

Katha Dance Theatre School of Dance



HANDBOOK 2025 - 2026

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://www.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

Kully Vance - School Manager

kully@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 offers hybrid classes (in-person and online). Our studio address is as follows:

St. Louis Park

5704 W. 36th Street
St. Louis Park, MN

When you arrive at the studio, please park in the lot behind the studio (if possible) and enter through the back entrance.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION PER SEMESTER (15 CLASSES)

\$351	(45 min. class/week/semester - a total of 11.25 hours)
\$454	(1 hour class/week/semester - a total of 15 hours)
\$586	(1.5 hours class/week/semester - a total of 22.5 hours)
\$38 per class	(1 hour class – valid for fewer than 8 classes a session)
\$49 per class	(1.5 hour class - valid for fewer than 8 classes a session)

TUITION PER YEAR

\$795	(1 hour class/week/school year)
\$1,044	(1.5 hours class/week/school year)

\$40 Registration Fee (per student each semester, which includes an administrative fee and the cost of 2 tickets to season show by KDT Company)

Our Full-Year tuition rates now include the cost of our recital fee, in addition to our registration fee, which includes the cost of two complimentary tickets for a professional

Company performance and two tickets to Sadhana, our annual school recital.

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

DISCOUNTS

- **Family discount:** additional registered members of the immediate family will receive an approx. 9% discount on tuition of equal or lesser value per semester.
- **Scholarships:** a limited number of dance students from a variety of backgrounds, interests, talents, financial need levels, and achievements are awarded scholarships per year. 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 the semester. Financial assistance is awarded at the sole discretion of Katha Dance Theatre and is subject to available funding.

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

PAYMENT GUIDELINES

- Full non-refundable & non-transferable tuition needs to be paid a week prior to the starting of the semester [online](#) via the KDT website. Our enrollment process requires full tuition payment along with the submission of our registration form.
- Payments made beyond two weeks after the start of each session will incur a **\$15 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.
- Tuition can also be paid via check to the KDT office in select cases. Contact the [office](#) for permission, as that will impact the student's enrollment procedure. Be sure to include a note identifying the student's full name in the memo. Mail to:

Katha Dance Theatre Office
5444 Orchard Ave
Crystal, MN 55429

- A change: please note that we will not accept tuition (cash or check) in a classroom & to a teacher whose work is to teach and not participate in administration.
- 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 semester via the online registration form found under the class listing on the Katha Dance Theatre [website](#).

- Registration includes a full tuition payment, as detailed above.
- 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 semester.
- Any changes made mid-semester (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.

- Beginner-level class size is limited to avarage 15 dancers
- Intermediate and advanced-level class sizes is limited to 12 dancers

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 semester 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.
- 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.
- **Refunds and withdrawal:**
Refunds will not be given after attending 2 weeks of scheduled classes. Please notify KDT via email regarding withdrawals.
- **Make-up classes:**
Dancers registered for an ongoing weekly dance class August through May are welcome to make up for a missed class by attending another weekly class of similar level on our dance year schedule. Please email or call us at 763-533-0756 to let us know that you/your dancer will be attending another class as a make up class.

Winter Weather Policy Effective: November - April

Minnesota winters can be unpredictable. Our goal is to keep students, families, and staff safe while maintaining consistent dance education. Please review the following weather procedures.

1. Decisions on Closures & Delays

- We typically follow **Minneapolis/St. Paul school district's guidelines** for weather-related closures.
- Final decisions for **evening classes** are posted by **1:00 PM**.
- Decisions for **weekend classes** are posted by **8:00 AM**.

2. How We Communicate Closures

Updates will be posted on the following platforms:

- Email to all families
- Text alerts to individual classes via **WhatsApp** messaging
- KDT's website homepage
- Updated voicemail message at KDT phone

3. Virtual Class Option

If weather is unsafe but power/internet is available, we may offer:

- Zoom technique classes

Families will be notified if virtual classes are used.

4. Building & Parking Lot Safety

- Please use caution in the parking lot—it may be icy.
- Leave boots/shoes in the designated area to keep studios dry and safe.

If you have questions, please contact us at Info@kathadance.org or **612-709-0138**
Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe during Minnesota's winter months!

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 the 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.

- **Photo and video:**

We love how excited you are to come, watch and celebrate your dancers' joy and accomplishment in the studio. It's ok to take brief videos and photos of your child.

Yes, we request that observers are mindful to not overly capture classes. Phone devices can be a distraction and increase pressure for the student. Please also be mindful that you are primarily capturing the images of your own child and not others in the room to respect everyone's privacy.

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

The examination is a demonstration of the student's ability, achievement and joy in dancing. It is observed and assessed by the examiner, but takes place in the presence of a teacher. Exams prove students' technical prowess. Taking the exam also earns students a certificate, which acts as a proof that they have completed their year of Kathak dance training at Katha Dance Theatre.

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 & FEES

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instruction.

- **KDT Season show** - a professional show in Fall and/or Spring is performed by KDT Company dancers and apprentice dancers All KDT students are required to attend KDT professional performance(s) as part of their yearly evaluation. With fall registration you will receive 2 discounted tickets to fall show 'Prakritir Pratisodh - Nature's Revenge' (Nov. 8 - 9, 2025)
- **Outreach performances in the community:** 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.
- **Sadhana - the school recital**
All classes will conclude with a Spring recital performance in May of 2026
- **Recital Fee:**
A one-time non-refundable recital fee of \$20 will be charged per student with Spring semester due. It covers the cost of theater rental, teachers fee for conducting the recital and the technician's cost. A reminder that our full-year tuition prices now include the cost of the recital fee.
- **Saraswati Puja fee**
Katha Dance Theatre, in partnership with the Hindu Society of Minnesota celebrates the Saraswati Puja and Vasant Panchami. This Hindu festival celebrates and honors the goddess of knowledge, music and art while welcoming the first day of spring. A \$20 fee will be charged per student with Spring semester due. It covers the cost of service to the temple and to the priest along with buying necessary items for the ceremony.

COSTUMES

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

Costume fee:

All Kathak dancers need at least one costume, plus one set of jewelry, hair items and ghungru (ankle bells). Visit <https://www.kathadance.org/our-school/costume-store/> for costumes and <https://www.kathadance.org/our-school/ghungru-store/> for ghungru

You will be advised for a costume in January, 2026.

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

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

ACCESSORIES FOR PERFORMANCE (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.

Angrakha - 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)

Quality dance education in a friendly and safe environment

Code of conduct for dancers and families

1. RESPECT EVERYONE

- a. Treat everyone with kindness and respect
- b. Use respectful body language and voices while in the studio
- c. Parents, family and guardians are welcome to watch the first and last class of the semester

2. BE POSITIVELY PRESENT

- a. Be on time - present with mind, body and spirit
- b. Talking or disturbances during class time will not be allowed
- c. Have a positive attitude and have fun

3. MAKE IT COUNT

- a. Maximize the time you get to spend in the studio
- b. Follow dress code - recommended attire includes Indian salwar/Kameez or churidar and/or dupatta. Tank tops, shorts and jeans are not permitted.
- c. Only water bottle is allowed in the classroom (no chewing gum, and phone conversation)

2025 - 2026 Student Handbook without notice at any time.