes a session)
\$42 per class	(1.5 hour class - valid for less than 8 classes a session)
\$20 Recital Fee	(per student performing in <i>Sadhana</i> - collected during Spring Session)

Full tuition rates are available [here](#).

Note that making a donation to the annual Saraswati Puja and purchasing Kathak dance costumes will incur additional costs.

DISCOUNTS

- The second (and third, etc) registered member of a family will receive a 10% discount on tuition of equal or lesser value per session, as will any student registered for two classes per session (with permission from their instructor).
- Scholarships are available on a limited basis and are awarded to students who demonstrate financial need as well as talent. Requests for financial assistance must be emailed to the [office](#) before the third class of session. Financial assistance is awarded

at the sole discretion of Katha Dance Theatre and is subject to available funding.

FORMS OF PAYMENT

- Tuition may be paid [online](#) via the KDT website. Note the additional handling fees for online processing.
- Tuition can also be paid via check to the KDT office in select cases. Contact the [office](#) for permission. Be sure to include a note identifying the student's full name in the memo. Mail to:

Katha Dance Theatre
5444 Orchard Ave
Crystal, MN 55429

PAYMENT GUIDELINES

- Each session's tuition is due in full before the first class of the session. This payment is non-refundable, but may be transferred to cover the cost of a different session within the same school year (Fall - Spring).
- Payments for our Summer Intensive are non-refundable and non-transferrable.
- Payments made beyond two weeks after the start of each session will incur a **\$10 late fee**. If you're unable to make a payment on time, you must email the [office](#) and request to make alternative arrangements. To avoid the late fee, requests must be submitted before the first class. Requests will only be granted in unique cases, at the discretion of Katha Dance Theatre.
- If your account becomes past due, and you have not made alternative arrangements, participation in class/performances will not be allowed and enrollment may be terminated.
- You are obligated to pay the session tuition unless your child has officially withdrawn from the program by emailing the [office](#). You will be obligated for tuition until the withdrawal procedure is complete.
- Tuition refunds will be given only in cases of serious injury or prolonged illness. Requests must be emailed to the [office](#) and include a doctor's note.

REGISTRATION

Students must register prior to each fall session via the online registration form found under the class listing on the Katha Dance Theatre [website](#).

- Teachers reserve the right to determine class placement for each student.
- Any class with fewer than five registrants will be canceled for the remainder of the session.
- Any changes made mid-session (adding classes, switching classes/locations, dropping classes) must be communicated to all involved teacher(s) and the [office](#).
- To officially drop a class, students should email a withdrawal notice to the [office](#) two weeks prior to the actual withdrawal date.
- If a student's contact info changes mid-session (new phone number, new email address, etc.) it is the student's responsibility to inform the [office](#) via email.

COMMUNICATION

- To contact the office, please [email](#) or call (763-533-0756). In case of emergency, consult the [website](#) or call the emergency phone number (612-708-5217).
- Katha Dance Theatre's primary means of communication is email. Please check your inbox regularly for important messages regarding school activities, and be sure to mark Katha Dance Theatre as a contact to ensure that our messages are not sent to your spam folder.

SCHEDULE

- Pay close attention to Katha Dance Theatre's academic calendar, available online via our [website](#).
- Changes in scheduling will occur two weeks in advance of the original planned date.
- Katha Dance Theatre reserves the right to cancel or reschedule class due to inclement weather, low enrollment numbers, or other constraints. In the event of extreme weather conditions, please check for an email from the office. The first and second

classes canceled in a session due to an emergency will not be rescheduled or refunded, but any classes canceled beyond that will be rescheduled and refunded by KDT.

CLASS POLICIES

Kathak dance is an age-old art form of great beauty and complexity. Many years of training are necessary in order to develop a thorough Kathak technique. KDT is fortunate to have Rita Mustaphi, a direct disciple of Guru Pandit Birju Maharaj, as its Artistic Director and Master Teacher. The rest of KDT's teaching staff is composed solely of members of its professional Company. All students are expected to take their dance studies very seriously, as well as:

- ◆ Show respect to their teacher and be courteous to all students, teachers and staff.
- ◆ Approach learning with sincerity and enthusiasm, practicing at home and during breaks.

