

Essential Ballet Vocabulary- All Levels



- **Adagio:** at ease or leisure; exercise consisting of slow and graceful movements.
- **Allégro:** brisk, lively; fast movements.
- **Arabesque:** one of the basic poses in ballet; longest possible line from fingertips to toes.
- **Battement:** beating action; to beat.
 - **Grand battement:** large beat.
 - **Petite battement:** small beat.
- **Cambré:** arched; the body is bent from the waist.
- **Chânés (turns):** chains, links; rapid turns done in a straight line.
- **Changement:** change of feet; jumping from fifth position, switching feet in the air and landing with the other foot in front fifth position.
- **Chassé:** chased; one foot literally chases the other out of its position.
- **Coupé:** cut, cutting.
- **Dégagé:** disengaged or disengaging step; pointing of the foot slightly off the floor.
- **Développé:** developed, developing movement.
- **Échappé:** escaping or slipping movement; opening both feet from a closed position to an open position.
- **En bas:** low; usually referring to starting arm position.
- **En dedans:**
- **En dehors:**
- **Fondu:** sinking down, melting; plié on one leg.
- **Fouetté:** whipped; whipping of the body from one direction to another.
- **Frappé:** struck, to strike.
- **Glissade:** glide, gliding.

- **Jeté:** throwing step; a jump from one foot to the other in which the working leg is brushed in a way which appears to be “thrown.”
 - **Grand jeté:** large throwing step.
- **Pas de chat:** large cat’s step, step of the cat.
- **Passé:** passed; passes the knee of the standing leg.
- **Piqué:** pricked, pricking; stepping directly onto the demi-pointe.
 - **Piqué en arabesque:** piqué executed in arabesque position.
 - **Piqué détourné:** piqué executed in a passé while turning inwards (en dedans).
- **Pirouette:** whirl or spin.
- **Plié:** bent, bending; bending of the knee or knees.
 - **Demi plié:** half bend.
 - **Grand plié:** full bend
- **Port de bras:** carriage of the arms; movement of the arms.
- **Relevé:** raised.
- **Rond de jambe:** round of the leg; circular movement of the leg.
 - **Rond de jambe à terre:** rond de jambe executed on the ground.
 - **Rond de jambe en l’air:** rond de jambe executed in the air.
- **Saut de chat:** cat’s jump.
- **Sauté:** jumped, jumping; jumping from two feet and landing on two feet.
- **Sous-sus:** under-over; relevé in fifth position with feet and legs drawn tightly together.
- **Tendu:** stretched, to stretch.
- **Tour jeté:** turning throwing step, turning jeté.

***all definitions received from *Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet* by Gail Grant



Word Search

Find the ballet words and mark them with one color,
mark the NON ballet words with a different color.

H A U Y E I U E D C P K Z E A D V O J F
S L V P A T U D H G I V R U V D Y E R H
U D C T L O T A N T J K C Q N D A A O U
R P U C Q I N E Q E G I M S L Q P G D E
B D E G A G E B U X T C Z E K P V N I J
T N E M E T T A B O O K Y B E W O K H O
C R S M E F I A P N R U T A E F O X B R
U Z E M Q F Q Q W Q L I M R W M R L O V
I N T Y M I K K D N J W P A R Z Z M S U
T S E X J S W E G O R D H F K J O P X F
J T P Z Y E Z J K H I J H D Q E Z B E Z
P R G Q S H Z O T P T P Z C C K F M Q W
X I R T Q L R L M C M G F V Z D P R O L
A K T R E G E S H N M O G L I D E S P J
X E W O E M U F W V F J L K W M H R Y X
C B K L E R R A B Y W I G R F A F Y I T
D P L J T Z B O Y Q V I U D O W J B Z S
I A U I Y D L I U C N R M K W D Z K O A
G M I H B M W O A P N O J T R M P E C F
P L L R A Y O Y S J R N G A A T H G S X

ADAGIO

ALLEGRO

ARABESQUE

BARRE

BATTEMENT

BRUSH

FONDU

FRAPPE

GLIDE

JUMP

KICK

CHANGEMENT

DEGAGE

FAST

PIROUETTE

PLIE

STRIKE

TENDU

TURN

SLOW

MELT

Put it in Practice

Take pictures or videos of yourself practicing some of these movements and positions and share them on social media. Don't forget to tag us!



Keep in mind the corrections received each week in class.

Some general things to think of in all of these positions and movements:

- Core engaged
- Feet and ankles pointed all the way through, NOT crunching the toes
- When the feet are on the floor, relax the whole foot into the floor, do not hold tension in the toes or arches
- Equal weight on two feet, weight centered in the ball of the feet when standing on one foot
- Pull up through the backs of the legs
- Turnout, bottom and inner thigh muscles engaged to keep insides of legs facing forward
- Hips and shoulders squared to the front, "headlights" forward
- Shoulders relaxed, press down into the shoulders and back and extend that energy through the arms
- Strong but soft arms
- Have fun!!

Your body is your instrument, rest it! Take time to practice terms, routines, and even take virtual classes, but ALSO take time to relax and take care of your body by stretching, eating well, taking a bath, deep breathing, and more!



Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 1. slow
- 4. disengaged
- 6. whipped
- 8. bending of the knees
- 9. fast
- 11. cut
- 13. whirl or spin
- 15. pricked
- 16. changing of the feet

Down

- 2. to develop
- 3. struck
- 5. glide
- 7. stretched
- 10. escaping or slipping movement
- 12. throwing step
- 14. raised
- 15. passe

The crossword puzzle grid consists of 16 numbered starting points for words. The grid is composed of white squares for letters and empty space for non-letter positions. The numbers are placed in the top-left corner of the starting square for each word.

- 1: Across, top right, 6 letters.
- 2: Down, top right, 6 letters.
- 3: Down, middle left, 5 letters.
- 4: Across, middle left, 5 letters.
- 5: Down, middle left, 5 letters.
- 6: Across, middle right, 7 letters.
- 7: Down, middle right, 5 letters.
- 8: Across, middle left, 4 letters.
- 9: Across, middle right, 6 letters.
- 10: Down, bottom left, 3 letters.
- 11: Across, bottom left, 4 letters.
- 12: Down, bottom right, 3 letters.
- 13: Across, bottom left, 5 letters.
- 14: Across, bottom right, 5 letters.
- 15: Across, bottom left, 5 letters.
- 16: Across, bottom left, 10 letters.