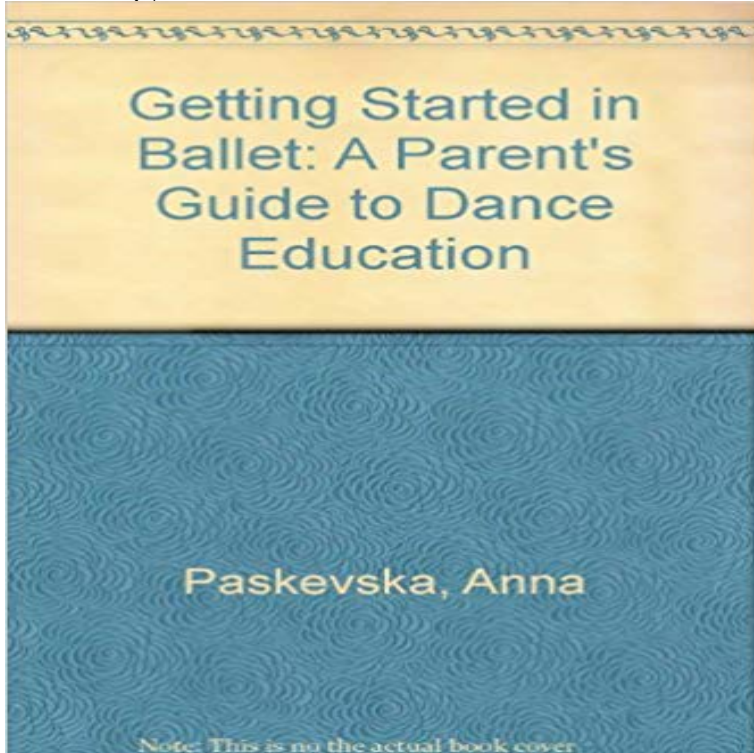


Getting Started in Ballet: A Parents Guide to Dance Education



Many children dream of being a ballerina. Chin raised with purpose, arms high above head, they twirl clumsily around the living room and leap tirelessly in the air. Sooner or later they're bound to say, I want to dance. Now what do you do? How do you know if the time is right? Where's the best place to start? In *Getting Started in Ballet*, Anna Paskevskaja draws from her training at the Paris Opera Ballet School and the Royal Ballet School in London and her career as a professional dancer and teacher to offer a step-by-step introduction to dance education for parents with children starting ballet. Paskevskaja begins with a historical overview of dance and discusses the fundamental virtues and many life-long skills it imparts. Dance teaches children how to cooperate and support each other's efforts; encourages them to work in harmony with others; helps establish a child's spatial relationships; and promotes discipline and responsibility. Paskevskaja outlines the proper sequence for training in ballet based on a child's physical and mental development. She clearly demonstrates how ballet's early training, focusing on repetition of simple motion such as exercises at the barre and basic jumps, establish pathways for all later movements not only in ballet, but in modern dance, jazz, and tap as well. Written in a clear and accessible style and full of anecdotes from Paskevskaja's long professional dance-related career, *Getting Started in Ballet* offers helpful information on types of dance schools and how to select the right school for your child. Included is valuable information on choosing a dance instructor, the role both parents and teachers should play in a child's learning experience, and the qualities the ideal teacher should possess. Also discussed are more practical matters such as the appropriate clothing to wear while practicing, the importance of shoes that fit properly, how to secure pointe shoes, tips

for avoiding injury, and how to balance training and performing experience during the formative years. A special chapter covers proper diet, eating disorders, and ways to recognize symptoms of imbalance. Finally, Paskevaska touches upon the professional world of dance, attending college as a dance major, and advice on choosing careers that benefit from a background in dance. With forewords by Violette Verdy, a preeminent ballerina affiliated with the New York City Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet, and Sybil Shearer, a pioneer of American modern dance, as well as an extensive appendix of performing arts schools and dance programs throughout the United States, Getting Started in Ballet gives parents the advice they need to make their child's dance experiences both enjoyable and constructive.

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