ATTENDANCE

- Students are expected to attend the class regularly. If a student will miss a class, the KDT office must be notified via [email](#). Include the date/time of absence. Any communicated absence is eligible for a makeup class.
- It is very important to have dancers arrive **on time** for class. Children should not be left unattended in the lobby, restroom or hallway. Please remind dancers to use the restroom before class. Shoes should be left outside the studio. Arrive fifteen minutes early to allow time for changing street clothes, using the restroom, and tying ankle bells. Students should be ready to begin class at the scheduled time. Note: during the pandemic, we ask that students leave promptly after class in order to minimize everyone's exposure. Look [here](#) for further pandemic-era safety policies.
- Extra rehearsals for *Sadhana* are scheduled weeks in advance, and students should arrange their schedules accordingly. The only excuse for missing a *Sadhana* rehearsal is illness - other lessons, sports, homework, etc. are not considered legitimate excuses. Missed rehearsals may result in the removal of the student from the performance.
- Students must attend at least three sessions per year in order to perform in two

dances at *Sadhana*, although students who have attended fewer than three sessions may participate in one *Sadhana* dance at the discretion of their teacher.

CLASS ATTIRE

What is KDT's dress code?

Kathak is a classical dance form, therefore the word 'discipline' is deeply rooted within it. Dancers need to groom themselves before attending a Kathak dance class. At KDT, we emphasize a sense of discipline, comfort and respect for the art form.

- Make sure that you tie your hair off of your face, either in a ponytail or braid. If you have short hair, use secure clips. Don't wear a headband, as it may fall out during vigorous movement. Bangs worn out are fine for younger or less experienced dancers, but as you progress and begin doing more vigorous movements, you should pin your bangs back.
- Make sure that you wear clothing that is breathable and comfortable. Your clothes should allow you to achieve maximum range of motion and see your own body line in the mirror. It should also respect the Indian dance etiquette regarding hemlines and sleeve length. Recommended attire includes Indian salwar/Kameez or churidar/Kameez and/or dupatta. Kameez and kurta are tops that go down to the knee--not too much above or below. They can have short sleeves or 3/4 sleeves, but not sleeveless. Churidar or Salwar are recommended to be worn on bottom. A churidar is tight at the shin and ankle--literally creating "churis" or bracelets with material around the ankles. Salwar are wider pants. Older students must tie their dupatta. Tank tops, shorts and jeans are not permitted.
- Make sure that you own a set of ankle bells or 'ghungru' and tie them properly and securely before each class so that you will not hurt yourself. Ghungru are sacred to Indian dance and should not be worn with shoes. Dancers must be barefoot - socks are not allowed. Make sure ghungru are strung on a rope as intended for Kathak dance. Children need 50 bells per foot; teens/adults need 75 - 100 per foot. KDT no longer sells ankle bells, and recommends purchasing them on Amazon.com. Contact the [office](#) for recommendations of verified sellers. Ghungru are not required for 1A students.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL

- Do not eat, drink, or chew gum during class. Only water is allowed in the classroom.
- For a focused learning atmosphere, non-dancers (including parents), siblings, and

friends are requested not to linger in the classroom. However, parents of young children (ages 6 - 10) are permitted to watch their child's first and last class of the session.

- Video/audio recording of the class is strictly prohibited. **We strongly encourage students to rely on memory rather than technology. Regular home practice will aid in this process. All audio and video are the intellectual property of Katha Dance Theatre.**

ALL MUSIC AND CHOREOGRAPHY PERFORMED OR TAUGHT BY KATHA DANCE THEATRE COMPANY AND SCHOOL IS COPYRIGHTED AND MAY NOT BE PERFORMED, RECORDED, TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY OR STORED WITHOUT THE ARTIST'S KNOWLEDGE AND WRITTEN CONSENT. VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY MAY RESULT IN ENROLLMENT TERMINATION.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Students receive evaluation in the form of 1) attendance and review of the each season show performed by Katha Dance Theatre company members, 2) technique testing, 3) written evaluation, and 4) *Sadhana* performance. Informal evaluations will be provided after each session. Teachers review these assessments as they make class placement decisions the following school year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Katha Dance Theatre School of Dance is a non-profit arts organization. This means that all income, including tuition, grants and gifts go directly to the operation of its performances and programs. Tuition is annually drafted to cover the cost of classes, rental of the studio spaces, maintenance of the Company, and administrative costs. Performances and programs extending beyond these classes must come from additional resources.

The quality of our program has a direct relationship to the quality of involvement from our families. Please watch for emails from the KDT's office requesting volunteers throughout the school year, as all parents and students are encouraged to become active participants in the community by volunteering.

STUDENT SECURITY

In-person Kathak classes by Katha Dance Theatre are held at its home base studio in St. Louis Park. It's imperative that parents and students understand the following security guidelines to ensure everyone's ongoing safety at the studio.

- Please pick up your student within 10 minutes of the end of class. Late pickups are an inconvenience to the staff, and Katha Dance Theatre does not provide childcare.
- If an emergency makes it impossible for parents to pick up their child, parents should make other arrangements and inform their child's teacher:

Rita Mustaphi | 612-709-0138
Monica Singh-Shukla | 763-234-9647
Sarika Haris | 612-220-4985
Nivedita Sahni | 763-732-9592

- Katha Dance Theatre is not responsible for lost items. Please do not bring valuables to the studio.

EMERGENCIES

Katha Dance Theatre, its teachers, dance studios and performance premises are not responsible for injuries sustained during class, rehearsal and/or performances.

In the event of an injury or illness, we will contact the designated emergency contact from the student's registration form. If we cannot reach anyone and medical treatment is needed immediately, we will call 911 and transport the student to the nearest medical emergency service. If you would prefer an alternative arrangement, you must inform Katha Dance Theatre via [email](#).

PERFORMANCES

Performance is a crucial part of an education in Kathak, equal in value to classroom instruction.

- Katha Dance Theatre company members perform in Season show(s); eligible company apprentices may also be invited to perform at the show. *All KDT students are required to attend KDT professional performance(s) as part of their yearly evaluation.*
- Students may be requested to perform at various community festivals and

celebrations throughout the year. Participation in these performances is not mandatory, but highly encouraged.

COSTUMES

All Kathak dancers need at least one costume, plus one set of jewelry, hair items and ghungru.

Ghungru or Ankle Bells: This is a functional element as well as a decoration of Kathak dancers. It should be balanced to the height of the dancer. Kathak dancers use ghungru that are bound in white cotton rope and in order to make a good sound it needs to be loosely bound.

Children: 25 - 50 on each foot
Youth and adult: 75 - 100 on each foot

Female Dancers

Lahenga Set – the Hindu period costume includes a long skirt (lahenga), a blouse (choli), a veil (aanchal ordni), pants (churidaar), and a belt.

Male and Female Dancers

Anrakha Set – the Muslim period costume includes a below-the-knee-length dress (anrakha), a jacket, pants (churidaar) and a veil (dupatta) for female dancers and a belt-like tie (patta).

ACCESSORIES (Female Dancers Only)

Jewelry

Lahenga Set - Traditionally composed of a gold and pearl set composed of short and long necklaces, earrings, tika (forehead piece with a string of pearls or gold chain) and bangles. A belt (preferably rope kind or cloth-lined) is needed for the Lahenga set. Be sure to wear a bindi.

Anrakha - Composed of a Kundan set (a necklace, a set of earrings and a tika for forehead). You may also use a nose ring.

Note that earrings must have a hook and a back to prevent earrings flying out during performances.

Hair

Dancers with short hair need a fake hair bun and a white fake flower garland around the bun.

Makeup

Children need only moisturizer, powder, blush, eyeliner, mascara and lipstick.

Youth/adults need:

1. Moisturizer
2. Foundation (liquid or cake)
3. Blush with brush
4. Loose powder with puff
5. Eyebrow pencil (black)
6. Eye shadow
7. Eye liner (black)
8. Mascara (black)
9. Lip liner (dark red or deep maroon)
10. Lipstick (maroon)

Katha Dance Theatre reserves the right to update, remove, and otherwise modify the policies of the 2023 - 2024 Student Handbook without notice at any time.